

SUMMA THEOLOGIAE

PRIMA PARS

Volume 1

SUMMA THEOLOGIAE

PRIMA PARS

with the Commentary of Cardinal Cajetan

Volume 1

The One God

QQ 1–26

**Thomas Aquinas and Thomas de Vio
Cajetan**

Translated by William H. Marshner



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Volume 1

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To the martyrs of Magadan:
Orent pro nobis

Translator's Preface

Sixty years ago, when Thomism was still the mandated pedagogy in Roman seminaries, and a theologian's career could depend on whether his published works were *ad mentem divi Thomae*, the relevance of a book like this, to a particular clerical public, would have been obvious (and its author would have been "profiled" by rival factions). Today, happily, we are in a different climate.

The thought of Aquinas is no longer the party platform of any denomination, nor the exclusive property of any "school." Serious thinkers from many churches (and none) have found new reasons to be interested in the 13th century genius who came to be called the Angelic Doctor. His account of knowledge has been retrieved by Alvin Plantinga (*Warrant and Proper Function*). His account of analogy has been studied searchingly by Richard Swinburne (*The Coherence of Theism*). His account of freedom has been defended by Linda Zagzebski (*The Dilemma of Freedom and Foreknowledge*). The philosophical aspects of his thought on God and creation have received a volume each from the late Norman Kretzmann (*The Metaphysics of Theism* and *The Metaphysics of Creation*).

Until about 70 years ago, it was universally agreed that, when one tried to read Aquinas, the commentaries written just before the Reformation by a Dominican cardinal, Thomas de Vio, called Cajetan, were the indispensable aids to doing so. They certainly shed decisive light on the famous topics just mentioned. But they also put Aquinas's work into dialogue with the intellectual innovators who came after him: the Scotists, Nominalists, Latin Averroists, and revived Augustinians. It is not surprising, then, that for five hundred years, the rising generation of Dominican friars was trained by reading through the *Summa* article-by-article with these commentaries in hand. Early printed editions of the *Summa* typically included them in a Talmudic arrangement, as marginal text running around each article by Aquinas. Their importance was reaffirmed late in the 19th Century, when Leo XIII ordered Cajetan's commentaries to be included in the critical "Leonine" edition of Aquinas's works.

No English translation of the *Summa* has ever imitated this example. Hence the first and principal reason for the present work: to make Cajetan's help available to the modern reader.

What happened about 70 years ago was that the neo-scholastic revival brought into prominence a handful of scholars who had become critics of Cajetan on particular points. One such was Étienne Gilson, according to whom Cajetan never understood the originality in Aquinas' philosophy of existence. Another was Henri de Lubac, SJ, according to whom Cajetan never understood the lack of originality (nay, the Augustinian conservatism) in Aquinas's theology of nature and grace. The pre-Reformation Cardinal was too much of an Aristotelian, said the latter. No, he was half a humanist, said the former. Whatever the merits of these complaints, the commentaries came under a cloud; reliance on them went out of fashion.

Hence a second reason for the present work: to put the controversial texts under the eyes of readers who can judge for themselves the rights and wrongs of the case.

There is a third reason for it, too, which takes a bit of explaining. In Anglo-American analytical philosophy, the second half of the 1960s saw logical positivism killed off and replaced by views more friendly to the cognitive significance of metaphysical claims. One of the principal reasons was the discovery by Jaakko Hintikka and Saul Kripke of formal models for systems of modal logic. This kind of logic, neglected since the Middle Ages, overlooked by Russell, but revived by C. I. Lewis, was the kind that captured claims about necessity and possibility (among other topics). In a modal predicate logic, one could distinguish between the properties a thing had to have (if it was to exist or belong to a certain kind) and those it might have but did not need. So when Hintikka's and Kripke's models made modal logic respectable again, a broad array of traditional topics came back to life as well: natural kinds, essential traits, accidents, real existence, physical (as opposed to logical) necessity, even the talk of a necessary being. A return to metaphysics was thus in order, and it has been executed with persuasive grace by many analytical philosophers. It is crucial to add that they have made the return without sacrificing the fruits of the "linguistic turn" earlier in the 20th Century. The result has been a new intellectual context within which to read Aquinas' works, and a new set of tools with which to interpret them. Since something called "analytical Thomism" has already appeared, the time is decidedly ripe for an analytically inspired translation of the main Thomistic texts.

Of course, boasts of new tools and contexts are often hollow. Contexts are not always helpful, and 'tools' is a dubious metaphor. German idealism was once a highly touted context in which to read earlier

philosophy, and one shudders to think of what will be done with “tools” borrowed from post-modern Frenchmen. But it is a provable matter of fact that, in order to read Aquinas well, one needs certain assets which the neo-scholastic revival did not revive, but which analytical philosophy has cultivated. One needs

- a philosophy of language that keeps the sense of a word distinct from its reference and keeps extensional contexts distinct from opaque ones
- a palette of logics that includes second order quantification (so as to say what “there is” in all the categories, to accommodate an analogy of being) and multiple modalities (so as to distinguish alethic, temporal, epistemic, and deontic modal claims), and
- a philosophy of science that keeps scientific accounts of things (*rationes*) distinct from the everyday notions embodied in ordinary-language and keeps them equally distinct from the topics of cognitive psychology (such as concepts).

Well, a reader who has these assets quickly discovers that they are very nearly (and sometimes precisely) the ones that Cajetan had. Hence the third reason for the present work: to let people see how far the *Summa* read with Cajetan’s commentaries is “analytical Thomism.”

With these goals in mind, the translation policy of the present effort has been simple: to secure the clearest good English that is consistent with fidelity to the technical force of the original. This has resulted in seven sub-policies:

- (1) to keep the English good by making the Bible sound like the Bible, the way the Old Itala of his Psalter and the Vulgate sounded to Aquinas: archaic and beautiful; in English, one achieves this by using the Authorized Version or, where needed, the Douay;
- (2) to avoid latinisms by giving important words their real translations; ‘*quaestio*’, for example, did not mean ‘a question’ but ‘an inquiry’; ‘*perfectio*’, did not mean ‘perfection’ but the finished state of a thing, or a property contributing to its completeness; ‘*proprius*’ did not mean ‘proper’ but ‘distinctive’ or, in semantic contexts, ‘literal’; ‘*simpliciter*’ did not mean ‘simply’ but ‘unqualifiedly’; ‘*absolutē*’ meant ‘independently [of further considerations]’; ‘*adaequatus*’ meant ‘equivalent’, not ‘adequate’, etc.;¹
- (3) to relieve the monotony of impersonal, passive constructions by turning verbs into the active voice, so that ‘*ut dictum est*’ can become ‘as I said above’, etc.;
- (4) to avoid abstract nouns which have drifted off into collective or concrete meanings, the way ‘humanity’ has come to be a name for the race, and both ‘deity’ and ‘divinity’ have come to be names for God or a god; I apologize for the resulting neologisms like ‘humanness’ and ‘divineness’;
- (5) to follow a spelling reform common in recent philosophy; when talking about volitional matters, I continue to spell ‘intention’ and ‘intentional’ in the traditional way; but when talking about the forms and objects involved in cognition, I spell them with an ‘s’: ‘intension’ and ‘intensional’;
- (6) to make consistent use of single quotes to indicate that a word or phrase is under discussion, *i.e.* being mentioned, not being used for what it (usually) stands for;
- (7) to make a judicious use of certain conventions pioneered by analytical philosophers where clarity recommends them. These include the occasional use of individual variables (like x and y) or predicate variables (like ϕ and ψ).

Of course, no defensible policy will turn a scholastic disputation into easy-going English prose.² Some parts of what follows are going to remain difficult, no matter what the translator does to smooth things along. One can only hope that other parts, which the reader finds accessible, will be rewarding

¹ These Latinisms are the fatal flaw of the old English Dominican translation, published originally by Benziger Brothers, then republished by Christian Classics, and now gaining ubiquity due to its free availability online.

² The new Blackfriars translation (published by McGraw Hill) reads splendidly as English, but it misses important technical points where exactitude counts. Some of these are points where Aquinas’s philosophy of science is at stake, because the Latin features the crucial *ratio*-idiom (*ratio* followed by a substantive in the genitive case); others are points where his philosophy of language is at stake, because the Latin features key terms in medieval semantic theory; others are points where his analysis of relations is at stake, or his epistemology. If one handles these things poorly, one can translate Aquinas only fuzzily, and one cannot translate Cajetan at all. One also misses one’s opportunities to connect Thomas’ statements with today’s debates.

enough to motivate patient perusal of the rough bits.

One more word: my policy in footnotes has been to acknowledge what empirical science has made obsolete in the work of St. Thomas but also to make clear how much today's science would have saved him useless labor.

Acknowledgements

A number of individuals need to be thanked for the guidance they gave to a not always tractable pupil. The foremost among these are the late Prof. Frederick D. Wilhelmsen, who first gave me a taste for Thomism, the late Prof. William E. May, who directed my dissertations, and the late Prof. Germain Grisez, who deserves to be better known as the real pioneer of analytical Thomism. Thanks also to Fr. Romanus Cesario, OP, who teaches virtue-theory while exhibiting its subject matter, and Prof. Patrick Lee, who was kind enough to raise some sharp objections. The late Prof. Damien Fedoryka, during his tenure as president of Christendom college where I teach, provided financial support, and a subsequent president Dr. Timothy O'Donnell, not only granted a timely sabbatical but also extended needed financial support, including two paid years as a professor emeritus.

Others need to be thanked not for guidance but for indispensable aid. Many student amanuenses turned my dictation into soft copy, most recently Mr. Charles Fuller. They came from a talent pool recruited by Profs. Eric Jenislawski and Matthew Tsakanikis, who shared the sense of urgency made evident to me by the irreversible effects of senectude. My family is to be thanked for affectionate patience and unflagging encouragement, especially my wife of 50 years, the political activist and Celtic scholar, Connaught Coyne Marshner.

William H. Marshner

Features of the Text and its Layout

Margins

The left and right margins are used for short notes, to spare the reader's eye from continually jumping to the bottom of the page. These short notes are of two kinds. The first completes a citation begun in the text (as in the Leonine edition). The second kind, marked with a printer's symbol (*, †, ‡, etc.) displays the original Latin term or phrase in a case where the reader needs to see it, because it is an important technical term or because I am giving it a less than obvious translation.

Footnotes

All the footnotes in this work are marked with superscripted numbers, and they have the status of translator's notes. I have inserted them either to make connections with current debates or to obviate difficulties for someone who is philosophically literate but not trained in matters medieval.

Sub-headings

In all the longer commentaries, translator's sub-headings have been inserted. For in a typical commentary, Cajetan first clarifies the issue, then lists the jobs done by Aquinas in that article, then begins a job-by-job analysis. But he breaks off to handle any problem or controversy attaching to how Aquinas did the job in question. As this interruption can be quite lengthy, involving simultaneous polemics against many parties, Cajetan's longer commentaries are quite hard to follow without a device that lets the reader know which party is being debated, when an interruption is finished, and when the job-by-job analysis is being resumed. Sub-headings serve this purpose.

Square brackets

Square brackets enclose material added by the translator, usually to fill-in where the text is elliptical.

By contrast, ordinary parentheses are just punctuation marks for translated text, so that the material inside them is not to be taken as coming from the translator/editor but as part of the original.

Angle brackets


Angle brackets indicate a textual problem. In Aquinas' text, they enclose a word or phrase that translates what was reckoned as a genuine part of the text, either in Cajetan's copy or in the Leonine edition, but which is no longer reckoned genuine in the New Blackfriars edition. They may also enclose a textual amendment recommended by the translator, especially in a commentary.

Sigla

- CG* = *Summa Contra Gentiles*; the book number is prefixed, and the chapter number follows, as in 2 *CG* c. 16
- Denz* = Denzinger-Hünemann, *Enchiridion Symbolorum*, etc., 43rd edition..
- In + title* = A commentary on the book with that title; thus *In I Sent.* indicates a commentary (by Aquinas unless otherwise indicated) on the first of the *Libri Sententiarum*. *In Boethii de Trinitate* indicates a commentary on Boethius' *De Trinitate*. Etc.
- PG* = Migne, *Patrologia Graeca* (cited by volume number and column number)
- PL* = Migne, *Patrologia Latina* (likewise cited by volume and column)
- I Sent.*,
II Sent.,
etc. = Book I (II, etc.) of the *Quatuor Libri Sententiarum* of Peter Lombard
- ST* = Aquinas' *Summa Theologiae*. The part number is prefixed, and the *quaestio* and article numbers follow in that order. Thus 2/2 *ST* 5, 4 indicates the *Secunda Secundae* q. 5, a. 4.

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St. Thomas Aquinas

SUMMA THEOLOGIAE

FIRST PART

Prologue

The teacher of Catholic truth should not only train advanced students. He should also prepare beginners, as the Apostle says in 1 Corinthians 3:1-2, "as unto little ones in Christ, I gave you milk to drink, not meat." Our intention in this work is to treat the topics pertaining to the Christian religion in a way that suits the educational needs of beginners.

For we have found that those who are just starting out in this field are getting bogged down at many points in the books written by other authors:

— partly because of the tendency of those authors to pile up useless questions, sub-questions, and arguments;

— partly, too, because they do not present the points which beginners need to know in the right sort of order for pedagogy (instead they follow the order of topics in the books they are commenting on, or they take up topics as they have occasion to debate them);

— and partly because those authors repeat so much that it begets distaste and confusion in the minds of their readers.

Therefore, with care to avoid these and kindred pitfalls, and with confidence in God's help, we shall try to go through the topics belonging to the sacred learning as briefly and clearly as the subject matter will permit.

Cajetan's Commentary

So long as one has the impression that I am taking a book written for beginners and loading it up with the disputes that go on among professors, St. Thomas's announced intention in this Prologue (as to how he will teach and how he will meet the needs of beginning students) will seem incompatible with mine, on the face of it. But if one looks more closely at the author's stated reasons for this *Summa*, my purpose will not look so misguided.

He does say that his work is to suit beginners, but the reason he gives is not because it will be easy or superficial, or because it will only summarize the larger points, or because it will limit itself to introductory topics. Rather, he says it will suit beginners because superfluities will be omitted, because repetition will be avoided, and because a very beautiful order has been hit upon. Indeed, it will emerge as we go along that every difficult problem in theology gets an explicit treatment here, in the terms proper to it. [So I shall not be spoiling the work, if I bring up difficult matters as well.]

Then, too, this book bears the misfortune of having had interpreters who were not always insightful or equal

to it; and it has had many opponents: and today it would have many more admirers, if it were made fully clear to people. For these reasons, I became convinced that a new effort at exposition was needed for those hoping to advance in the field, and that, to the best of my ability, I would have to add things to the text — not better things than it already contains, but more recent things, and things no longer well known among today's students.

To all readers I give this advice: look only at the reasons the author gives for his statements; examine those reasons, so as to accept them or refute them. I do not have the stature or the arrogance to put forward my own authority. Here and elsewhere I speak only so far as the reasons put down by St. Thomas support me. Where I fall short, I shall thank as my helper anyone who corrects me. Also, when I use words like 'error', 'falseness', 'mistake', 'ignorance', and the like, I use them against opinions, not persons; and even against opinions, I mean them only insofar as the opinions are, or seem, unsound. For I have no wish whatever to quarrel with persons; and with opinions I quarrel only when they strike a jarring note.

Inquiry One:

Into the sacred learning: its nature and extent

If this project is to stay within bounds, it is necessary to inquire first into the sacred learning itself, to settle what sort of learning it is, and what it covers. Ten questions need to be raised:

- | | |
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| (1) is this learning needed? (2) is it science? (3) is it one or many? (4) is it theoretical or practical? (5) how does it compare to other sciences? | (6) is this learning wisdom? (7) what is its subject matter? (8) does it proceed by argumentation? (9) does it need to use metaphors or symbolic speech? (10) should holy Scripture be interpreted along multiple lines? |
|---|--|

article 1

Is a further learning needed, beyond the philosophical disciplines?

2/2 ST q.2, aa.3-4; In I Sent. Prolog. a.1; 1 CG cc 4-5; De Veritate q.14, a.10

Beyond the <natural or> philosophical disciplines, no further learning seems needed.¹

(1) After all, a human being should not try to peer into things above our reason, as Sirach 3:22 says: "Seek not the things that are too high for thee." But what permits of rational treatment is adequately handled in the philosophical disciplines. It would seem superfluous, then, to have another learning.

(2) Besides, a branch of knowledge has to deal with beings; for nothing is known unless it is true, and what is true or real is coextensive with what is. But all beings are dealt with in the philosophical disciplines, including God, which is why there is a part of philosophy called theology or "divine science," as one sees in *Metaphysics VI*. So, there has been no need for a further learning beyond the philosophical disciplines.

ON THE OTHER HAND, there is 2 Timothy 3:16, "Every writing inspired by God is profitable to teach, to reprove, to correct, to instruct in righteousness." A writing inspired by God lies outside the philosophical disciplines, because the latter arise as products of human reasoning. It is profitable, then, for there to be other knowledge, divinely inspired, beyond those disciplines.

ANSWER: for human salvation, a learning that arises from divine revelation is needed, above and beyond the natural and philosophical disciplines that arise from human rationality. The first reason for this is because people are directed to God as to a goal* beyond our rational comprehension, as it says in Isaiah 64:4, "eye doth not see. O God, apart from thee, what thou hast prepared for them that love thee." But a goal has to be understood

* *finis*

in advance by the people who are supposed to direct their intentions and actions toward reaching it. Hence it was necessary for our salvation that some points going beyond human reason should be made known to us by divine revelation.

Secondly, even on the points about God that can be settled by human reason, we have needed to be taught by divine revelation. For when a truth about God is acquired by reasoning, it is discovered by few, it takes a long time, and it reaches people in a mixture with many errors. And yet our entire salvation, which lies in God, depends upon our knowing the truth in this area. So, in order for salvation to reach people more expeditiously and surely, they have needed to be instructed about divine matters by divine revelation.

Therefore, beyond the philosophical disciplines that develop through reason, a sacred learning* imparted by revelation, is and has been needed.

* *sacra doctrina*

TO MEET THE OBJECTIONS — *ad* (1): things higher than human cognition should not be sought out by reason; but when they are revealed by God, they should be received with faith. Hence the same passage goes on to say, "many things are shown to thee above the understanding of men." Sacred learning is a matter of just such things.

Sirach 3: 25

ad (2): a difference in the basis for knowing[†] makes one science different from another. An astronomer and a geologist may demonstrate the very same thing, *e.g.*, the roundness of the earth, but the astronomer does it by a mathematical means [or middle term], abstracted from matter, while the geologist does it through a means [or middle term] based on matter. Thus nothing prevents the same things from being treated on one basis in the philosophical disciplines, *i.e.*, as they are knowable by the natural light of reason, and on another basis in another science, as they are known by the light of divine revelation. Accordingly, the theology that belongs to sacred learning is different in kind from the "theology" that is part of philosophy.

† *ratio cognoscibilis*

¹ A few older copies had the word '*physicae*' here instead of '*philosophicae*'. Cajetan's copy did, as his comments show. But it was a happy flaw, because "philosophical" no longer covers the natural sciences. In the 13th century, it did; and Aquinas meant to ask whether more was needed beyond all such studies.

In the title of this first article, notice three terms. The first is 'necessary'. According to *Metaphysics V*, it can be used to mean 'necessary in itself' or 'needed for a purpose'. Here it is used the second way.

• The next term is 'physical' disciplines. A science can be called physical or natural (they mean the same) for two reasons. One is *because of its object*, so that "physical" science is one part of science, distinct from mathematics and metaphysics (according to *Metaphysics VI*).

The other is *because of its productive cause* (meaning that the sciences in question arises from our natural cause of knowing, which is the light of the agent intellect¹), so that "physical" knowledge is distinguished from supernatural. This is how the term is being used here, where all forms of learning acquirable by our intellect's own light are being called physical.

• The third term is 'a further learning'. It does not say a further science or opinion or faith. The reason to pay attention to this will emerge below.

Analysis of the article, I

ii. In the body of the article, two conclusions are established in reaching a yes-answer. They are: (1) for our salvation, there needs to be a learning received by revelation about many points which go beyond what human reason can settle; and (2) for our salvation, there also needs to be a learning received by revelation about theological issues which natural reason can settle.

iii. Before looking at how these conclusions are supported, one should get clear why they are distinct and jointly sufficient. Two distinctions are helpful. One is from 1 *CG* c.3, which says that points knowable about God fall into two main kinds:

- the ones that can be proven conclusively, and
- the ones that can be known only by revelation.

Examples of the latter are the Trinity, the beatitude promised to us, the mysteries of the Incarnation and Redemption. Examples of the former are God's being one, immortal, etc. In the present article, conclusion (1) covers the points knowable by revelation alone, while conclusion (2) covers the provable points. The other distinction comes from *Metaphysics V*; it says a thing can be "needed for a purpose" in two ways:

- needed for it to be achieved at all [*ad esse*], or
- needed for it to be achieved well [*ad bene esse*].

In the present article, the phrase 'needs to be' in conclusion (1) is meant the first way, while in conclusion (2) it is meant the second way.²

iv. With that background, the first conclusion is supported as follows. [*Major:*] Anyone who is ordered to God as to a goal unknown to his natural reason and yet

¹ 'Agent intellect' names the mind's active power to abstract intelligible objects from sensory inputs, see 1 *ST* q.84.

² So in the two conclusions together, both kinds of points-knowable are covered, and both ways of being needed are covered.

required to be reached by his own intention and action, needs a supernatural teaching by which to know this goal and direct his activities towards it. [*Minor:*] Man is such a case; ergo [man needs a supernatural teaching]. The minor is supported by Isaiah 64.

Is the faith what is needed, or theology?

v. Regarding this conclusion a doubt arises at once. What does he mean here by this "sacred learning" or "teaching"? Does he mean the faith, or theology?

• If he means the faith, two awkward results follow. First, the same question will be raised twice, once here and once in 2/2 *ST* q.2, a.3, where he asks whether it is necessary for salvation that a person believe anything supernatural. Secondly, the term 'sacred learning' will be used with one meaning here and with a different meaning in the ensuing articles, where it clearly does not mean the faith.

• But if he means theology, a falsehood will follow, *i.e.*, that faith does not suffice for our salvation without theology. This will follow, because he says in the article that this learning is "needed" for human salvation. But the falsity of it is not only clear in itself but emerges from the very reason given in the text: one *can* bend one's actions and intentions towards one's supernatural goal just by knowing the faith.

vi. TO ADDRESS THIS, I should say that 'sacred learning' is not being used here to mean the faith as contrasted with theology, nor to mean theology as contrasted with the faith; rather, it is being used to mean "knowledge revealed by God" (either formally revealed or virtually) insofar as that knowledge has what it takes to be called teaching and learning, abstracting from whether it has what it takes to be called "believed directly" or "inferred scientifically." For the knowledge we need for salvation is "learning" and "teaching" just because we receive it from God teaching it, as it says in John 6:45, "Everyone that hath heard from the Father, and hath learned, cometh to me." This is what Aquinas says is necessary for salvation in the conclusion we are talking about. Since such knowledge is a revealed teaching *independently* of whether we just believe it or draw out more from it scientifically — ergo *independently* of whether it is formally revealed [*i.e.* revealed explicitly] or virtually revealed [*i.e.* inferable from what is explicit] — it is wrong to descend into those differences here, where what is in question is just a revealed learning, beyond the natural disciplines.³

³ In other words, a point *p* is "taught" either in case (a) the teacher himself has said it, so that in believing him we credit *p* directly, or in case (b) the teacher said something else, and we have figured out that *p* is implied in his message. Since the status of *p* as "taught" is thus independent of whether it is directly credited or figured out, the whole divine message can be revealed *teaching (doctrina)*, regardless of whether some part of it was first taken on direct faith (and so entered human intellectual history as *fides quae*) or was first figured out from other points believed (and so entered human intellectual history as speculative theology). This point is crucial to seeing how *developments* of doctrine can arise and yet remain within the scope of "the revealed."

Thus what is focally in question here is one thing, and what is in question below in 2/2 is something else. Here the topic is doctrine: there it is believing. Moreover, 'sacred learning' is used with the same meaning here and in the following articles. But it does not follow that theology *as contrasted with the faith* is necessary: what follows is that knowledge-of-God as abstracting from faith vs. science is necessary for salvation, and that is true for the reason given in the article. At the same time, it is not valid to say, "Faith suffices, therefore theology is not required." For on the one hand, theology as it is taken here (knowledge of God) is contained in the faith as animal is contained in man.⁴ And on the other hand, as

c.7: PL
42, 1037 Augustine says in *De Trinitate XII*, this science not only feeds, defends, and strengthens the faith; it also "begets" it. As far as the objects of faith are concerned, that is quite true. For while faith as an inclination to believe comes from God's infusing it, what there is to believe comes "from hearing, through the word of Christ," as it says in Romans 10: 17, and as St. Thomas stresses in a comment on the passage. Thus theology is involved in faith as giving rise to its objects. If someone draws the inference, "so then every adult who believes explicitly, etc., is a theologian," I should say: not in the full sense of 'theologian', but to some extent. Every such adult, after all, takes part in theology by knowing its starting points.

lectio 2

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A clash with Scotus: why does our goal need revealing?

vii. As to this part of the article, Scotus (in the Prologue to *I Sent.*, q. 1) does not disagree with its conclusion [that revelation is needed for us to reach our goal], nor with the reason given for it [because the goal is otherwise unknown to us]; he disagrees only with our explanation of why the goal in question is naturally hidden to people. We Thomists take that goal to be naturally hidden to us because it is an end supernatural to our soul, so that no matter how perfectly the nature of our soul became known to us in its natural aspects, we would still not know the reason why our soul is ordered to such an end. Both the end itself and that way of knowing our soul fall outside the scope of natural things. But Scotus takes the end in question to be *natural* to our soul (though he admits it can only be reached supernaturally), and yet he says that this end is *naturally unknown* to us because our soul itself, in that proper and special makeup whereby it is ordered to this end, is not naturally known to us, at least in our present state.⁵

viii. To justify taking the end in question as natural to us, Scotus argues three ways. (1) From the authority of

⁴ He means that "knowledge of God" is a genus contained in such species as *by faith* and *by proof* and *by sight*.

⁵ In Thomism as Cajetan understood it, a discovery test ("Can we discover *x* naturally?") was used in determining whether *x* was natural to us. Why? Because the sense of 'natural' relevant here was the sense used in Aristotle's natural sciences. In this sense, we could not have a "natural" end which was not knowable in such a science; and so an end known only from revelation was *eo ipso* supernatural to us. In Scotism, this discoverability test was set aside, and a different criterion for calling ends, inclinations, potencies, etc., natural was introduced. Part of it is explained in the next paragraph.

Augustine in *De praedestinatione sanctorum*: "potential to have faith (like the potential to have charity) belongs to the nature of human beings; but actually having it belongs to the grace of believers." (2) He argues from inclination: towards the end you call supernatural, he says, man inclines naturally; hence it is natural to him. (3) He argues from the basis for calling potencies "natural." When a potency *P* is compared to the very act it receives, Scotus says,

- (a) *P* is either a natural potency to that act, a forced one, or a neutral one, and
- (b) there is no room to speak of *P*'s being a supernatural potency to that act.

From these two points, he concludes that the intellect or soul is naturally ordered to the Vision or enjoyment of God. To establish (a), he says that *P* either inclines to such an act, or inclines away from it, or else stands neutrally towards it; in the first case, *P* is a natural potency to that act; in the second case, forced; in the third case, neutral. To establish point (b), he says the difference between natural and supernatural arises only when *P* is compared to the agent-cause communicating an act to it [doing so] either naturally or supernaturally; but when *P* is compared directly to the act itself, there is no supernaturality. To justify drawing the conclusion that ergo the human soul is "naturally" ordered to the enjoyment of God, he argues from the premise that the soul is inclined to its every completion*, and especially to its highest completion, which is just what the act of enjoying God is, etc.⁶

* *perfectio*

ix. TO CLEAR UP THIS MUDDLE, the reader should be aware that, for Thomists, a potency is either natural, forced, or *obediential*, no matter whether it is compared to its act or to the agent communicating the act; and in the world of nature at least (setting aside artificial things) there is no "neutral potency." This will be taken up in a separate discussion *On Neutral Potency*, to be written in connection with this article.⁷ 'Obediential potency' is the term for a thing's openness to have done in it whatever God ordains to be done. It is with this kind of potency that our soul is said to be in "potency" to the happiness God has promised, in "potency" to our supernatural end, and to other such things.⁸

Point-by-point replies

x. So to answer Scotus' first line of argument: Augustine did not say that man's potency to have faith is *natural potency* but that it *belongs to the nature* of human beings.

⁶ In sum, Scotus' argument went like this. The soul is naturally inclined to whatever completes (or perfects) it. The Vision of God completes/perfects the soul. So the soul is naturally inclined to that Vision. But whenever a potency *inclines* to an act, it is a *natural* potency to that act. So our soul is in natural potency to the Vision of God. This is why Augustine said that our *posse* to have Christian faith, etc., belongs to our nature.

⁷ Cajetan is promising his readers a forthcoming supplement. He made good by publishing in 1511 the opusculum *De Potentia Neutra*. It discussed (1) whether in natural things there is found a neutral potency, and (2) whether a potency receptive to supernatural acts is a natural potency to those acts. Because the opusculum has been incriminated in much post-conciliar theology, the text is given at the end of this inquiry as an appendix (see p. 43).

⁸ To a reader inclined to think that obediential potency is a scholastic over-refinement, with no contemporary value, I recommend reading again the famous Barth-Brunner controversy over "natural theology."

It is one thing for a potency to belong to our nature, and it is quite another for it to be a natural potency. The former expresses where the potency *resides*, while the latter expresses its *mode*.⁹ The former is true in this case, while the latter is false. The obidental potency to faith and charity does reside “in the nature” of human beings, since ours is an intellective nature, and does not reside in lions’ nature, since it conflicts with their nature. And this is what Augustine had in mind. — As to Scotus’ second line of argument, we deny its premise [that man inclines naturally to the end we call supernatural].¹⁰ — As to his third line, we deny what it assumes both as to the third kind of potency he affirms [in (a), above] and as to what he denies [in point (b) above]. Supernaturality *does* arise when a potency is compared directly to the act-state it receives; there are act-states that are down-right supernatural in what they *are*, like grace, glory, and others. This will come out in the other discussion.*

* See Appendix
p 43

Analysis of the article, II

xi. The second conclusion is supported thus. [Major:] We need a teaching that will help more of us to know the points provable about God more quickly and more securely; [minor:] a revealed teaching does this; ergo [a revealed teaching is needed]. Everything is clear in the text, and the topic is treated more fully in 1 CG c.4.

On the answer ad (2)

xii. In looking at the answer to objection (2), recall that the objection itself went like this. [Premise:] everything there is, is knowable by the physical/natural disciplines; so [first inference:] there is nothing left over to be known by a revealed learning; and so [second inference:] no such learning is needed. The first inference is supported on the ground that only what is true is known, and what is true or real is coexistent with what is. The premise is from *Metaphysics VI* and is clear enough inductively.

c.1
1026a 18 There are two ways to answer this, because there are two ways to introduce a distinction into the meaning of the premise. The first way would [distinguish beings from points knowable about them, so as to] make it say:

⁹ The difference between naturalness in residence and mode is easily illustrated by diseases. Some diseases are limited to people of one race only, like sickle-cell anemia, while others are caught by people of every race, like colds. Potency to the former resides in special genes not found in everyone; potency to the latter type resides in human nature. But its mode is a purely Aristotelian issue, which arose as follows. No potency of our nature was defined as our catch-a-cold system; the potency which is reduced to diseased-act by a cold was defined as potency to breathe, and it was a *natural* potency to that healthy act; hence it would have been called a *forced* potency to the disease by Aristotle. Thus the *posse* to catch cold belonged to human nature and yet was not a natural potency. Augustine was saying that *every human can* have the faith; Scotus was using him to say that this ‘can’ is Aristotelian natural potency — natural in mode — a far more technical claim.

¹⁰ Cajetan will deny the premise that our soul inclines to every completion it can receive. Amend the last to ‘naturally receive’, and the premise will no longer support an inference about the beatific Vision. More deeply, the amendment will highlight the difference between “completions of the soul” univocally so-called and the Vision, which is only analogously so called.

- every being, in every point knowable about it, is knowable by the natural disciplines, vs.
- every being is knowable by them but not in every point knowable about it, but only in those points that can be abstracted from sense data.

Here the first meaning is false, but the second is true. The other way of introducing a distinction is like this:

- every being is knowable on every basis through the natural disciplines, vs.
- every being is knowable through them but not on every basis, but only insofar as it can be illuminated by the light of the agent intellect.

Again, the first sense is false, while the second is true. Although either answer would meet the objection, Aquinas took the second approach here and preferred to make it explicit, rather than the first. In part his motive was to meet the objections in terms proper to this article — in this case, the light of divine revelation. But also, the other way of answering had already come out in the body of the article, in conclusion (1).

Another clash with Scotus: over the answer ad (2)

xiii. Nevertheless, when Scotus met the kind of argument posed by this second objection (as he was commenting on the Prologue to *I Sent.* q.1), he criticized the solution given here. He said that the objection sought to eliminate the *need* for theology, and that this answer did nothing to show a need. — He supported his criticism as follows. [Premise:] From Aquinas’ answer, one gets only the point that the same things are known, albeit differently, by theology and by the other sciences (as the fact that the earth is round is known by astronomy and by geology). [Inference:] So, what is established is not the need for theology but its distinctness from the other disciplines. This follows from the very example appealed to: for since ‘the earth is round’ is known by one of those sciences, the other (distinct as it may be) is not needed as far as getting to know this conclusion is concerned.¹¹

xiv. IN ANSWER, I say that a difference in the basis for knowing brings with it a difference in the object known (formally taken), that is, it brings with it a difference in what the object has in having what it takes to be an object-known (even if the object is still the same conclusion materially). This happens whenever a basis-for-knowing-objects [an O-basis] and a given basis-in-things-for-their-being-knowable [a T-basis] imply each other.* But when T fails to imply O, a difference in O makes at least a difference as to whether many truths are or are not knowable, as we shall see below in commenting on article 3. Hence the same *things*, taken on diverse bases for knowing, yield different *objects-of-knowledge*. This is why, when Aquinas spoke of a different basis for knowing, he also implied different objects-knowable — and he had already brought this issue out into the open in the first conclusion. Hence I deny Scotus’ premise: even though the answer given a-

¹¹ A short answer to Scotus would have been: look, the objection tried to prove that there was no need for theology by proving that there was *no room* for it. When Aquinas showed that theology is distinct, he proved that there was room for it, and thus the objection failed on its chosen ground. Cajetan preferred a longer answer, however, which anticipated upcoming points.

bove speaks explicitly of a difference in the manner of knowing alone, a difference in the objects-knowable is implicit in it.

As to the example about astronomy, I could say that examples do not have to resemble in every respect what they are used to illustrate. But sticking to the example, I say astronomy reaches the same conclusion *here* as geology (by a different light) but does not reach *all* the same

conclusions. Likewise, theology (by its own light) holds some of the same truths as the other sciences but also holds truths of its own, even about the same things. So, *JUST AS* astronomy, by having its own light and coming to truths of its own (even if it overlaps geology in reaching materially the same conclusion here), is not only a different science but a needed one, *SO ALSO* theology is both different and needed.

Does the sacred learning count as science?

272 ST q 1, a.5 ad 2; In 1 Sent. Prolog., a.3, q^m 2; De Veritate q 14, a.9 ad 3; In Boethius de Trinitate q 2, a.2

It would seem that the sacred learning is not a scientific way of thinking.¹

(1) After all, every scientific way of thinking reasons from starting points that are obviously true.* The sacred learning reasons from the articles of faith, which are not obviously true, since not everyone believes them. “For not all men have faith,” as the Apostle says in 2 Thessalonians 3:2. This learning does not count, therefore, as a scientific expertise.

(2) Besides, science does not deal with isolated individuals or events, while sacred learning deals with precisely such things: the deeds of Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, etc. Therefore, the sacred learning is not science.

ON THE OTHER HAND, there is what Augustine says in *De Trinitate XIV*: “it is to the credit of this science alone that, by it, saving faith is begotten, nourished, defended and strengthened.” The expertise to which this statement refers is none other than the sacred learning. So, the latter is a science.

I ANSWER: the sacred learning is scientific. But one needs to know that scientific proficiencies come in two kinds. Some reason from starting points that are known to be true by the natural light of direct understanding. Proficiencies in arithmetic and geometry are examples. But there are others that reason from starting points which are known by the light of a higher science. For example, those who work on problems of perspective reason from starting points proved

¹ Translating ‘scientia’ with ‘science’ is unavoidable here but misleading. For neither in everyday Latin nor in learned use did ‘scientia’ mean what ‘science’ means in modern English. In everyday Latin, ‘scientia’ meant knowledge or knowing of any kind. In learned use, ‘scientia’ translated Aristotle’s ‘episteme’ and meant an acquired mental ability, an “intellectual virtue” that was subject-matter-specific. More exactly, it meant an expertise at figuring out further truths or explanations, given the initial evidence appropriate to the subject matter. [Note continues]

by geometers, and those who work out musical harmonies start with truths figured out by arithmeticians. It is in this latter way that the sacred learning is scientific. It reasons from starting points known to be true by the light of a higher expertise, which is the knowledge that God has and that the blessed in Heaven have. Therefore, just as a composer believes the principles loaned to him by mathematicians, so also sacred learning believes the starting points revealed to it by God.

TO MEET THE OBJECTIONS — *ad* (1): the starting points used in a scientific way of thinking are either obviously true or else go back to what a higher science can see. The starting points of sacred learning go back in this way.

ad (2): particular individuals are in the content of sacred learning, but not because it mainly deals with them. Rather, they come in as examples of how to live (but the moral sciences also use such examples), and they come in as showing the authority of those through whom divine revelation has come down to us. For sacred learning and Scripture rest on that authority.

In this exact meaning, *scientia* contrasted with other mental abilities, some of lower stature, such as practical abilities, and some of higher, such as direct understanding (*intellectus*), which was talent at seeing the ultimate first principles. The primary boundary marker between *scientia* and lesser knowing was *certitudo*, which meant either certainty or warrant.

Today, ‘science’ means a body of results rather than the intellectual skill to obtain them. More importantly, ‘science’ today means the body of testable theories which have withstood various rigorous tests and yielded successful applications. These theories were figured out as explanations, but our view of what is appropriate in that process has changed, and the trait of testability has largely replaced the trait of certitudo as marking the boundary between science and non-science.

Even so, the body of article 2, written as an answer to the question about *scientia*, would need surprisingly few changes to be recast as an answer to the question about science.

Cajetan’s Commentary

In the title of this second article, pay attention to two terms. The one is ‘science’, and the other is ‘sacred learning’. ‘Science’ is being used here in its proper sense, to mean an intellectual virtue (as in *Ethics VI*), an acquired ability to reach conclusions by proofs from acceptable starting points. Next, [it is a rule of interpretation that] subject-terms are always to be construed along the lines allowed by what is being said about them; in this article, then, the term ‘sacred learning’ should be taken to mean the revealed learning *insofar as it teaches conclusions*. It does not mean the learning as a whole. It would be stupid to ask whether

one’s whole effort to know (including both holding the starting points and reaching the conclusions) is science, since it is well known that facility in holding starting points is not called “science” [but in this case, “faith”]. Rather, it means the sacred learning taken independently of the distinction between the faith and theology, as it did in article 1, but now with an added relation to conclusions. In other words, the sense of the question is this: does the same sacred learning that we just proved was needed have what it takes to be called a science in virtue of the conclusions it draws, or does it not have what it takes? Should it be called

cc 3-8;
1139b 15-
1142a 30

"opinion"? *Etc.* So understood, the question asked and the answer reached are about exactly the same subject, and the questions correspond to what there is to ask, according to *Posterior Analytics II*.

c.1;
89b 21-35

Analysis of the article, I

ii. In the body of the article, he puts down his answer and then does three jobs: (1) he draws a single distinction; (2) he modifies his answer in light of it, and (3) he derives a corollary.

c.13
78b 35 –
79a 15

The distinction is taken from *Posterior Analytics I*, and it is this: there are two kinds of science, higher [*subalternans*] and subordinate [*subalternata*]. The difference between them is that a higher science proceeds from starting points which are seen to be true in and of themselves,*

* *per se nota*

while a subordinate science proceeds from starting points which are seen to be true not in themselves but by the light of a higher science. In this way arithmetic is higher and music is subordinate; geometry is higher, and optics subordinate.

On the difference giving rise to this distinction between sciences

iii. As to this distinction and difference, observe that the difference appealed to here comes from the most basic defining trait of science, and so it has to be taken as the first and essential difference between a higher science and a subordinate one; and if it is correct, all difficulties will have to be solved by going back to it. For the most basic defining trait of a "science" expertise (as contrasted with other intellectual habits or virtues) is that it gets conclusions that can be seen to be contained in prior points, *i.e.* in starting points [prior principles or premisses]. For, necessarily, every science arises from starting premisses. And from this it follows that *no science* (neither higher nor subordinate) *has in itself the verification of its conclusions; rather, each has this by the help of a faculty at seeing the truth of the starting points.*¹ Given this much in common, the higher and subordinate kinds diverge as follows:

- in a higher science, the conclusions are provable in and from starting points which by their nature are verified immediately, without the mediation of any other science-proficiency, while
- in a subordinate science, the conclusions are provable in and from starting points that by their nature are verified mediately, *i.e.* with the mediation of a higher science-proficiency.

This is the essential and *per se* difference between the higher and subordinate kinds of science. Other characteristics of the difference follow from this one as consequen-

¹ Please forgive the translator for italicizing much of the previous sentence. Think of the "starting points" as concrete "protocol sentences," and recall the trouble about them in the Vienna Circle. Think of the "starting points" as mathematical axioms, and recall the crisis produced by Riemannian geometry or by Russell's paradox. The moral is that no science can have such indubitable starting points as to have its verification "in itself." Every science's starting points need help from a critical talent for assessing their truth.

ces, or else they attach to some particular cases but not to this inter-science relationship as such. (*e.g.* it is secondary that the lower science says a fact obtains, and the higher says why, or that the object [of the lower] adds an extrinsic accidental difference [to that of the higher]. The latter may affect the difference as far as the object of the two sciences is concerned, while the former may affect it as far as the content of the starting points is concerned. This will be clarified further below.)

Thus the essential mark of any "scientific" (*i.e.* discursive) expertise properly so called is that it gets conclusions that can be seen to be true not in and of themselves but in and from another. Given this, five consequences follow. (1) Every scientific expertise gets to be scientific by virtue of its connexion with a higher proficiency. For it gets verification of its conclusions from that connexion alone; and as it says in *Posterior Analytics I*, "he who lacks a proof of what can be proved will not know scientifically." For proof is what makes for connexion — never mind whether in act or in potency. (2) For the same reason, a subordinate scientific expertise gets to be scientific by virtue of its connexion (actual or potential) with the relevant higher science. (3) Expertise in the higher science is the proficiency that deals of itself* with the proximate starting points of the subordinate science. (4) The higher science and its subordinate are not necessarily opposed as to their object, nor as to their subject-matter, but rather as to the status of their means of proof; for in a higher science, the means of proof connect immediately to starting points seen to be true in and of themselves, while in a subordinate science the means of proof connect to such starting points mediately, through the mediation of a specifically different science-proficiency. (5) A subordinate science and its higher one are compossible in the same knowing person, as they are not opposed in that regard.

c.2,
71b 28

* *per se*

From these one can deduce another consequence: (6) the proximate starting points of a subordinate science can be known with two different habits, namely, (a) the proficiency of the higher science, and (b) credence. If you paraphrase slightly the terms of (6), you get what Aquinas says explicitly in this article; I mean, if you replace 'credence' with 'belief in the starting points' and replace 'proficiency' with 'light' of the higher science. But the higher science is the proficiency that deals of itself with those starting points, because it is essentially by relation to it that the subordinate science is a science, while credence is a habit that touches those starting points *incidentally*,² because it bears on them because of a person in whom it is found, *e.g.* in an optics-expert who is not a geometry-expert.¹

† *per accidens*

² A mathematician expert in geometry might also be a talented painter, and he might have an interest in problems of perspective as a painter. This man would not need to take on faith the geometrical principles he was applying in his art. His case illustrates the point that credence is not a habit that workers in the subordinate field need to have; it is dispensable when they are also masters of the higher field. Just so, religious faith is dispensable in the case of a person who sees God (as every Christian will do in Heaven; this is why St. Paul says that faith and hope will cease, but not love). Cajetan's point, however, in saying that credence bears *per accidens* on the premisses which the subordinate field takes from the higher,

There is one more thing to notice here. In the first and essential mark of a subordinate science, two elements come together. The first is lack of verification in itself (joined with the fact that its verification is from and in another science); the second is the borrowed character (mediateness) of its proximate starting points, and this borrowed character is a reason it lacks verification in itself. Of these two elements, the first is the formal element and is absolutely required in every case; the second is just the material element. So if it were possible to have a case where science *A* lacked verification in itself and was verifiable from science *B*, but *A* was not borrowing anything from *B*, science *A* would still be subordinate to science *B*. For as already said, the essential and *per se* difference between a higher science and its subordinate is this dependency as to verification. From this it follows that a subordinate science, just as such, does not have to have as its starting points borrowed *explanatory reasons* [as opposed to borrowed facts]; it suffices that its starting points be propositions which are unproven in it but whose proof can be seen in the other science.³

is not just that faith is dispensable. He also means to point out that credence is never the reason why a subordinate field is a science, and that credence is never the reason why a point believed in the subordinate field counts as a point known *scientifically*. The higher science alone is the reason.

³ Cajetan's exposition of the subordination relation between sciences has enough merits to deserve a contemporary paraphrase. This is easily done as follows.

(1) Every science *S* produces arguments whose conclusions are the results (*R*) of *S*, and whose premises are either argued to in *S* or assumed in *S*. Setting aside the ones argued to (which are prior results), let the points assumed in *S* be the set *P*. The members of *P* are the ultimate premises of *S*.

(2) In each science, then, the truth of its results *R*, depends upon the truth of the *P*.

(3) In verifying an ultimate premise, *P_i*, there are only two possibilities. Either *P_i* is taken to be true on its own merits (which include the demerits of $\sim P_i$), or else *P_i* is a result argued to in another science from other propositions, *P_m*, . . . *P_n*.

(4) If all the ultimate premises *P_i* used in *S* are (taken to be) true on their own merits in *S*, then *S* is a higher science.

(5) Otherwise, *S* is subordinate to some other science *S'*. In short, *S* is subordinate to *S'* if, and only if, some point used as an ultimate premise in *S* is obtained as a result in *S'*.

Notice that nothing in this position depends on Aristotle's particular view of what goes on in a scientific argument. Nothing requires the production of scientific results to take a syllogistic form. It could be a rational process of conjecture and testing. So nothing requires an ultimate premise *P_i* in a higher science to be an analytical truth or an essence-statement, such as Aristotle wanted in an *apodeixis*. An ultimate premise could be an observation statement; in mathematics, it could be a freely postulated axiom. In a subordinate science, an ultimate premise *P_i* could come from a theory well confirmed in another science; it could be a technique for solving a certain class of equations; it could be testimony from an eye-witness.

On this view, it is no longer the case (as it may have been in the 13th century) that the "subaltern" sciences are just applied ones. Important relations among the theoretical sciences are now Thomistic subordination relations. Examples are molecular biology in relation to chemistry; chemistry in relation to physics; every hard empirical science in relation to mathematics; history in relation to a mastery of the primary sources.

Analysis of the article, II

iv. The modified conclusion is: sacred learning is a science subordinate to the knowledge which God and the blessed have. This is supported: [*major:*] an expertise acquired from starting points known to be true [not by itself but] by the light that God and the blessed have in their knowledge is a subordinate science to their knowledge; [*minor:*] sacred learning is such an expertise; ergo.

v. The corollary is: sacred learning believes the starting points revealed to it by God. This is supported by comparison with the case of a subordinate artisan: a musician takes on faith the principles lent to him by arithmetic. Ergo, etc.

Criticisms of the conclusion: group I

vi. In this article, notice that the answer reached has two parts: (1) that theology is a science. (2) that it is subordinate to God's knowledge.

Against the first part, multiple arguments are advanced by Durandus, Aureol, and Gregory of Rimini (you can see the citations in Capreolus*) based on the conditions for scientific knowing and proving set down in *Posterior Analytics I*¹ and in *Ethics VI*². To reject the claim that sacred doctrine is a science at all, these writers draw their arguments:

- from the **object** of science: science is about necessary states of affairs, while theology is about contingent ones, such as the Incarnation, predestination, future glory, etc.;

- from the **starting points** of science: science proceeds from self-evident starting points [while theology does not], and the proficiency dealing with the starting points of a science is a higher attainment than the one dealing with its conclusions [while in this case faith is not a higher attainment than theology];

- from the **certitude** of science: one who knows scientifically knows that he knows [while a theologian only believes that he knows], and a science is a cognitive attainment [while theology falls short of that]; and if you say the theologian knows that he knows *given* a condition, namely, if the articles of the faith are true, then (says Aureol) theology becomes a science of conditionals, not of conclusions, in which one knows the necessity of an implication, not the necessity of the point implied: in a word, theology becomes a knowledge of inferences, not things;

- from the **style** of science: whereas science is handed on in syllogistic discourse, sacred doctrine is not (says Scotus in remarks on *III Sent.* d.24); rather, in sacred learning, we assent to every point equally, and not to one point because of another. The claim that we assent equally is easily verified (says Scotus): there is an argument presented in 1 Corininthians 15, and there are arguments presented by the sacred doctors, but in them no greater certitude attaches to a proved point than to one used to prove it, nor do the points proved have any more certitude than the points that are not but are just asserted: in a science, things do not go like that;

- and lastly from the **subject** having a science: according to you Thomists, one cannot simultaneously believe and know scientifically, says Scotus in remarks on *III Sent.* d.24 and on *I Sent.* Prolog. q.3; therefore [since you believe, you do not know scientifically].

* On *I Sent.* Prolog., q.1.

† c 2, 71b 10

- 72b 5

‡ c 6, 114b 8

§ 30 - 1141 a 8

Criticisms of the conclusion: group II

vii. Against the second part of our answer (that sacred learning is subordinate to God's knowledge) many arguments are advanced on two fronts: (1) attacking our account of the difference between our theology and that of God or the blessed, and (2) saying that the distinction between them, whatever it is, is not a distinction that meets the conditions for one to be a science subordinate to the other.

On the first front, Scotus attacks with two punches in remarks on *I Sent. Prolog.* q.3. [Subordination requires two sciences] he says, but [*premise:*] scientific knowledge of God must be unique, and hence [*inference:*] there is no subordination. The premise is sound, he says, because to have distinct sciences of the same God, there must be different formal bases* for knowing Him, but there is only one formal basis for knowing God, and that is the divine nature. [Therefore, God's theology and ours are not distinct sciences.] With the other punch, he says it is impossible for there to be a higher and a subordinate science of just the same truths, because where the one science leaves off, the other begins: but God's theology and ours are about exactly the same truths; ergo. The two punches are delivered in a different form by Aureol: the subject matter of the subordinate science adds something to the subject matter of the higher: but the subject matter of our theology adds nothing to that of God or the blessed; ergo.

On the second front, Scotus again delivers two punches (on *I Sent. Prolog.*, q.3; on *III Sent.* d.24). With the one he says that a subordinate science depends upon the higher as its cause; but our theology does not depend in that way on the science of the blessed; ergo. He supports his minor as follows: a "cause" of our science would have to be its object, or the potency in which it resides [the intellect], or the subject who has it [the knower], or its light. The science of the blessed is none of these [so it is not the cause of our science]. With the other punch, he says a subordinate science and its higher science are compossible in the same person: but God's theology and ours are not compossible; ergo. To prove this minor, he says: if they were compossible, the same knower would be at once enjoying the Beatific Vision and not enjoying it [which is contradictory; hence they are not compossible].

Finally, Durandus argues against this second part of our answer. According to him, a higher science says why something is the case, and the lower science says that it is the case. Well, the knowledge possessed by the saints does not relate in this way to our theology. Ergo. To prove his minor, he says that theological matters do not have a cause why*; or if they do, we and the saints say the same. *E.g.*, why Christ became incarnate was "for our salvation," etc.

How to answer the critics

viii. To clear up this muddle, please realize two[†] things. (1) "Our theology" can be considered either *in its nature* or *as it exists in us pilgrims*.[‡] If it is considered in its nature,

[†] "In its nature" our theology is human propositional discourse about God. Because the saints in glory do not lose their power of discourse, a theology which is propositional in its nature exists in them as well. Hence what is "in its nature" our theology has two

there is no doubt whatever that it is a science subordinate, for purposes of verification, to what the blessed know, since it gets what it takes to be called "knowing" from its connection to what they know, and it proceeds from starting points which show their truth only in the light which the blessed enjoy. And none, or hardly any, of the arguments just given goes against this. The first group of arguments [section vi] suggest that our theology *in us* is not a science, while the second group [section vii] suggest that our theology is not a subordinate science in the whole sense; they don't show that it is not one in a limited sense. — Rather, when theology is considered as it exists in us in our pilgrim state, then it is that all these objections emerge, and the difficulties they point out become real. And there are those who think that theology so taken, even in the eyes of St. Thomas, was not science (except in some equivocal sense), as he himself seems to say in another place,[§] and who think that theology so taken is not subordinate in any but a restricted sense, limited to verification. And if one were to take this line, the resolution of this question would be easy.

ix. But I think that St. Thomas is to be interpreted rather differently, especially on the latter point. [The former I let pass:] for as to whether our theology is, or is not, science, as it exists in us as pilgrims, frankly, either thing can be said, if it is rightly understood. You can say, "It is not a science," since it does not have *all* that it takes to be a science, because one who cannot trace his conclusions back to evidently true premisses does not really "know." And you can say, "It is an imperfect science," thanks to our present state; for an imperfect science is not entirely beyond the pale of science. And this is the side on which the present article is coming down. Aquinas, so as not to be misunderstood in a climate where it was very much debated whether theology was a science, answered with a 'yes but', attaching the 'but' so that his complete answer would have this limiting condition and not be taken without it. He did not argue here that sacred learning is science, but that it is *subordinate* science, so that his description of this qualifier would show the imperfection that theology has in our present life.

x. But as to the other point, the one about subordination, it seems to me that the article means to assert "subordinate science" in the full sense. This is what he had distinguished from the other kind of science before reaching his conclusion. And as we saw above,^{*} subordination with respect to verification is subordination as it arises from the defining trait of science. So, I think we should hold that our theology, considered in its nature, is scientific knowing in the true sense and subordinate in the full sense, and that this theology considered in us as pilgrims is scientific in a partial sense but subordinate in the full sense.

modes of existence, one in us (still pilgrims in this life) and one in them. Certain propositions about God cannot be seen to be true in any form of propositional knowing; but the realities which the propositions are about are seen in the Vision which the saints enjoy. Thus a saint who has the Vision knows God in a trans-human way but also knows humanly that the propositions just mentioned are true. So, our theology has a better mode of existence in the saints, where it coexists with the Blessed theology of Vision and its starting points enjoy a seen truth (which flows down to every sound conclusion), and a poorer mode of existence in us, where sight is forestalled by darkness, and we walk by faith.

* rationes
formales

‡ In *III Sent.*
d.33, q.1,
a.2, qu⁴.

* § III

† the second
is in § XI

Now, dear beginner, when you get into a debate [with a Scotist], be careful not to slip up by thinking

'our theology in its nature'

means the same as

'theology in its nature'.

For these are very, very different. "Theology in its nature" means the Self-knowledge to which the divine nature naturally gives rise; so this is the "theology" that God has about Himself. The other term, "our theology", is ambiguous. If by 'us' you mean everybody who has human nature, you are including people in Heaven, and then "our theology" has to be distinguished into our theology as the blessed have it and our theology as the rest of us have it as pilgrims. But if by 'us' you mean only the people who are pilgrims, you do not need to make that distinction (and such is the situation here, in the context of this article). But you do need to realize that this "our theology" can still be taken in the two ways mentioned above, namely, (1) according to its nature, and (2) as it exists in us as pilgrims. You see *this* distinction at work here in the body of the article. For where Aquinas draws his corollary [that sacred learning *believes* the starting points], he is obviously talking about our theology as it exists in us pilgrims, since *believing* these things is our rôle as pilgrims. But where he is reaching his main answer [that the sacred learning *is* a subordinate science], he is talking about our theology according to its nature; for the key trait that it has as such a science (that it arises from starting points which are known to be true by the light of a higher science) is a trait that belongs to "our theology" according to its nature [and so is verified in both its modes of existence].

xi. (2) The other thing one needs to realize, to clear up this muddle, is that when any property we can have is transferred and predicated of God, it is understood to be transferred with any and all imperfections removed. When "science" is predicated of God, we mean that His knowing has what it takes to be evidently verified and certain, without the imperfection that is involved in discursive reasoning [having to go from one idea to another]. So, when we say that His knowing is the higher science to which our learning is subordinate, we do not mean that God in His knowing proves the starting points of our doctrine by a discursive reasoning; we just mean that His knowing has what it takes to provide the evident verification of those starting points and the wherewithal to see them in other points. Thus the subordination relation does not require that the starting points of our theology be *deduced propositions* in the Blessed theology of Vision. It suffices that they be evidently true propositions in that theology. To take a parallel: if geometry existed without discursive reasoning, it would still have what it takes to verify optical principles, though it would do so in a different way, and it would still be the higher science to which optics is subordinate. So, since our theological conclusions come from revealed articles as from starting points not obvious in themselves but verified in what God and the blessed know, it follows:

(a) that our theology has in its nature the essential trait that makes a science subordinate, and

(b) that thanks to its connexion with what God and the blessed know, our theology counts in its nature as scientific

knowledge, and

(c) that the proficiency that bears of *itself* * upon the starting points of our theology is God's own knowledge, while faith is a proficiency that bears upon them *incidentally*, and

(d) that our theology in its nature does not conflict with the higher science which the blessed have either in its object or in its subject-matter but differs from it only as what has its verification in itself differs from what does not, and so

(e) the two are compossible in the same subject.

Furthermore, one cannot talk about subordinate science and faith as though they were the same. For, intrinsically, the divine light without restriction is what it takes for our claims about God to be science, while (just as intrinsically) that light restricted, *shining in darkness*, is what is required for our claims to be assents of faith. As said above, faith is the habit bearing upon theology's starting points incidentally [*i.e.* just because those points happen to be entertained by us, as pilgrims]. This is why, in Heaven, faith will not remain the habit bearing upon those starting points, and yet the knowledge gained from them will remain. As St. Jerome said, "Let us learn on earth the things whose knowledge will remain with us in Heaven," etc.

* *per se*

Letter 53 to Paulinus, PL 22, 549

Point-by-point replies: group I

xii. I am now ready to go back over the first group of arguments advanced against us, answering them one by one, so that beginners can see how it is done.

• (1) against the argument from the *object* of science: the Incarnation and other such mysteries are contingent in themselves but not in their status; in that respect they are predetermined by God and known by Him as such. The mysteries become topics of our theology precisely in their status as known by God [and so revealed]; so, as topics of our science, these mysteries are not contingent but settled or necessary in status.⁵

• (2) against the arguments from the *starting points* of science: it has already been explained that our theology departs from points which *are* self-evidently true, but mediately so, and this suffices, as Aristotle concedes in *Topics I*. "demonstration is from self-evident premisses or from those that gain credence from the self-evident." — Also, the proficiency which deals of *itself* with the starting points of our theology *is* a higher attainment [namely, the knowledge which God and the blessed have], so it does not matter what you say about faith, the habit that deals with them incidentally. In one respect, though, faith *is* higher than our theological science: in the firmness of its adherence to those points, even in the absence of seeing their truth.

c. 1,
100 a 28-30

⁵ Things that could once have been otherwise are called "contingent in themselves" or in their nature; things that can still go one way or another are called "contingent in status"; things that could once have been otherwise but are now settled and predictable are called "necessary in status," even if they are contingent in themselves; and things which are intrinsically such that they could never have been otherwise are called "necessary in themselves" or in their nature (and are automatically necessary in status). When Aristotle said science is interested in things that could not be otherwise, he did not only mean things that could never have been otherwise; he also meant things that have become predictable because causes adequate to produce them have fallen into place. Thus, science ex-

• (3) against the argument from the *certitude* of science: a theologian knows that he knows — not conditionally, but *subordinately*; and this is not just a matter of knowing implications but involves knowing the points implied. A theologian knows them from premisses, and those premisses are plainly true in the higher science. From the fact that they are not plainly true to us, the only conclusion that follows is that our knowing is incomplete unless it is connected to the higher science. Well, we not only concede that point: we teach it. — On the related matter, we say that a subordinate expertise, insofar as it is *not* connected to its higher expertise, is not a cognitive attainment but a *beginning* of a cognitive attainment, and so it is at least oriented toward the kind of virtue that “*scientia*” is.⁶

• (4) against Scotus’s argument from the style of science: I deny his entire assumption. In Scripture, the germs of probative arguments are communicated; and from the practice of figuring things out from the articles of faith, a proficiency is generated which is other than faith itself. It is just not true that we assent to every point “equally,” if that means “in the same way.” For when we assent to the articles, we do it *on account of no other point*; but when we assent to what we have figured out (which is all that this science is about), we do it *on account of the articles*. As to the claim that we assent equally to points proved and merely asserted, I answer with the following thought-experiment. Suppose God did not leave us anything to figure out but simply asserted all theological points as to-be-believed. In that scenario, our proficiency in speaking of God would not be a science-in-act in us but would coincide completely with our faith-in-act, and we would assent to every point not only “equally” but in the same way. Yet, even so, our proficiency at speaking of God would still have the mark of science in its nature, because the points we would be believing *but could otherwise have figured out* have what it takes objectively to be figured out. Now, in actuality, God has put only the articles before us as simply to-be-believed, and the rest is left to be figured out, and therefore we do not assent in the same way to the starting points and the results. Nor do

tends to things necessary in status. Cajetan’s answer is saying that the objects of science need be no more than necessary in status, and that God’s decrees and foreknowledge suffice to give this status to theology’s objects. It is worth mentioning that a view of science restricting the “scientifically knowable” to things so necessary in themselves that they could never have been otherwise precludes all science of the material universe as posited by Christianity or by contemporary physics.

⁶ One can now see that the concept of a science as a proficiency or virtue was an amalgam of two elements: (1) a trained ability to reason (which is still part of our science concept) and (2) a “cognitive” attainment, an expertise *based on the known* and thus in no danger of being wrong. This element has turned out to be more an ideal than a reality. Today’s theories in the sciences are vulnerable to falsification. Even mathematicians have starting points (such as the axiom of choice in set theory) which are short of being “self-evident” or “certainly true.” So, the condition (lack of evidence that one is proceeding from the “known”) which Cajetan saw as making “our theology as it exists in us pilgrims” an *imperfect* science and a mere *start* towards a cognitive attainment — that today is the condition of every hard science.

we assent “equally” to proven and unproven results, and this is why so much diversity of opinion is tolerated in the sacred learning on the unproven points.⁷ Thus, in the actual situation, our proficiency at speaking of God is an expertise at figuring things out — a science proficiency — not only in its nature but also as it exists in us (where it is still imperfect science).

• (5) against the argument, finally, from the subject having a science: it has become obvious already that we do not posit anyone’s at once believing-that-*p* and knowing-scientifically-that-*p* for any proposition *p*. The believing has to do with the articles, and the scientific knowing applies to the results proved.

Point-by-point replies: group II

xiii. Next we revisit the arguments that tried to impugn the other part of St. Thomas’ conclusion, that sacred learning is subordinate science to God’s. [On the first front, to block the first punch,] I grant that there can be only one science-about-God fully commensurate [*adaequata*] with His knowable reality, but there can be more than one science less than commensurate with that reality, and such is our theology. — An alternative answer that goes deeper but comes to the same result would be as follows. Scotus’ premise [that scientific knowledge of God must be formally unique] is false in the sweeping way that he states it. To secure the uniqueness of a science, its object must have both a single formal basis which it exhibits *as a thing* and a single formal basis on which it is known *as an object*, as we shall see in the next article. But in the present case, although God’s self-knowledge and our theology have the same thing as their subject matter, God, and He has a single formal basis which He exhibits as a thing, namely, deity, He has different formal bases on which He is known as an object. For God’s being-clearly-seen is the basis on which He is a known object to Himself and to the blessed, while His being-revealed [in propositions] is the basis on which He is a known object to our theology — which is true of our theology independently of whether it exists in us as pilgrims or exists in us in Heaven, if you allow for the difference of darkly revealed vs. clearly revealed.

To block the second punch, our theology and that of the blessed are not about just the same truths, as is abundantly clear in the case of the truths which are (for us) articles of faith; the theology of the blessed gets them as results, and ours does not.

And that should make it clear how to answer Aureol’s form of argument. One can grant that the subject matter of our theology adds *in a way* to the subject matter of the Blessed theology by taking as “the subject matter of our theology” the whole aggregate of subject matter as thing and as known object. For then the subject matter is “God revealed in propositions,” and it is clear enough that being

⁷ The key difference between proven results and unproven ones is introduced here but not explained. I call it “key,” because a science without unproven results would be a science without conjectures, without hypotheses, without theories — in a word, without any life left in it. See q.32, a.4.

revealed adds an accidental difference. If someone insists that the subject matter of a subordinate science must make an addition to the subject-matter-as-thing of the higher, then I deny that his claim is universally true. It is only true in some cases. And nothing to the contrary is said in *Posterior Analytics I*. What is taught there is that one science does not descend into another unless the subject matter of the latter comes under the subject matter of the former, either flatly or *in a given way*. This we concede: we say that the Blessed science descends into ours because the subject-matter-as-thing (God) is exactly the same in both, while the subject-matter-as-object of ours (God revealed) comes under the subject-matter-as-object of theirs (God seen).

Now onto the second front and the rest of the objections. First, our theology depends upon that of the blessed as upon a light, and both theologies are possible in the same person. It does not follow that this person would at once have the Beatific Vision and lack it. It follows that he would have the Vision *and* have the knowledge which he acquired in this life. But he would have the latter in a new way: he would no longer be laboring through deductions and (more crucially) he would have his human knowing

perfected by its being connected with the Blessed knowing.

Lastly, against Durandus, I deny that theological conclusions (never mind for the moment the starting points) have no *why* [no *propter quid*] to explain them. And if we and the Blessed give the same reason *why*, we still do not give it the same way. They give it as evident to them, and we give it as inevident to us, unscen. Now, if someone says that the very starting points of our theology have to have a *reason why* in the higher knowledge, he has already been answered: this is not necessary; it suffices that the starting points of the subordinate science be unverified in it, while being verified in the higher science.* I am talking at this point about a *reason-why* in the strict sense of the term: for every purely theological proposition has a “reason-why” in some sense of the term.⁵

* above, § iii.

⁵ In the strict sense, the reason-why of a fact is the cause stated in the explanation showing why it is the case and could not be otherwise. Not every datum of the faith admits of such an explanation, even in the divine Mind, because many revealed facts are products of divine free choice. Such a choice has no reason-why in the strict, causally determining sense: it has only a reason-why in a lesser sense — e.g. an appropriateness (a reason why the option was choice-worthy).

Is sacred learning a single science?

In *I Sent. Prolog.*, aa.2, 4

It would seem that sacred learning is not a single expertise but many.

c.28;
87a 38
*genus
(1) In *Posterior Analytics I*, Aristotle says that a single science has subject matter of a single kind. Well, creator and creature are not contained in any common kind*, and yet sacred learning deals with both. Ergo this learning is not a single science.

(2) Furthermore, in sacred learning one studies angels, creatures with bodies, and human morals. On the [natural or] philosophical level, things as different as these belong to different sciences. So [they must belong to different sciences on the sacred level, and thus] sacred learning is not one science but many.

ON THE OTHER HAND, Scripture speaks of this learning as if it were one science. For example, in Wisdom 10:10 it says that wisdom gave him "the knowledge" of the holy things.
† Vg. *scientia*

ANSWER: the sacred learning is a single expertise. After all, the test for whether a power or expertise is *one* is that its objects are of one kind — not of one material kind, but of one "form" which is the basis for being an object² of that power or expertise. For example, a man, an ass, and a rock [though different in material kind] are the same in the "form" which is being colored, which is the basis on which they are objects of the power of sight. So, since sacred writing deals with things on the basis that they are divinely revealed, as said above, all points whatsoever that are knowable-by-divine-revelation belong to a single "formal kind," which is the sole basis for being an ob-

‡ ratio
formalis
objecti

a.1 ad 2

ject of this science. Hence, they are all included under the sacred learning as under a single expertise.

TO MEET THE OBJECTIONS — *ad* (1): sacred learning does not handle God and creatures in the same way. It deals first and foremost with God; it handles creatures only insofar as they are revealed to be related to God (as to their source or end). Hence its unity as a science is not impeded [by the failure of God and creatures to belong to a common kind].

cf. 1 S⁷ q. 3, a.5

ad (2): nothing prevents a case from arising where [a] lower-level powers or proficiencies split apart as they handle different objects, and yet [b] those objects all fall under a single higher-level power or proficiency. For the higher power or expertise reaches its object on a basis that is more general. For example, the object of the internal *sensus communis* is the perceptible-in-general, and this includes both the visible and the audible.¹ In this way, the *sensus communis*, although it is a single sense-power, extends to all the objects of the five external senses. In a similar way, sacred learning, though one science, can consider on one basis (*i.e.* as knowable-by-divine-revelation) things treated in multiple natural sciences. Indeed, by doing so, sacred learning is an imprint of God's own knowing, which is one and simple and yet reaches all things.

¹ Aristotle listed four internal senses in *De Anima III*, c.2. The function of this one, the "common sense," was to combine the data of the external senses into a composite of what was being perceived by them. 426 b 12

Cajetan's Commentary

In the title, pay attention to both subject and predicate. Here 'sacred learning' stands for theological expertise as a whole, while the predicate 'single' stands for oneness-in-kind — indeed, oneness in a fully specific kind [not just in some generic kind]. And note that what we are asking here is whether this learning is *one kind of expertise*, not whether it is a single, simple quality in the knower. And never mind what kind of "oneness" a single expertise usually has (whether it has the kind that comes from simplicity or the kind that comes from order). For what each of us may think about these issues has no bearing whatever on the matter at hand. What matters and suffices at present is to discuss whether theology is one very specific kind of knowing, or is not so specific, but is divisible into many. Mathematics is divided up into geometry, arithmetic, etc. Should theology be divided up also, into multiple sciences — e.g. into theology of God, Christology, moral theology, etc.?

Analysis of the article

ii. In the body of the article, one conclusion is reached, answering the question of singleness in the affirmative: sacred learning is a single science. — This is supported

as follows: [*premise:*] oneness is assigned to a power or an expertise in case there is just one formal basis on which any item is its object; [*inference:*] therefore the sacred learning is one, single science. Accepting the premise as correct is illustrated by the power of sight and the formal basis on which anything is its object. — Drawing the inference is supported thus: all matters treated in sacred learning have in common a single formal basis for being objects-of-this-science, namely, the light of divine revelation. Ergo [it is a single science].

Objects: Their kinds and bases

iii. To clarify the reason given here for this answer, observe that there are actually two "kinds" on whose basis an item gets to be an object of a given science, *S*. One is its relevant kind as a *thing* [henceforward, its *T-kind*], and the other is its kind as an *object* [henceforward, its *O-kind*]. Sometimes the former is called the formal basis which [*ratio formalis quae*] an object of *S* exhibits, and the latter is sometimes called the formal basis on which, or light under which [*ratio formalis sub qua*] an object of *S* is reached [by a knower who

has acquired the science, S].¹

The object's relevant kind as a thing (or *T*-basis which it exhibits) is the aspect of the thing

- which provides the immediate terminus for an act of knowing in *S*, and
- from which flow the relevant traits of the thing as subject-matter for *S*, and
- which therefore serves as middle term [means of proof] in the basic deductions of *S*.

In this way, *being a being* is the *T*-basis which the objects of metaphysics exhibit; *being so-much or so-many* is what the objects of mathematics exhibit, and *being subject to change* is what objects studied in physics exhibit.

By contrast, the object's kind as an object [or *O*-basis on which *S* reaches it] is one or another removal from matter, one or another way of abstracting and defining. For example, the basis on which metaphysics reaches its objects is abstraction from all matter; the basis on which mathematics reaches them is abstraction from all but intelligible matter; in physics, the basis is abstraction from only *this perceptible matter vs. that*.²

¹ A *ratio formalis objecti* was mentioned by Aquinas in the text, and Cajetan is now subdividing into the *ratio formalis quae* (which I shall call a *T*-basis) and the *ratio formalis sub qua* (which I'll call an *O*-basis). To understand the subdividing, it helps to realize that '*ratio formalis objecti*' was shorthand for '*a form which is the reason a thing is an object*'. It is easy to see that this expression could mean a form in the thing (had independently of minds or senses, but thanks to which the thing was ready to be an object of some knowing or sensing — in short, a *T*-basis for knowing) or could mean a form of *apprehending* (under which the thing was reached and so became an object reached-this-way — an *O*-basis for knowing).

² The purpose of any science is to achieve true explanations. There is no explaining an individual thing or fact just in its pure individuality, because explaining something requires bringing it under a general law. If the law depends on the kind of matter involved in the explanandum, e.g. its chemistry, then the explanation abstracts from *this* batch of the chemicals vs. *that*, but not from empirical matter of *this kind*. Aristotle thought this was the situation in every science of nature (physics) because such science explains change, and how things get to be, pass away, etc., depends upon their material composition. One moves into a different kind of science, however, if the explanatory law under which the thing or fact is being brought depends only on some quantified aspect of the explanandum. For then the explanation abstracts from empirical matter in all its kinds, retaining only certain intelligible traits which, in the real, depend on matter, such as numerical distinctness of one item from another, comparability in quantity, shape or structure in space. Such traits were called intelligible matter. Aristotle thought this was the situation throughout mathematics. One moves into yet another science, if the law under which the individual is brought has nothing to do with matter or quantity. For then the law must be appealing to nothing more than the sheer requirements of being-something (being anything), and the explanation is metaphysical.

It was an important point for Aquinas that every human science proceeds by abstracting from matter in one of these ways. Hence only metaphysics left room for a being which precluded matter already in its extra-mental reality. Such a being would preclude all physical potentiality for change or measurement. It might even be Pure Act. But beyond arguing for the existence of such a being and making a few (analogical) deductions about how it must be, *qua* a being, metaphysics could say nothing. For what an immaterial being is (other than just a being) cannot be reached by abstraction from matter and so is not a possible object of human science. Rather, any topic such as the inner na-

iv. This distinction, its nature, and the need for it, arise from the fact that there are two distinct classes into which an object of any science must be put. After all, in order for a thing *x* to be an object of a science *S*, *x* must be such-and-such a thing [*T*] knowable in such-and-such a way [*O*]. And so *x* has to have both what it takes to be constituted in such-and-such *real being* [*T*] and what it takes to be constituted in such-and-such a way of *being knowable* [*O*]. In this way, *x* will be located both in a class of things [the *T*-things] and in a class of knowables [the *O*-objects].

In much the same way, the objects of a sense-power are doubly classified. They exhibit an affective quality in the real, and they fall under a way of being knowable-by-sense. And again the specific forms of "affective quality" make one list, while the specific ways of being knowable-by-sense make another. The forms of the quality are color, sound, odor, etc., while the ways of being knowable-by-sense are visible, audible, smellible. A quality from the first list goes into the makeup of the *things* which are objects, but an entry from the second list puts nothing in those things. The qualities from the first list establish subject matters, while the entries from the second list mark their ways of affecting perceivers. Or so one gathers from *De Anima II*, where the proposition 'color is visible' is said to be true *per se* in the second sense of '*per se*'.³

c 7;
418a 27-33

Continuing the parallel between senses and sciences: just as the division by which we distinguish and number the senses is not just any division of perceptible quality (but only the one which *per se* divides it as perceptible (that is, the one which gets at the proper specific differences within the genus "perceptible," namely, the differences in impact on a sense-power) — and this is the division that yields the familiar five senses because sensation is divided as the perceptible *qua* perceptible is divided — so also, the object of a science is at once in a class of beings and in a class of knowables-by-explanation,* and each class has its own division into a list of species. The proper differences listed under "being" are ones that constitute beings in real kinds (as "being through itself" constitutes a thing as a substance, and "being in another" constitutes it as an accident, etc.); but the proper differences listed under "explainable" put nothing in beings. So the kinds of being on the first list establish subject matters, while the ways of being-knowable on the second list

* *speculabilia*

ture of such a being (e. g. deity), with its designs, choices, etc., would have to be explained on a revealed basis. This is why Cajetan left room below (in § 8) for a fourth way of being (besides just being-at-all, being quantifiable, and being changeable), namely, being divine, and left room for a fourth way of being explainable (besides by abstraction from all matter, from all but intelligible matter, and from particular matter), i.e., by the divine light.

³ A proposition was true *per se* in the second sense of '*per se*' when the subject was involved in the definition of the predicate. An example was 'a line is curved or straight', because there is no way to define 'curved' or 'straight' without mentioning lines. So the claim in *De Anima II* was that there is no way to define 'visible' without mentioning color. If that is true, then a thing must be in the *T*-kind "colored" in order to be in the *O*-kind "visible", and if that is true, any object of sight must be doubly classified, as Cajetan is saying.

mark their ways of affecting knowers; for how a being is knowable-by-explanation is a way we can be affected.* Hence the next question: which division of “being” also marks off the different scientific proficiencies? The answer is the one that makes a proper division of the explainable as explainable — and this is the one that splits into ways of being removed from matter, according to

c.1: 1026a 7-16
Metaphysics V I. For as a result of this division, the *T*-basis “being” is first-off divided into *being-something-at-all*, *being so much or so many*, *being subject to change*, and *being divine*. From this division flows the other, the division of the *O*-basis — knowable-by-explanation — into *explainable by the metaphysical light* (in terms lighted by abstraction from all matter), *explainable by the mathematical light* (in terms lighted by removal from perceptible matter yet shaded by intelligible matter), *explainable by the physical light* (in terms shaded by perceptible matter but lit by removal from individuating conditions), and *explainable by the divine light* (in terms blazing with the divine light, which lays things open to theological knowing).

v. An object of a science has, then, two forms on whose basis it is an object: one that enters into what it is as a thing, and a second that (absolutely speaking) only puts a name on it but which (relative to a knower) enters into what it is as a knowable and thus enters into what it is as a kind of object; for being-knowable is a way of being-an-object.⁴ And that is why I distinguished above between the kinds on whose basis *x* is an object-of-*S*: kind as a thing and kind as an object.

Now, since the senses are divided by how the perceptible as *such* breaks down into kinds, and in like fashion the sciences are divided by how the knowable-by-explanation as *such* breaks down into kinds, it follows that one kind of science will have to be found as one kind of sense is found, and many kinds of science [as many kinds of sense, namely:] where several kinds of the explainable-as-explainable are found. And if you add to this the further fact that the different kinds of the explainable-as-such are identically the “kinds” of the knowable object as an object [*O*-kinds], the necessary consequence is that a determination of whether we are dealing with one kind of science or many follows upon a determination of whether we are dealing with one kind of object-as-object or many — *i.e.* one *O*-basis or many. This is what Aquinas is saying in the body of the article: he draws the reason theology is one science from the fact that the formal basis on which it reaches its objects is one, namely, by the light of divine revelation (so that, in other words, those objects are all of one formal kind as objects, *i.e.*, the knowable-by-revelation kind). For all things are said to be considered in theology insofar as they are knowable by divine revelation.[†] Thus, the force and meaning of the reason given in the article become plain.

† *divinitus reuelabilis*

⁴ The scholastics maintained a firm distinction (lost now in English) between things and objects, *res* and *objecta*. Cajetan has just said why. *X* is already a “thing” in its own makeup independently of perceivers, but it is an object *in relation to a power of perceiving, knowing, etc.* That island is already a thing; but in relation to the power of sight, it becomes visible as verdant (a kind of object); in relation to a mathematical mind, it becomes a closed curve or area (another kind of object).

Three doubts

vi. But once the reason is fully clarified, three doubts arise about it. One concerns the reason itself [whether it is coherently argued]. A second concerns its premise [whether it is really the case that a power or expertise is tested for oneness by whether its objects are of one kind]. The third concerns a proposition assumed in getting to the conclusion [whether it is really the case that all the things considered in the sacred learning are of one formal kind.] These doubts will have to be dispelled, one by one, in the order given.

The first doubt

The first doubt is whether the reason Aquinas gives in the article does not fall into an equivocation. For in the major premise [that a proficiency is single in case its objects are of one kind], he means the kind which they exhibit as things [their *T*-kind]; this is clear from his appeal to the case of sight, where he takes color as the formal basis for a thing’s being visible, and obviously color is the formal basis which it exhibits as a thing. But in the minor premise [that the objects of sacred learning are of one kind], he is talking about the kind based on how the object is reached as an object [the *O*-kind], since he pulls in the premise that knowability-by-revelation is the formal basis for anything’s being an object of theology. So, he obviously commits an equivocation, trying to infer one *O*-kind from a premise that required one *T*-kind.

vii. I ANSWER by denying the claim about the major premise. The major uses ‘kind’ to refer indiscriminately to the one that the object exhibits as a thing or the one under which it is reached as an object. But the one it exhibits as a thing is appealed to (a) because it is a better-known example, and (b) because these two formal bases are equivalent; they imply each other, as a subject-matter and a way to affect us, as mentioned above [in § *iv*]. So he could pass without equivocation to the formal basis on which the object is reached as an object, its knowability-by-divine-revelation*.

* *reuelabilibus*

And of course, Aquinas did right to pass over to the formal basis on which [the *O*-basis]. For one thing, the other basis (the *T*-basis which an object of theology exhibits as a thing) had not been assigned yet; it was to come up for discussion below, in article 7. For another thing, this *T*-basis does not imply a fully specific *O*-basis on which the object is reached as an object, and hence does not imply a fully specific kind of science, as we shall see in just a moment. Hence sticking to the *T*-basis would not have served the author’s purpose.

viii. But with this answer of mine, as a way of dispelling the first doubt, a major DIFFICULTY ARISES. If it is correct that the *T*-basis and the *O*-basis are [in this case] equivalent to each other, as a subject matter and a way of affecting knowers, as my answer maintains (and I said before), then it follows that our theology and that of the blessed come together in having the same *O*-basis, and then it follows that *they are one science* in fully specific kind.

But in that case, the whole claim of the previous article — that our theology is a subordinate science to theirs — falls to the ground, as Scotus was arguing in

cf. commentary
on a.2, § vii

that connection: one and the same science cannot be subordinate to itself. — Drawing this consequence is supported as follows. These two theologies agree in the form which their object exhibits, since the divine nature [*deitas*] is the *T*-basis for both. So, the *O*-basis is the same for both. Why? Because the two bases imply each other; they are equivalent as subject-matter and its way to affect us, as said. For things that agree in forming one subject matter must agree in one way to affect knowers, since a way to affect knowers is inseparable from a subject-matter.

ix. To MEET THIS DIFFICULTY, I should say that this proposition,

The *T*-basis and the *O*-basis are equivalent, is perfectly true [in this case] if correctly understood, that is, as talking about an *O*-basis which is fully commensurate* with the knowable reality which is the *T*-basis. But matters are quite otherwise with an *O*-basis that is less than commensurate with that reality, in the case where a *T*-basis happens to have such an inadequate way-to-be-known. For the inadequate *O*-basis is not equivalent to the *T*-basis; it implies the *T*-basis but is not necessarily implied by it. Such is the situation in the case at hand. To the divine nature there corresponds but one commensurate *O*-basis, and it is the divine light. But “divine light” is not specifically one, only generically so. It is divided into

* *adaequata*

- *evident* divine light,
- *revelatory* divine light (abstracting from evidently or invidently so), and
- *inevident* divine light.

The first of these is the *O*-basis in the Blessed theology; the second is the *O*-basis in ours; the third is the *O*-basis of faith. Thus diverse *O*-bases are compatible with one and the same *T*-basis. As a result, specifically diverse proficiencies are compatible with the same *T*-basis. So, although the divine nature is equivalent to the generic *O*-basis, it is not equivalent to any of its species. Deity does not determinately imply any of them but is implied by each of them. Hence for any science, *S*, this is valid:

If God is object of *S* on the *T*-basis of deity, then
God is object of *S* on the *O*-basis of divine light,

and so is its converse,

If God is object of *S* on the *O*-basis of divine light,
then God is object of *S* on the *T*-basis of deity.

But the following is not valid:

If God is the object of *S* on the *T*-basis of deity, then
God is the object of *S* on the *O*-basis of evident
divine light.

Nor is this:

If God is the object of *S* on the *T*-basis of deity, then
God is the object of *S* on the *O*-basis of revelation.

x. To understand this answer deeply, you should realize that when two formal bases are named together in this way and are equivalent as subject-matter and its way to affect knowers, it is very often the case that they are not equal in their level of specificity (as they would be if, when one was fully specific, the other was too, and if one was generic, so was the other; not so in many cases). Look at an object of metaphysics: its *T*-basis, “being-something,” does not even have generic unity; yet its *O*-

basis of explainability “by abstraction from both empirical and intelligible matter,” is fully specific. The same appears in geometry and arithmetic, whose subject-matters are *T*-wise generic but *O*-wise fully specific. You get the opposite situation when the *T*-basis is fully specific but the *O*-basis is generic, as happens in the present case with deity and the divine light. If you think about it, it is quite right for the object of theology to show an opposite imbalance from the objects of the other sciences just named. For the object of theology, on its *T*-basis, is infinite. It stands to reason that an infinite kind of Thing would exceed any definite species of the *O*-kind, while equaling the whole genus of such kinds.

xi. Something more may also be said. One may say that an *O*-kind is assigned in two ways: either by looking to the object itself (which yields one equivalent to the *T*-kind), or by looking at our defective power to know (and this yields one that is not equivalent, implying the *T*-kind and not implied by it). The latter type of assignment would be in play here. Deity and the divine light are equivalent, but deity and the divine-light-so-seen [defectively, revealing darkly] are not equivalent. The light [defectively seen] implies [the *T*-basis] deity, but the converse does not hold. Even so, it would have been licit to infer the light of revelation from a premise requiring the *T*-kind, because in the former the latter is implicit [he means: implicit in divine light revelatory to us (by revealed propositions) is what we are (defectively) able to see by it: deity].

The second doubt

xii. Concerning the premise [that a power or an expertise is single in case its objects are of one kind formally speaking], there is doubt about this whole business of counting an expertise (or power) as one or more-than-one on the basis of its object. But that is a very broad topic, indeed. To do it justice, one would have to make a separate question out of it. For present purposes, let it be enough to say that the premise in question comes from *De Anima II*, where powers are said to be classified as different from one another by their acts [so that one kind of act, such as seeing, means one power, such as that of sight, and another kind of act, such as hearing, means a different power], and acts are said to be classified as different from one another by their objects [such that one kind of object, such as visible things, means one kind of act, and another kind of object, such as audible things, means a different kind of act]. The relevance of this to the matter at hand is that one makes the same judgment about proficiencies as about acts in this regard.⁵

c.4,
415a 14-22

The third doubt

xiii. Concerning a premise assumed in reaching the conclusion, namely, that all the things considered in the sacred learning are of one kind, formally speaking, *i.e.* things-knowable-by-divine-revelation, two hesita-

⁵ The reason for this is that a proficiency or expertise lies between the basic power (in this case, the intellect) and its acts. A science proficiency is a training of the intellect to perform some class of its acts better

tions arise: one about the premise in itself, and one about the use of it to infer that theology has specific unity [as one kind of science].

q 3, m.2 • Against the premise itself. Albert the Great argued in book I of his *Summa*. Knowability by revelation posits nothing, he said, in the thing revealed; ergo it is not formally what it takes for anything to be an object of the sacred learning. He holds this conclusion on the ground that what it takes to be an object should posit something in the object for which it *is* what it takes.

In I Sent.,
Prolog.,
q 3, a.3

Later on, Aureol argued against it. The divine light stands to theology, he said, as the agent intellect stands to acquired sciences; therefore, it is [the efficient cause of our knowing it,] not the *O*-basis for things to be theology's objects. — Also, he said, God stands to us as a Teacher: therefore His revelation is not the formal basis on which things are theology's objects [but rather the efficient cause of our knowing].

• Against the use of it to infer theology's unity as a science. Aureol argued as follows. If God were to reveal both philosophy and geometry, that would not make them one science. So, whether *S* is one science simply does not follow from the oneness of being revealed.

xiv. For more light on how TO ANSWER THESE OBJECTIONS, beyond what has already been said, you should know that the divine light of revelation can be looked at in two relations to a science. In one relation, it can be looked at as the infuser *vis-à-vis* the infused, or as an efficient cause stands to its effect. In that regard, it is not giving unity to a science, since it can infuse all sciences, however diverse. Or it can be looked at in another relation, as the basis or manner of the object to be known, the basis on which (or manner in which) the thing revealed is reached by the knower. In this way, it does give unity to a science. Although both relations occur together in this case, they don't always have to occur together. If God did reveal geometry to me, revelation would not thereby

become the basis *on which* my geometrical knowing reached its object; in that regard, I would know geometrical items on just the same basis as other geometricians do [*i.e.* as provable or explainable by abstraction from all but "intelligible" matter]. [I would just know them on this basis suddenly and miraculously!] But in the sacred learning both these relations turn up. This expertise is (a) not possessed without infused gifts, and (b) the things known in it are all reached and assented to insofar as they are under the divine light as their way of being knowable. So, in this article, the oneness of theology is inferred from the oneness of the divine light not as an infuser but as the *O*-basis, as explained above.

xv. With that background, how to answer the objections is very easy to see. Albert's argument equivocates on 'what it takes to be an object [of the science, *S*]', seizing on the form which the object exhibits as a thing, and excluding the basis on which *S* reaches it as an object.

Aureol's first argument falls short because the divine light doesn't only relate to theology as the agent intellect [relates to acquired sciences] but also as the formal basis on which theology's subject-matter is reached as an object.

His second argument fails in the same way: the Teacher's light is not just infusion in this case but the formal basis on which the item infused is reached as an object. By the way, it is false that multiple sciences could be taught by one teacher [formally as such].

As to Aureol's last argument, its invalidity is already clear: a divine light infusing both physics and mathematics would not concurrently relate to them as the basis [the kind of explainability] on which their objects are known, but would relate to them only as the infuser, *etc.*

article 4

Is the sacred learning a practical science?

In *I Sent. Prolog.*, a.3, q^m 1

It would seem that the sacred learning is a practical expertise rather than a theoretical one.

* *operatio*
c 1;
993b 20f (1) "The purpose of practical knowing is doing.*"
says Aristotle in *Metaphysics II*. Well, the sacred learning is ordered to doing, as it says in James 1:22, "Be ye doers of the word, and not hearers only." So, the sacred learning is a practical expertise.

(2) Furthermore, the field of sacred learning is divided into the old Law [of Moses] and the new Law [of Christ]. But law belongs to the study of morals, which is a practical science. Therefore, the sacred learning is a practical expertise.

† *operabilia* ON THE OTHER HAND, every practical expertise is about things people can do¹, as ethics is about human actions, and architecture is about our doings in building things. But the sacred learning is first and foremost about God, and we are rather His doing. So it is not a practical expertise but a theoretical one.

ANSWER: sacred learning, while remaining a single expertise, extends to matters belonging to what are different disciplines on the philosophical level, as was said above, thanks to the one formal basis on which it reaches the different matters, *i.e.*, as they are knowable by the divine light. So, while some sciences are theoretical and others practical on the philosophical level, the sacred learning still covers both just as God, by one and the same knowing, knows Himself and knows what to do.

Even so, it is more theoretical than practical. It deals more primarily with divine things than with human actions. It deals with man's doings just insofar as, through them, man lives for the sake of knowing I mean the perfect knowing of God in which our eternal happiness is delivered to us.¹

How to answer the objections should now be clear.

¹ Theology covers human actions just insofar as they relate to reaching the end we have been divinely called to reach (a.1).

Cajetan's Commentary

In the title, note what the terms 'theoretical science' and 'practical science' mean. An expertise is called theoretical when its distinctive purpose is just to know; practical, when its distinctive purpose is to do, whether the doing be a desire or an execution. So Aristotle says in *Ethics II*: "we take up this sort of discourse not to be knowers but to be doers," *etc.*

c 2;
1103b 26-30

Analysis of the Article, I

ii In the body of the article, there are two conclusions. The first is: theology is neither merely practical nor merely theoretical, but higher, comprehending in itself on a higher level* both what it takes to be practical and what it takes to be theoretical.

* *eminentius*

iii. Before looking at how this conclusion is supported, just to get clear the sense of it, one must know that *practical* and *theoretical* do not mark an essential difference between sciences, nor are they traits that follow from an essential difference at the first division within science-in-general just as sight and hearing are not differences at the first division within sense-power-in-general. Rather, just as "sense-power" is divided first into *common* and *proper*, and then "proper" sense power is divided into sight, hearing, *etc.*, so also knowledge or "science" is divided first into *limitless* and *limited*, and then "limited science" is divided into theoretical and practical. The reason is that when a science's objects exhibit a single *finite T*-basis, it cannot have both what it takes to yield a

rule of action and what it takes to be just a feature knowable in itself, such that no rule of action can be gotten from it. Rather, these two conditions must be met in *two finite T*-bases, as is clear from experience. But if the *T*-basis exhibited by any knowable object is infinite, then already by its infinity it meets and comprehends both conditions within itself, in a higher way than they are met in finite objects. For traits dispersed in lower beings preexist unitedly in a higher being. Hence, just as there is a sense-power of a higher order, above the proper senses, being neither sight nor hearing, *etc.*, so also, beyond the theoretical and practical sciences, there is a science of a higher order, neither theoretical nor practical only, but containing both in a higher way*. This is the sense in which the conclusion here is meant. This is why the text of the article says that although among natural disciplines, the theoretical ones and the practical ones are different (that is, theoretical and practical make for otherness, which is substantial difference), nevertheless the sacred learning, while remaining a single expertise, comprehends both, as a science of a higher order.¹

* *eminentius*

¹ The sacred learning changes people's hearts by the theoretical knowledge it gives them. It is a transforming, life-changing knowledge. One renders this crucial point unintelligible if one over-absolutizes the split between theoretical and practical. If one over-absolutizes, one faces an ugly choice when confronting the question of what is ultimately most important for a human being to know a choice between gnosticism (opting for the theoretical) and moralism.

Analysis of the article, II

iv. The conclusion is supported in the text as follows. [*Premise:*] Sacred learning, while remaining but one expertise, extends to matters that pertain to the theoretical and the practical sciences; [*consequent:*] so it is higher, comprehending both under itself. The premise is supported by the previous article. The sacred learning looks at one common basis on which to know both things open to theory and things open to practice, namely, the basis that they are knowable by divine revelation; ergo. — Inferring the consequent is supported on the ground that such a science is like that of God; He in one and the same “science” knows Himself and His works; ergo [so do we in our one theology].

v. At this point, to get the text clear, you need to take into account three factors.

- The *first* has to do with how he supports inferring his conclusion (given that the premise is supported). Observe that the support he gives is optimal, rising from a causally prior point, not a mere common-place comparison. Our theology is nothing less than an imprint and stamp of God’s knowing, since both are about God in His inner character as God, and our knowledge is derived from His, under a true (though poor) share of the light proper to His. As a result, the unity of our theology is the unity of God’s knowing; and the high perspective of His knowing, whereby it covers both kinds of truths, confers a high perspective on our theology. Hence the ‘just as’ [where he says, “just as God, by one and the same knowing,” etc.] is put into the text on a probative basis. What it expresses is not a mere similarity but the *assimilation* of a true copy to its proper exemplar.

- The *second* factor to take into account is how the means of proof are arranged at this point. The reasoning goes like this. The sacred learning covers both fields, theoretical and practical, *because* it extends to all objects while remaining a single science. And it manages to do this *because* it considers all objects on a single formal basis. And this in turn it manages to do *because* it is an imitation of the single Knowing by which God knows Himself and everything else, etc.

- The *third* factor has to do with the consequence that “while some sciences are theoretical and others practical on the philosophical level, nevertheless the sacred learning covers both.” Another argument can be brought forward to prove this. It relies on the fact that if *A* is the reason for *B*, then *not-A* will be the reason for *not-B*, and conversely, as it says in *Posterior Analytics I*. Well, we have from the antecedent in the article that there is oneness of formal basis in theology, while there is diversity of formal bases in the natural sciences. It is known that the diversity of formal bases causes the natural sciences to divide into theoretical and practical. It follows that the non-diversity (or unity) of formal basis in theology will cause it to be [non-divided, hence] one expertise containing the theoretical and the practical together.

Analysis of the article, III

vi. The second conclusion is: theology is more theoretical than practical. — This is supported on two grounds.

The first is this: theology deals more primarily with the things of God than with human actions; ergo [it deals more primarily with theoretical topics]. The second is: the reason theology deals with human actions is [that they be done] in order to really know God; ergo [its main purpose as a science is to know, and so its main type is theoretical]. This premise is supported: because eternal happiness is delivered in really knowing [God].

Defending this interpretation

vii. On the whole text as thus expounded, two things* need mentioning. The *first* is that my interpretation of St. Thomas’s first conclusion [§ *iii*] is not made up out of whole cloth, nor is it new. It is hinted in the text, as anyone will see who thinks through what it *means* to say that theology “while remaining a single expertise, extends,” etc., and who ponders the fact that Aquinas is talking about singleness-in-kind, which (we know) makes a thing *one per se*. He is obviously excluding the crude interpretation of those who think theology covers the theoretical and the practical by just lumping them together. In that case, it would be one by mere aggregation; it would not proceed on one formal basis but two; properly speaking, it would not “cover” both, as the text says, but would be composed of both. What would be the point, then, of his appeal to the oneness of God’s knowing?

To get all such fantasy out of their heads, these interpreters should look at what the same St. Thomas writes below, in 2/2 *ST* q.45, a.3, in his answer *ad* (1). There he says explicitly that infused wisdom is of a higher order than the theoretical and the practical, and he gives the same reason he uses here: [it has a higher basis, and] the higher the basis, the more things it extends to, while remaining one. He offers another argument as well: this [transcending the difference between theoretical and practical] goes with its high standing. Well, since theology has the highest standing of all the sciences, as we are about to learn [in the next article], and has a single, common formal basis for all practical and theoretical objects, and is of a higher, divine order, you have to be rolled up in darkness to interpret this to mean that theology covers both on any other basis than as a science of a higher order. — The same result is clear from the end of the previous article [a.3, *ad* 2], where this learning is explicitly said to stand to the other sciences as the *sensus communis* stands to the proper senses, and that the differences in *their* objects do not introduce a difference into it. Why not? Because it is *of a higher order*. Again, this interpretation is supported by both the reasons advanced in the text: (1) because theology has one formal basis which is higher, and (2) because theology is an imitation of God’s knowing, *i.e.*, because it is an imprint and stamp of that Knowing, which is a single, simple — not merely aggregate — Knowing of all things.

viii. The comparative statement made in the second conclusion [theology is more theoretical than practical] poses no obstacle. For what is “in a higher way” [*eminenter*] both ϕ and ψ is form-wise* ϕ and form-wise* ψ . Thus, the sun is “in a higher way” heat-producing and drying, and yet is form-wise* both. God “in a higher way” is under-

* the second is in § 14

c.13;
78b 19-22

* *formaliter*

standing, willing, and carrying out what He wills, and yet He is form-wise all three.² By the comparative statement, he just means that 'theoretical science' comes closer to the nature of theology than 'practical science' does. Similarly, if we were to say that the *sensus communis* has more of the nature of vision than of hearing, we would just mean that the conditions of sight and *sensus communis* are more alike than are the conditions of hearing and *sensus communis*. Nothing more is meant in the present case. — No obstacle is posed, either, by the fact that St. Thomas says elsewhere that the sacred learning is without qualification [*simpliciter*] theoretical and in a qualified way [*secundum quid*] practical. The reason he says this is that 'theoretical' describes what realizes the whole character of science, while 'practical' describes a less complete realization, and so the conditions of theo-

² The translator apologizes to the reader for 'form-wise', a neologism to which he resorts only because he is reserving 'formally' for a different use. 'Form-wise' describes how a thing has a trait, and it means 'in or thanks to its form'. The alternatives to being ϕ *formaliter* were being ϕ *virtualiter* (in or thanks to its power) or being ϕ *metaphorice* (in or by a figure of speech). On the first alternative, the thing would have what it takes to cause ϕ -ness in lower things but would not be ϕ in itself. On the second alternative, the thing would offer some basis for being called ϕ figuratively but would not be ϕ literally. When Aquinas argues later in the *Summa* that certain terms like 'intelligent' and 'being' apply substance-wise to God and not just *relative* (1 *ST* q.13, a.2), he is ruling out the first alternative, and when he argues that those same terms apply to God "literally" (1 *ST* q.13, a.3), he is ruling out the second. At that point, he claims that the traits signified by these terms are really present in God but *secundum eminentiorem modum quam in creaturis*. Shortly thereafter (1 *ST* q.13, a.4) he says these traits preexist in God *unitè et simpliciter* but are received in creatures *divisè et multipliciter*. These texts provided the basis on which Cajetan said above that traits "dispersed in lower beings preexist unitedly in a higher being" and the basis on which he says here that what is *eminenter* ϕ is *formaliter* ϕ .

This concept of *eminentia* is important to Thomism; it alone explains how radically different things can both be ϕ *formaliter* and yet only analogously so. *Eminentia* is also interesting in its own right. It deserves to be rescued from the scientifically obsolete examples with which it was illustrated in Patristic and Scholastic texts. We no longer think of the heavenly bodies as made of higher stuff than the earthly elements, so the idea that the sun stands "eminently" to what produces heat and dryness on earth (fire) will have to be amended or replaced. To replace it, one can point out that what is going on at the heart of the sun is nuclear fusion, a process which is physically "of another order" from the chemical reactions releasing heat on earth, yet has some of the same effects. To replace the example, one might switch to the cosmological idea that all the fundamental forces of physics were once a single, more "eminent" force, so that what was once united and simple exists today *divisè et multipliciter*. (A physicist will find it odd, however, to think of the primordial universe as having a "higher mode of being.")

retical science befit an expertise as outstanding as theology better than the conditions of practical science do. Hence, he says theology is theoretical "*simpliciter*," that is, without qualification, because it is formally theoretical and yet is so in a higher way. He says theology is practical "*secundum quid*," and not unqualifiedly, so as not to give the impression that theology is [in its nature] imperfectly a science, as the ones that are unqualifiedly called practical are.

Also, it is quite irrelevant whether proficiency in theology or in any science is said to be one on account of the simplicity of a quality [in the knower] or on account of a unity of order among concepts*. Either way, the order or quality has to be of a higher grade than the order or quality that makes a science only theoretical or only practical.

* *species intelligibiles*

ix. The *second* thing to mention about this whole article is that, quite clearly, from the position maintained in it [certain inferences are blocked:] neither from the fact that the conditions of a theoretical science are met by theology, nor from the fact that the conditions of a practical science are met by it, can one infer "therefore theology is theoretical," or "therefore theology is practical," *in the sense in which either is contrasted with the other*. Rather, you may infer "therefore theology is theoretical or has in a higher way what it takes to be theoretical." Likewise, you may infer, "therefore it is practical or has in a higher way what it takes to be practical." Likewise, you may infer, "therefore theology is affective or has in a higher way what it takes to be affective." Hence Scotus' arguments in his remarks on the *Prologue* [to *I Sent.*], q.4 — arguments which he draws from the definition of practical science and from the object of this science (namely, that it yields principles regulating praxis, and the like) — do not support the conclusion that theology is practical. Rather, if they are worth anything, they support the conclusion that it is (as I said), either practical or has in a higher way what it takes to be practical. — You, then, who are engaged in disputations [with Scotists], use this answer, and apply to such traits as 'derives a rule of action' or 'theorizes' the distinction between *exclusively* and *not exclusively*.³ For a science which is exclusively either, is *just* practical or else *just* theoretical [not both], while a science which is either, but not exclusively so, is something higher [than both], as is clear from what has been said already

† *praevisè*

³ 'Exclusively' renders '*praevisè*' better than 'precisely' in Thomist school-writing. In his *De Ente et Essentia*, Aquinas developed a theory of abstraction in which he distinguished the normal kind of abstraction from the special kind which is exclusive abstraction (designated with '*praeviscendere*' and '*praevisio*'). In the special kind, one abstracts an aspect of a thing and cuts away (excludes) all other aspects of it. Thus, abstracting *praevisè* from Socrates' complexion yields just paleness (rather than a pale man or pale skin).

Is the sacred learning of higher standing than the other sciences?

Cf. 2I ST q.66, a.5 ad 3; In I Sent. Prolog., a.1; 2 CG c.4

* *dignior* Sacred learning does not seem to be of higher standing* than the other sciences, but lower.

† *certitudo* (1) After all, warrant¹ enhances the standing of a science. The sciences whose starting points are indubitable seem to be better warranted than the sacred learning, whose starting points (the articles of faith) are subject to doubt. Those sciences seem, then, to be of higher standing.

(2) Furthermore, the hallmark of a lower science is to receive from a higher, as music theory receives from arithmetic. But the sacred learning receives something, at least, from the philosophical disciplines. As Jerome said in the letter to a great Roman orator, the church Fathers have "so loaded their books with the teachings and opinions of the philosophers that you hardly know which to admire more, their secular learning or their command of the Scriptures." In short, the sacred learning is subordinate in standing to the other sciences.

Ep. 70:
Pl. 22, 688

ON THE OTHER HAND, there is the fact that the other sciences are called servants of this one in Proverbs 9:3, "she hath sent her maids to invite to the tower."

I ANSWER: since this science is theoretical in one regard and practical in another, it transcends all others of both kinds. To begin with the theoretical sciences: one of them is called higher in standing than another (a) on account of its warrant, and (b) on account of the loftiness of its subject matter. On both counts, this science outstrips the other theoretical sciences:

- as to warrant, because the others have theirs from the natural light of human reason, which can get things wrong, while this science has its warrant from the light of divine Knowing, which cannot be led into error;
- as to lofty subject matter, because this science is mainly about things so high as to transcend human reason, while the other sciences consider only things that lie subject to our reason.

Moving now to the practical sciences: among them, one is higher than another in case it is about securing a more ultimate purpose or goal. In this way, political

science is higher than military science, because the good of the army is for the good of the nation. Well, insofar as the sacred learning is practical, it is about securing the goal of eternal happiness — and all the other purposes secured by the practical sciences are for the sake of this, as the most ultimate purpose of all.

It is clear, therefore, that in every way the sacred learning is of higher standing than the others.

TO MEET THE OBJECTIONS — *ad* (1): nothing prevents a science very warranted* in its nature from being less warranted to us, because of the weakness of our understanding, "baffled by the most evident things, like a bat's eye by sunshine," as Aristotle says in *Metaphysics II*. The reason there is doubt in some minds over the articles of faith is not because the reality is uncertain but because human intelligence is weak. Yet even when our grasp of very high things is slight, it is still more desirable than the most certain knowledge of trivialities, as Aristotle also says (in *De partibus animalium*).

* *certius*

c 1;
993 b 10

Book I, c 5,
644 b 31

ad (2): this science can take contributions from the philosophical disciplines not because it absolutely needs them, but just to clarify the topics it teaches. Sacred learning does not take its *starting points* from the other sciences; these it takes immediately from God by revelation. Hence sacred learning does not take points from the other sciences as a subordinate science would take them from higher ones; rather, it uses the others as inferiors and servants, as architecture uses the building trades, and as political science uses military skill.

Also, the reason sacred learning uses them is not a defect or inadequacy in itself, but in man's intellectual capacity. The human mind is more easily led to grasp the supra-rational things taught in this science, when it is led to them from a prior grasp of the knowns of natural reason, whence the other sciences proceed.

¹ Any translation of '*certitudo*', said to be a property of a science and also a property of things or facts, will be problematic in English. The reason for choosing 'warrant' will be stated in a footnote on the commentary.

Cajetan's Commentary

The title is clear. — In the body of the article, a two-edged conclusion answers the question in the affirmative: insofar as it is theoretical, sacred learning is of higher standing than the other theoretical sciences; and insofar as it is practical, it is higher than the other practical ones.

ii. Before looking at how the conclusion is supported, pay attention to why the two specifiers, 'insofar as it is

theoretical' and 'insofar as it is practical', have been put into it. This was not done idly. As the previous article said, this learning has two features: (1) it is an expertise of a higher order than the natural sciences, and (2) it meets formally the conditions of a theoretical science and those of a practical one. Thanks to (1), it is undoubtedly of higher standing than the others, since it is posited to be of higher order. But as to (2), doubts can arise [as to whe-

ther it is higher in each of the said respects]. This is why, although the title question was asked in general terms, the answer went into more specific comparisons that could be in doubt, and the answer was that, *qua* theoretical, it was higher in standing than the theoretical sciences, and *qua* practical, higher than the practical ones — skipping the perfectly clear point that, on a general footing, it is the highest in standing of all, since it belongs to a higher order.

Analysis of the support, I

iii. First, then, he supports the conclusion as to its first part (the theoretical edge). [Major:] Among theoretical sciences one is higher than another because of warrant and height of subject matter. These tests are taken from Aristotle's *De Anima I*. [Minor:] Theology passes both tests. Ergo. The minor is supported as to the first test thus: this science is warranted by the infallible divine light; the others, by the fallible human light; ergo this one has more warrant. But this means "more warrant" in itself, not to us, as comes out in the answer *ad* (1).¹ — As to the second test: this is a science of objects that lie beyond human reason; the others are of objects subject to our reason; ergo this one is about objects of higher standing.

This reasoning about higher objects is also based on the saying in *Metaphysics II* about the eye of the bat "baffled by sunshine." The point is that objects going beyond our intellectual power are in themselves the most lucid and evident knowables. Take intellectual substances for example: proper definitions of them, hidden to us because of their preeminence, are of higher standing than the mere descriptions of them that we can reach by abstraction from sense objects in metaphysics, etc. So, since this science is about such preeminent objects, it is about objects of higher standing — *objects*, I say: *accounts* of things, not things themselves (because there is no *thing* of higher standing than God).

Analysis of the support, II

iv. Then the second part of the conclusion (the practical edge) is supported. [Major:] Of practical sciences, that one is higher whose concern is not ordered to a more ultimate end [but whose concern is itself the more ultimate end]; [minor:] but the end with which this science is concerned is the ultimate purpose of the ends with which all the others are concerned; ergo [this science is higher]. Here the major is supported by the case of political science and military science. The minor is supported by the fact that the end whose attainment is the concern of this science is eternal happiness.

¹ Medieval use stretched '*certitudo*' to cover not only certitude but also warrant and scientific knowability. A reality might be scientifically knowable to ideal knowers but not to us. A proposition *p* might square nicely with such a reality, and yet our warrant for believing *p* might be slight (or zero), because the evidence for *p* might be largely (or wholly) inaccessible to us. Revelation from an ideal knower, of course, would raise the warrant for believing.

Clarifying the practical edge

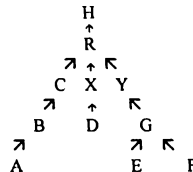
v. Here one should note that the major premise is not meant so sweepingly as it sounds, but is meant to cover *comparable* practical sciences* [i.e. those whose ends lie on the same chain of ends]. Where the practical sciences deal with ends on different chains, it is not true that one is higher than another in case it deals with the more ultimate end [on its chain]. E.g., attending to a low task in an art of higher rank, like the goldsmith's art, is of higher standing than attending to the top task in an art of lower rank, like making clay pots. But among practical sciences that are comparable, there is no doubt that the major premise is true.

* *de practiis subordinatis*

Consequently, in the body of the article, the minor premise does not claim that the end which theology is concerned to secure (*our* eternal happiness) is the most ultimate end whatsoever [God's glory is that]. It claims, rather, just two things: (1) each of the other [human] practical sciences is comparable to theology (by saying that the end secured by each such science is ordered to the end secured by theology), and (2) the end secured by theology is the ultimate one [on each common chain]. So taken, the reasoning is perfect, and false accusations are excluded.²

vi. But here one must bear in mind two ways of dividing the general idea of "end" [purpose]. One way divides them into (a) the purpose which is the point of a doing (or of a work done) and (b) the purpose which is the end intended by the doer. This distinction matters here because eternal happiness is not a purpose intended by every doer. Many people act against it by turning

² As this passage shows, Cajetan realizes that "order" does not automatically mean linear order. He presents the set of ends pursued in human life as only partially ordered. The ordering relation is *for the sake of*: if A is for the sake of B, and B is for the sake of C, then A, B, and C form a chain segment within the set, on which C is ultimate. Aquinas believed that there is a single end H, our complete fulfillment, for the sake of which every other human end is pursuit-worthy; but nothing prevents two lesser ends, X and Y, from lying on different chains, so that neither is for the sake of the other. Thus:



But Cajetan's acknowledgment of this comes up in a context which requires him to complicate the picture with a further point. There can be another ordering relation, such as *more noble than*, under which whole chains of ends are comparable to each other as to rank. Then it might be the case that the chain army's good → country's good → ... → human fulfillment involved in the art of state-craft is more noble than the chain smelting → jewelry-making → ... → human fulfillment involved in a fine art, which in turn might be of higher nobility than

digging → pottery-making → ... → human fulfillment.

away from virtue, even while acting quite well by the norms of their trade or art. Rather, eternal happiness is the point of every point-of-doing and of every work done, because every work and doing [that has a point] is for the sake of the good of reason [the good of living in accord with reason], and the good of reason in turn is for the sake of eternal happiness.³

The other way of dividing the general idea of purpose, which you should bear in mind, is into (a') intrinsic purpose [attained in the exercise of an act] and (b') extrinsic [attained through the exercise of the act]. You should realize that the happiness which is the ultimate purpose, the Vision of God, is the extrinsic purpose of theology in its practical aspect; its intrinsic purpose in this aspect is doing [that we should be doers of the word and not hearers only, etc.]. But this point does not invalidate the reasoning put forward in the body of the article. Granted, the argument is talking about ends of the practical sciences that happen to be intrinsic, but the argument is based on [the fact that they are] proximate ends, whether extrinsic or intrinsic. For it makes no difference to the standing of a practical science whether the end that dignifies it is furnished *in its exercise* or through it, so long as that end is proximate. Well, such is the case here. As St. Thomas said in a.4, theology deals with our doings insofar as, through them, we are living for the contemplation of God. The other practical sciences teach us to act for this end remotely [*via* teach-

³ Cajetan has given two divisions of the senses of 'end'. The first is between sense (a), what gives an undertaking its point, whether intended or not, and (b) what an agent intends to achieve. In a Christian life, knowledge of God must be one's end in the (b) sense. But wisely, Cajetan begins with sense (a). Thomist tradition acknowledges that one can be a good citizen (jeweler, potter, etc.) without being a Christian, i.e. without thinking of one's political or professional efforts as means to the knowledge of God. But it did not follow that politics or the professions were themselves secular affairs, having no more ultimate purpose than earthly happiness. This conclusion, drawn by the so-called Enlightenment, was denied in the tradition on the ground which Cajetan presents here: the very life of reason (which serves as the point of every effort to know, to apply what one knows politically or professionally, and to live according to what one knows morally) has a point or purpose beyond itself. This purpose is the total fulfillment of rational existence as such, which is to know (in a life-changing way) the ultimate reason for everything. This final secret is hidden in the first and deepest cause of everything, which we call God. So when God reveals that the secret is to be learned in seeing Him face to face, supernaturally, His disclosure cannot be irrelevant to any reasonable human project. It affects the point of them all. This is why, in any human life, coming to know God should be an end in sense (b). And in any life informed by revelation, the face-to-face Vision has to become a consciously chosen, intended end.

ing us to act in accordance with reason in some department]. — Also, the fact that theology has the same proximate end in its practical aspect as it has in its theoretical aspect (though in a different way, extrinsically) is true of this science because it is *in a qualified way* practical; for if it were purely practical, contemplation would be its remote end.⁴

On the answer *ad* (2)

vii. The answer to the second objection uses two distinctions. (1) Science A can take from science B in two ways: as from a superior, or as from an inferior. (2) It can take as from an inferior in two ways: to remedy a defect or inadequacy in itself, or to remedy a defect in something else, e.g. (as here) in our understanding.⁵

⁴ Here the point is that we do not first keep the Commandments and *then* get to know God as a reward. This moralistic understanding of Christianity would make knowledge of God the *remote* end of our theology in its practical aspect. Rather, since sacred theology is (in a higher way) both theoretical and practical, we are "doing theology" not only when we think and reason but also when we love and serve. We *know* God through being "doers of the word." We have a foretaste of the eternal knowing and happiness not just in our heads as doctrine but in our lives as experience.

⁵ If science B borrows from science A only for illustrative/clarificatory purposes, science B does not become subordinate to science A, says Aquinas in his answer to this objection. We have already been told that if science B borrows any of its starting points from science A, it does become subordinate. But what about intermediate points? Cajetan did not feel it necessary to explain further at this point how the two sorts of borrowing differ. Perhaps he thought the difference was obvious from what he had said before. Alas, it is not. He had said that B is subordinate to A when, and only when, the *truth* of B's results depends on the *truth* of a proposition established by A, not B. But now, let B be sacred theology, and let A be (not what God knows, but) what philosophy holds. A wide-spread notion of "theological conclusions" holds that they arise from conjunction of two (kinds of) premises, one revealed and one established by reason, usually the philosophy used by the Scholastics. If Cajetan ever heard of this notion, he must have thought it wrong. It would make the truth of theological reasonings depend on the truth of propositions established in metaphysics. Theology would then be, by Cajetan's own account, a science subordinate to philosophy. He must have thought it obvious, therefore, that St. Thomas' own Aristotelian borrowings do not appear as *explanatory principles* in his theological proofs or explanations (for if they appeared in that capacity, the truth of the latter would certainly depend on them). One should consider seriously, then, the possibility that when Cajetan fought for a metaphysical point in this commentary, he was not fighting for some indispensable premise but, usually, for a point which, rightly understood, made a good illustration. The clarity of the theological discourse was at stake, not its truth. Is the metaphysics *optional*, then? No, we shall hear, because clarification is crucial to defense. Use of philosophical points in theology's defense comes out below in a.8.

Does this learning count as wisdom?

In I Sent. Prolog., a.3, qu*1 & 3; In II Sent. Prolog.; 2 CG c.4

It would seem that the sacred learning does not give one wisdom.

(1) Any learning that gets its starting points from another [and so is subordinated to it] is not worthy of the name 'wisdom'. Why not? Because "what a wise man does with his wisdom is subordinate* other things to it, not it to them," as it says in *Metaphysics I*. But this learning takes its starting points from another, as emerged above [a.2]. So it is not wisdom.

* ordinare
c.2;
982a 18

(2) Furthermore, one uses wisdom to prove or test the starting points of the other disciplines claiming to be "sciences," and this is why wisdom is spoken of as the topmost of the sciences, as one sees in *Ethics VI*. Well, the sacred learning does not prove or test the starting points of the other sciences, and so it is not wisdom.

c.7;
1141a 16

(3) Also, the sacred learning is acquired by study. But wisdom is infused by God and hence is numbered with the seven gifts of the Holy Spirit, as one can see in Isaiah 11:2. So this learning is not wisdom.

ON THE OTHER HAND, there is Deuteronomy 4:6, where the Law is introduced with these words of preface: "This is our wisdom and understanding before the peoples."

ANSWER: this learning makes one wise to the highest degree, compared to all the human wisdoms, not just in some one field but across the board.

For what a wise man does is put things in order by his wisdom and judge things soundly; but sound judgment on things comes from looking at their deeper cause or more ultimate purpose. Hence in each field, the master who considers the deepest cause in that field, or the most ultimate purpose at which it aims, is called "wise." In the construction field, for example, the one who designs the house is called the architect and the wise man, compared to the lower workers who hew timbers or shape stones. So, in I Corinthians 3:10, St. Paul says, "As a wise architect, I laid the foundation . . ." Again, in the broader field of human life as a whole, the prudent man is called wise, inasmuch as he subordinates human actions to a due purpose. This is why Proverbs 10:23 says, "Wisdom is prudence in a man." So then: he who looks at the deepest cause and most ultimate purpose of everything, across the board — which is God — is called wise to the highest degree. This is why wisdom is called "knowledge of divine things," as one can see from Augustine in *De Tri-*

nitate XII.

But does the sacred learning attain knowledge of God in His capacity as the deepest cause and most ultimate end? Yes, and most distinctively so, because the information it has covers God not only as He is knowable through creatures (which is how the philosophers know Him, according to Romans 1:19, "that which is known of God is manifest in them") but also as He is known by Himself alone and communicates to others by revelation. Thus, the sacred learning is called wisdom to the highest degree.

TO MEET THE OBJECTIONS — *ad* (1): sacred learning does not get its starting points from any human science but from God's knowing, the highest wisdom of all, to which all our knowledge is subordinate.

ad (2): the starting points of the other sciences are either (a) evident in themselves and cannot be proved or (b) are proved in some other science by some natural reasoning. But what is unique to this learning is a knowing that comes through revelation and not through natural reason. Therefore, its rôle is not to test or prove the starting points of the other sciences but rather to judge their results. For anything found in the other sciences that conflicts with the truth of this science is condemned definitively as false. This is why 2 Corinthians 10:4-5 speaks of "pulling down fortifications, destroying counsels and every height that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God."

ad (3): since what the wise man does with his wisdom is judge soundly, 'wisdom' is taken in two ways, in line with the two ways of judging soundly. In one way, a person may judge well thanks to an affinity or inclination, as one who has a habit of virtue judges correctly how to act out of virtue (which is why it says in *Ethics X* that the virtuous man is the rule and standard of human actions). In the other way, a person may judge well thanks to his learning, as one who is schooled in ethics may be able to discuss the acts of a given virtue even if he does not have that virtue. So, here, the first way of judging well about divine things comes from the wisdom mentioned as a gift of the Holy Spirit in I Corinthians 2:15 ("The spiritual man judgeth all things") and in *De divinis nominibus* (where Denis says that Hierotheus "was taught not only by learning about divine things but by suffering them"). The other way of judging well comes from the sacred learning under discussion here, since it is gained by study (though its starting points are gained from revelation).

c.14;
Pl.42, 1009

c.5,
1176a 17

PG 3, 648

Cajetan's Commentary

In the title, 'wisdom' means a knowledge that equips one to judge other matters soundly and put them in their proper place. This is what the epithet 'wise' commonly indicates in daily life, as it says in *Ethics*

c 7:
1141b 10
17.

Analysis of the article, I

ii. In the body of the article, one conclusion answers the question with yes: the sacred learning is wisdom to the highest degree compared to all the human wisdoms, not just in a limited field but across the board. Notice here that the phrase 'across the board' applies to *human* wisdom, just as 'in a limited field' does. So the sense is that the sacred learning is wisdom to the highest degree whether you compare it to a wisdom that is specific to a given field, or whether you compare it to a human wisdom that is general and not field-specific.

iii. This is supported as follows. [*Premise:*] The sacred learning reaches knowledge of God most distinctively in His rôle as the deepest and most ultimate cause. [*Inference:*] Therefore the sacred learning is wisdom to the highest degree, etc. The premise is supported: sacred doctrine reaches knowledge of God [in this rôle] not only as He can be known from creatures but also as He is known by nature to Himself alone. Ergo it [reaches knowledge of Him] most distinctively, etc.

On this premise

iv. Concerning this premise and the ground supporting it, bear in mind that the things of God which are naturally hidden to us are the very things which are most distinctive of Him: unique to Him in His knowing and unique to Him in His being. This is why a science that reaches knowledge of God in matters naturally known to God alone is a science that is drawn from the things distinctive of God and is rightly said to reach knowledge of God "most distinctively." And since it is these distinctive traits in God that provide the first and deepest reason for His causality, this science is said "most distinctively" to reach knowledge of God as *He is the deepest cause*.

Nevertheless, be careful here. This word 'as' in the modifying phrase, 'as He is the deepest cause', can be interpreted in two ways.

- In one, the 'as' would be fixing the formal basis which God exhibits as the subject matter of this science [its *T*-basis];

and so taken, the modifying phrase as a whole would make the premise false. As we shall see in the next article, God is its subject matter "as God" and not "as the deepest cause."

- In the other, the 'as' fixes a special aspect of God that follows from His being God and so falls within the scope of what sacred learning considers.

So taken, the phrase makes the premise true. For the

text of the article means to say that the sacred learning considers God "most distinctively" as He is God and hence is the deepest cause also, which is the aspect especially relevant to wisdom.

Analysis, II

v. Next the inference is supported. [*Assumption:*] Sound judgment about things comes from [looking at] their deeper cause or more ultimate purpose; so [*1st inference:*] he who considers the deepest cause or most ultimate purpose in any field is the wise man in that field. [*2nd inference:*] Therefore he who considers the cause or purpose which is across the board the deepest or most ultimate of all, namely God, is a wise man to the highest degree. [*3rd inference:*] Therefore, if there is any wisdom that considers God most distinctively as He is deepest cause and most ultimate purpose, that wisdom is wisdom to the highest degree, compared to all others, both field-specific and general — which was the inference to be supported.

The assumption is clear. The first inference is supported on the ground that what a wise man does is judge soundly and put things in order; this is illustrated in the construction field and in the ethical field of human life as a whole, and authoritative texts are cited from the Scriptures, as one sees in the text. — The second inference is left to be supported on the same ground with an implicit proportionality,

the deepest cause in a given field : wisdom in that field
:: the deepest cause of all : wisdom across the board,

and this is confirmed by the text from St. Augustine. In this deduction, wisdom across the board is called wisdom to the highest degree to indicate that it exceeds field-specific forms of wisdom. — The third inference is left as obvious in itself. For if a person *M* who considers what is across all fields the deepest cause of all, namely God, is wise across-the-board and to a higher degree than those who are just wise in this or that field, then it has to be the case that a person *N* who considers that same deepest cause *from its distinctive traits* is not just wise across-the-board but also to a still higher degree — not just higher than those who are wise in a given field but also higher than the person *M* who is just wise across-the-board; for *N* transcends *M* in that *N* unearths the distinctive traits of the deepest cause, while *M* rests content with its common traits [those it has but shares with other things as well] and with what can be figured out from the common traits. For all the rationally established predicates of God which a metaphysician has in hand are either

- common predicates, if they are simple (as that He is being, true, good) or
- composed of common predicates, if they are distinctive (as that He is pure act, first being, etc.).¹

¹ There is a crucial difference, then, between the distinctives of God which the sacred learning knows (which are deep ones, known naturally to God alone) and the ones which meta-

vi. In the answer to the third objection, a word is introduced in praise of Denis's teacher Hierotheus, namely, that he did not only learn by way of under-

physics knows (which are surface distinctives reached by compounding traits He shares with other beings). The philosophical proofs which attain Him as "first cause" and "pure act" are thus shallow stuff compared to His being "Father, Son, and Holy Spirit," *etc.*

standing but "suffered" divine things by way of desire.* * *affectus*
 The infused gift of wisdom has its seat in the intellect form-wise but in the will cause-wise. He is said to have "suffered" as those who are strongly stirred about something are said to be suffering from it or "passionate" about it. What is referred to here is a maximally strong inclination of the will, as when the will is already habituated in divine things and made connatural to them.

Is God the subject matter of this science?

1 ST q 1, a.3 ad 1; In 1 Sent. Prolog., a.4; In Boethii de Trinitate q.5, a.4

God would hardly seem to be the subject matter of this expertise.

(1) Every scientific expertise takes for granted a definition of the subject matter, saying what it is,* as Aristotle says in *Posterior Analytics I*. But the sacred learning does not take for granted a definition saying what God is. In fact, as John Damascene remarks [in *De fide orthodoxa* I, 4], "In God's case, it is impossible to say what He is." Therefore, God is not the subject matter.

* *quod est*
c.1:
71a 13
PG 94, 797

(2) Furthermore, all the points determined to be true in a given science are included in its subject matter. But in sacred Scripture, points are determined about many things besides God — things such as creatures and human morals. Therefore, God is not the subject matter.

ON THE OTHER HAND, the subject matter of a science is what it talks about, and the talk in this one is about God. The very name 'theology' shows this: speech about God. Therefore, God is its subject matter.

ANSWER: God should be called the subject matter of this expertise. For a subject matter stands to a science as a [formal] object stands to a power or proficiency¹. The [formal] object of a power/proficiency, properly speaking, is that by reason of which everything referred to that power or proficiency is referred to it. A man and a rock are referred to the power of sight, for example, by reason of their being colored; so what-is-colored is the [formal] object distinctive of sight. Well, everything treated in the sacred learning is treated by reason of [having to do with] God, *i.e.* because it either is God or bears a relation to God¹ — a relation such as coming from Him as its origin and

† *habitus*

¹ English grammar will hardly permit one to say, with Aquinas, that this learning treats a topic "by reason of God," and then explain, "because it either is God or has a relation to Him." To smooth over the awkward grammar, I have interpolated 'having to do with', so that 'by reason of God' becomes 'by reason of [having to do with] God'. Only nothing has literally "nothing to do" with God. Nevertheless,

being directed to Him as its [purpose or] end. Hence it follows that God really is the subject matter of this science.

The same conclusion emerges from considering the starting points of this science, the articles of faith. The faith is about God. And the subject matter of the starting points is identically the subject matter of the whole science, because the whole is contained in the starting points virtually*.

Some writers, however, have looked at the topics treated in this science without looking at what basis those topics have for being taken up. These writers have therefore ascribed the subject matter differently: "things and signs" (say some), or "the works of redemption," or "the whole Christ, head and members." All these are treated, of course, in this science, but on the basis that they bear relation to God.

* *virtute*

TO MEET THE OBJECTIONS — *ad* (1): although in God's case we cannot know "what He is," we can still use an effect of His (in nature or in grace) as a substitute for the definition, serving the purpose of indicating the matters about God treated in the sacred learning. Similarly, there are some natural sciences in which something about a cause is demonstrated from its effect, and the effect is taken in place of a definition of the cause.²

ad (2): all the other points determined to be true in the sacred learning are comprehended under God, not as parts [under a whole] or species [under a genus] or accidents [of one substance], but as related to Him in some way.

one needs to know that "having to do with God" is twofold. Every creature relates to Him as its cause and stands as a finite image of Him, but not every creature participates in Him as He is more deeply in Himself, as God. Only revelation discloses the intra-Trinitarian plan that explains the being of creatures as they relate to God in *Himself*, and such relatedness is the subject here.

² Cf. J.J. Thompson using 'cause of the cathode ray tube phenomenon' to define what he was seeking the nature of.

Cajetan's Commentary

In the title question, pay attention to both terms. 'Subject matter' stands for formal subject, and 'God' is taken formally, that is, to mean God under exactly that description. So, the question is whether God, just exactly as God, is the formal subject of this science.¹

To get the full benefit of studying this issue, think deeply about what 'exactly as God' means, using a clarification which Scotus contributed to this question. Picking ourselves as an example, humans can be taken in four ways:

In 1 Sent.,
Prolog. q.3

- (1) as rational animals,
and so taken we are understood according to what-it-is* to be human;
- (2) as a substances,
and thus we are conceived very generically;
- (3) as being gently born,

† per accidens

and so taken we are conceived in an accidental way[†], because being a gentleman is an accident or superimposition on a man;

‡ relativē

(4) as the noblest of animals,
and so taken we are conceived comparatively[‡] to something else. So also, and going in reverse order, God can be considered in four ways:

- (4') as highest cause — and more generally, under some predicate relating Him *ad extra* — and so taken He is studied comparatively to what is outside Himself;
- (3') as wise, good, just — more generally, under some attribute —

and so taken He is studied quasi-accidentally;²

(2') as being, act, *etc.*,
and thus He is conceived very broadly [quasi-generically]. The compound predicates with which we describe Him

pure act, first being, *etc.*,

are derivative from these three quasi-simple ways of considering Him; for God is thought of in these com-

¹ Materially taken, the subject matter of a science *S* is just some set of things about which questions are taken up and answered in *S*. But what gives to this set any unity or cohesion? And what makes the things in it such that the theories of *S* apply to them and explain them? The search for the "formal subject" of *S* was the search for an exact description picking out the real aspect of things thanks to which they would (1) belong to the set to which *S* applies and (2) be explainable by *S*. In commenting on a. 3 above, Cajetan distinguished the real aspect that the objects of *S* exhibit from the kind of abstracting that goes on in *S*. Both could be called "basis for knowing," but the former was the *T*-basis (*ratio formalis quae*), and the latter was the *O*-basis (*ratio formalis sub qua*). At issue in this article is the *T*-basis of theology, which is now being called its "formal subject" or the *ratio formalis* of its subject.

² God's attributes are called quasi-accidental because, even though they flow from His nature and are not subject to change, they do not compose His definition. Neither natural nor revealed knowledge furnishes anything that would define that unknown nature whereby God is at once existent, subsistent, divine, and hence good, just, merciful, *etc.*

pound ways as falling under a general concept but with a relation [such as *prior to*: a being prior to any other is the first being] or a negation [such as *no potency*: what is act with no potency is pure act], as is obvious. But ahead of all these ways, God can be considered (1') as what-He-is distinctively.

For in terms of natural priority, this is the first knowledge and the foundation for all the rest. We designate this what-He-is with the circumlocution, 'deity'. When we ask whether God in having exactly what it takes to be God (*versus* having what it takes to be good, just, a cause, *etc.*) is the subject matter of this science, we are asking whether God is its formal subject in what-He-is-uniquely, so that His very essence as God is the *T*-basis He exhibits in being this science's object.

Analysis of the article, I

ii. In the body of the article, two jobs are done. (1) He lays out a case answering the question affirmatively. (2) He handles the opinions of other authors.

As to job (1), his conclusion is: God is the subject of this science. This is supported on two grounds*. The first goes as follows. [*Premise:*] The object of a power or proficiency is that by virtue of which anything is referred to that power/proficiency; [*1st inference:*] therefore the subject matter of a science is that by virtue of which anything is taken up for study in that science. [*2nd inference:*] Therefore the subject of this science is God.

* the second comes
in § vii

That the premise is true is illustrated by the object of sight. — The first inference is supported thus: a subject matter stands to a science as its object stands to a power/proficiency; ergo if the object [is that by virtue of which *etc.*, the subject matter is that by virtue of which] *etc.* — Then the second inference is supported. [*Assumption:*] all things taken up for study in the sacred learning are taken up for [having to do with] God; [*inference:*] so if the subject [of any science is that by virtue of which *etc.*, the subject of this science is having to do with God]. The assumption itself is supported: everything sacred learning takes up either is God or is related to God as its origin or end. *etc.*

iii. Concerning the support given to the first inference, bear in mind that the proposition assumed,

a subject stands to a science as its object stands to a power, *etc.*,

does not have to hold good from every angle but suffices in the present context just in case it holds good as far as the comparison of formal bases is concerned. In other words, all we need is that

just as the formal basis exhibited by the object of a power *P* is the reason anything is referred to *P*, so also the formal basis exhibited by the subject of a science *S* is the reason anything is taken up for study in *S*.

Whether the proportion holds in other respects, such as commonality in the real (whether the formal subject of

science has to be something common in the real to all its *per se* topics, as the formal object of a power is something common to all its *per se* objects) is of no relevance. Obviously, St. Thomas did not think such a comparison had to hold up, since the subject matter he posited for this science was not a trait common [to angels, men, morals, and the other *per se* topics of theology] but [something unique,] God as God, who, as such, is something quite singular, obviously.

Also, there is no difficulty about the fact that St. Thomas said elsewhere (in article 4 of his commentary on *I Sent., Prolog.*) that the subject matter of any science *S* meets the condition of being common-by-predication [*i.e.* that the *T*-basis of *S* is uniformly predicated of everything taken up by *S*], because that is generally how things happen, but not necessarily. If we look at the subject matters generally assigned by the experts to the various sciences, we see that this condition is generally met; but it doesn't have to be, as you can see from *Metaphysics IV*, where the counter-example is the science of health.³ — A second response is also possible. One could say that every formal subject does satisfy commonality by predication, not by direct predication only, however, but by direct or oblique predication. For in that way 'God' is predicable of every theological topic: it is God, or it is *of God*, or it is *unto God*, or it is *from God*, etc. But my first response reflects the position held here in a. 7.

c.2,
1003a35

Too broad a subject?

iv. Concerning the proposition assumed in supporting the second inference, namely,

all things taken up in this science are taken up as [having to do with] God, doubt has arisen both as to the truth of it [*simpliciter*] and as to whether Aquinas could adopt it without contradicting himself [*ad hominem*].

— Against the truth of it, Gregory of Rimini has argued as follows. If God, as having what it takes to be God, were the subject of our theology and that of the blessed, everything knowable from God's being

In *I Sent.*,
Prolog. q.4
a.2, concl. 2

³ 'Healthy' was a famous case of a predicate which could not be affirmed uniformly, that is, univocally, of the matters studied in medical science. There was no *one* reason to call things 'healthy' and 'unhealthy' which would serve as the reason these terms could be affirmed of patients, medicines, diets, urine samples, etc. There were different such reasons, and the best one could say was that the reasons were related. 'Healthy' used of patients and used of diets was therefore said to be used analogously.

Similarly, in theology, there is no one reason to say that *x* has to do with God which will serve as the reason to apply this predicate to every *x* which theology takes up. For example, one reason to say that *x* has to do with God is that it has what it takes to *be* God: this is infinitely different from what a creature has when it has what it takes to *be from* God, and yet a creature's having this is sufficient reason to say it "has to do with God." Hence, "has to do with God" is at best analogously predicable of the various things which theology takes up.

God would come under theology. Which is impossible, because then all objects whatsoever would come under theology, and so would infinitely many truths. For through His being God, all objects, along with infinitely many truths, are knowable, as emerges when you think about the knowledge God has of Himself through what-He-is.⁴

— As to whether Aquinas is consistent, the problem is that in article 4 of his commentary on *I Sent., Prolog.*, he himself said that the subject of this science is "divine entity knowable by inspiration," and not God Himself, except as the main topic. Therefore [he is contradicting himself here.]

v. TO ANSWER the first of these doubts, one should reject the implication it makes [if God as such were the subject, everything would come under theology] as invalid. One should reject it for two reasons. The *first* is that theology, either ours or the blessed, is a science that is less than equivalent [*adaequata*] to its subject. That implication only holds good of a theology that would be equivalent, and God alone has a "theology" that is equivalent to its formal subject. — But this reason *seems* not to be worth anything. For a science and the formal basis for its subject have to be equivalent (one might say); otherwise sciences would not be distinguished by their formal subjects, and no reason could be given why a science takes up one question about such-and-such subject rather than another.

So I add a *second* reason to reject that implication. In the antecedent of it ['if God as God were the subject'] no mention is made of the *O*-basis for knowing Him. Yet that is the basis on which the equivalence or non-equivalence of the points-knowable with the reality-there-to-be-known depends. For even though God as God, *i.e.* by reason of His deity, has infinite knowable reality, God *seen* as God under a participated light of glory is knowable only up to a certain limit, as far as particular facts about His creatures are concerned.⁵ Likewise, God known as God under the participated light of grace is knowable within certain limits. So, to make the implication in question come out true, one has to add to its antecedent as follows:

if God as God were the subject of *S* under a light commensurate to Him, then *S* would cover all objects, etc.

With this amendment in place, the falsehood of Gregory's inference about *our theology* is obvious. For only the divine light in itself is commensurate to Him. God is the subject of our theology and of the blessed theology *as God*, to be sure, but under a diminished light. Thus the extent of a science is determined by the power of its light. What sets the extent of a science is not the extent of its *T*-basis as a reality independently there-to-be-known but the extent of its *T*-basis as under the science's way-of-reaching-objects (its *O*-basis).

⁴ It was common doctrine in the schools that God is omniscient through the simple act of knowing Himself.

⁵ So Aquinas will say at length below, in *I ST* q.12, a.8.

vi. As to the doubt about St. Thomas's consistency, in the earlier passage he was not asserting but entertaining an opinion and following the *dicta* commonly laid down by others about the conditions to be met by a "subject." You can see as much from how he introduces that position: "if we wish to posit a subject in which all these conditions are met," etc. But what he had only begun to settle there, he has determined assertively here. And even in the earlier work he said all topics in this science were considered "*sub ratione Dei*." So this answer is flatly the one to be held, while the other is to be entertained as a plausible alternative.

Analysis of the article, II

vii. The second ground on which the overall conclusion is supported is as follows. [*Major:*] The subject of the starting points is the subject of the whole science; [*minor:*] God is the subject of the starting points of this science; therefore God is the subject of the whole science. — The major is supported: because the whole science is contained virtually in its starting points. The minor is supported, too: because God is the subject of the articles of faith [*cf.* the Creed].

What is virtual containment?

viii. Concerning the proposition taken up here to support the major, namely,

the whole science is contained virtually in the starting points,

difficulty arises. It seems to conflict with another teaching of St. Thomas's. Look what can be made to follow from it. If the whole science is contained virtually in the starting points, then [*1st consequence:*] the whole is contained in the subject of the starting points, and so [*2nd consequence:*] the whole science is contained in its subject. Then [since the subject of each science is a kind, there is this *3rd consequence:*] there cannot be one science (one maximally specific science) that covers two disparate kinds, not even a species and its genus, in what is distinctive of each. But this consequence is considered false by St. Thomas. In his view, scientific knowledge of the triangle, the square, and geometrical figure in general, taken not only in their common traits but also in their distinctives, is just one, maximally specific science, as you see from 2/1 *ST* [q.54, a.1 *ad* 3] and from his comments on *Posterior Analytics I*. So [there is a conflict]. Yet the first consequence is obvious, because the starting points are put together from what it takes to be the subject. The second is obvious, too, because the subject of the starting points is the same as that of the science. The third consequence follows because knowledge of what is distinctive to one fully disparate species is not contained virtually in [knowledge of] another species, nor in [knowledge of] what it takes just to be the genus [under which those species fall]. Likewise, modifications peculiar to one species are not contained

lecto 41

virtually in another, nor in the defining makeup of their genus.

ix. TO ANSWER THIS, one should not treat it just as a problem for Aquinas but as a problem for anyone. This business of virtual containment raises doubt not just because it is appealed to in this article but because it is flatly problematic. Scotus holds that the feat of virtually containing all the truths belonging to a science *S* is a condition that enters into what it takes for anything to be the formal subject of *S*, and so he agrees with the objection just raised (in his comments on *I Sent.*, *Prolog.*, q.3); he concedes that the consequence deduced above is true, while we consider it false.

One should realize, therefore, that there are two opinions about this sort of containment.

- Scotus thinks that the subject of *S* must contain immediately-virtually, as a sufficient cause explaining them, all the truths pertaining to *S*. He supports this with two arguments. (1) The subject of *S* must contain in this way all these truths because it contains the undervived propositions which are the starting points virtually containing the whole of *S*. This last is clear, he says, because the predicate of an undervived proposition is contained in its subject, and that subject is the subject of *S*.⁵ (2) The subject of *S* must contain in this way all these truths because it is the sole sufficient cause* of the expertise [*habitus*] which is *S*: therefore, it contains immediately-virtually the whole effect [the whole expertise]; therefore, it contains all these truths [familiarity with which constitutes the expertise]. — If one follows this opinion, there are as many fully specific kinds of science as there are fully disparate species of things (I say 'fully disparate' to leave aside a subordinated species, such as a subject and its modification [e.g. *curved line* as a species under *line*]) — indeed, as many as there are "formal accounts" which are not virtually contained one in the other. For example, there is one science just of animal as such, which considers nothing but the distinctive traits of animal (since those alone are virtually contained in animal); and there is another science of the cow [not *qua* animal but] *qua* cow, and another of lion *qua* lion, etc.⁶

* *causa adaequata*

⁵ In other words, for Scotus, if *T* is the formal subject of a science *S*, the starting points of *S* will be a set of undervived truths saying things about *T* (perhaps analytical truths, perhaps asserted definitions, perhaps just universal statements), and every other truth acquired in *S* will be a theorem deduced from those starting points. So, *T* "virtually contains" the whole of *S* because the logical fertility of the set of definitions, etc., is sufficient to imply all that can be known scientifically about the topics treated in *S*. One is reminded of Euclid's set of axioms, definitions, and postulates.

⁶ To see how this follows from what was said in footnote 5, suppose 'cows cleave the hoof' is a truth of science. Then it should be a starting point or a proven result in a science that covers cows. Since some animals have no hoofs at all, there is no definition covering the animals *qua* animals that says anything about hoofs. So, nothing about hoofs can be deduced in the science of animal as such. Ergo the point that cows cleave the hoof must be known in a different science.

x — St. Thomas, on the other hand, thinks that sciences divide into kinds not according to how things themselves divide, independently of knowers, but according to how things as knowable divide [so that to each science there corresponds not an absolute kind of thing but a knowable kind]. So he holds that the formal subject of a science *S* has to meet two conditions: as set forth in the article above. First, the subject of *S* has to be that by virtue of which everything pertaining to *S* pertains to it. And second, it has to contain virtually the whole science — yet not as a source of explanations sufficient in itself (as Scotus wanted) but as a source that, taken in itself, suffices as *first source*, so that [to cause the knowing of these truths] it is sufficient on its level, and not in every respect. It does not suffice in every respect until it is taken *both*

- in itself
- *and* in the things sharing in it,
- *and* in the things attributed to it in any way.

By a “source sufficient” to explain an effect *e* in the full sense of “sufficient”, we mean a cause which immediately, *i.e.*, all-by-itself* explains *e*; in this way a subject [say, nose] explains a modification only it can have [say, snub] (if not directly, then by way of a prior instinctive). By a reason explaining *e* that is “sufficient on its own level,” we mean a cause which, while not sufficient to produce *e*, is nevertheless the complete and total cause in its own place in the hierarchy of causes explaining *e*; in this way, the sun is a cause of Socrates. It is in this way, too, that the starting points of a science, as its first propositions, contain “virtually” all its truths. For not all of those truths are known directly from the starting points alone (as is obvious), nor are they all known by way of just those further truths which depend totally upon the starting points. Rather, the many conclusions are known from a combination of (a) those starting points as *first reasons* plus (b) other points as *secondary and proximate reasons*.⁷

⁷ The two theories of virtual containment thus amount to competing visions of how a science is logically structured. In the Scotist vision, a science is a formal system (as one would say today), while in the Thomist vision, a science is only partially formalized, in that extra premises (or auxiliary assumptions) keep being added as one goes along. Since a science starts in both visions with self-verifying truths, a crucial difference emerges when these are taken to be analytic: the Scotist vision excludes empirical content from ever getting into a science, while the Thomist vision allows such content to come in as one goes along. Thus Scotism represented an early push of the Aristotelian heritage towards what would later become continental Rationalism.

In Cajetan's next paragraph, the reader will see him pursuing the comparison in a mathematical science (arithmetic), where his case would be stronger if he had known of Peano's axioms. Here the crucial difference will not concern empirical content but the limits of formalism itself. Scotism is a step toward Hilbert's program, while the Thomist view is consistent with Gödel's result.

One sees this very clearly in a science, if one looks at those properties of its subject which the science explains or demonstrates. Take the science of number: not every property provable in this science has to be contained *immediately*-virtually (that is, sufficiently and sole-sufficiently) in what it takes *just* to be a number; otherwise the properties that belong only to even ones or only to those divisible by three would not be known in this science. Rather, number-in-itself has to “virtually” contain all these properties *as their first root*. Then as diversified *and shared* in even numbers, ternaries, *etc.*, number becomes the immediate and sole-sufficient subject of the properties. Thus, in a science having number for its subject, the starting points virtually contain, as *first causes* explaining them, all the [scientifically knowable] truths about number. They don't have to suffice for reaching all those conclusions without additional propositions having as their subject even number, ternary number, *etc.*, and which serve as *proximate causes* of proof. In just this way, number-in-itself is not a sufficient means to explain the properties of even numbers but serves as the first root of their explanation as they are knowable to us (mathematically knowable), regardless of how things stand in the real.

This shows quite clearly how it can happen that one and the same specific science is at once the knowledge of a genus and the knowledge of many species, in what is distinctive of each.

xi. Suppose one asks: what sets a limit, then, on what is knowable in a single science? The answer emerges quite clearly from points already stated: the boundaries of the sciences coincide with the boundaries of knowable kinds as such, not with the boundaries of real kinds. Therefore, as many real species and genera of things can be comprehended under one science as happen to fall within one kind of knowable object [one *O*-kind]. Therefore, if the boundaries of a science *S* are set by *O_S*, then the *T*-basis in things which provides immediate foundation for *O_S* — I mean, the *T*-basis whose way to be known directly is the mode of abstracting or defining or knowing which constitutes *O_S* — is the *T*-basis of *S*. And it is the first root of everything pertaining to *S* as it pertains to *S*.⁸

⁸ Given just the few, broad kinds of knowable-object mentioned in Cajetan's theory of science, it would seem to follow that much of physics, all of chemistry, and a lot of biology are just specialties within what is basically one science. Its *O*-basis is explainability by an empirical *kind* of matter (abstracting from particular batches), and its *T*-basis is being subject to processes of change. It would also seem to follow that all branches of mathematics are specialties within one science. But when one looks at a modern treatment of mathematical logic, set theory, lattice theory, general topology, *etc.*, one has to conclude either that Cajetan has understood the quantitative too narrowly or that some modern mathematics is really metaphysics (a delightful thought). Cajetan's theory also gives rise to this question: where would a science fit whose *O*-basis is explainability by human intention and whose *T*-basis is being-constituted by human action?

Does the above account of virtual containment suffice [to cover the rôle of] the subject matter in a science and its starting points? Yes, as you can see from what actually goes on in the sciences, both mathematical and physical. In both, the properties of many species are handled in terms distinctive to them. Geometry, for example, handles the properties unique to triangles *and* those unique to rectangles, which the bare subject matter of geometry obviously cannot contain sole-sufficiently.

Answering Scotus

xii. Thus the first argument of Scotus [in *ix* above] has been answered. — As to his second, I should say on the same grounds that this proposition, the subject of an expertise virtually contains the entire expertise,

can be understood in two ways:

- (1) by taking the subject just in itself, or
- (2) by taking the subject as it is found in other things which *per se* share in it in any way.

And likewise ‘virtually contains’ can be taken two ways:

- sole-sufficiently, or
- as first cause.

Then taken (1) just in itself, the subject virtually contains *as first cause* the whole expertise and not just a part of it — as the sun virtually contains the whole man, not just a part of him, but as first or higher cause. Taken (2) in itself *and* in the things sharing in it, the subject contains virtually and sole-sufficiently, as total cause, the entire expertise. — Thus the difficulty is cleared up both as a problem in its own right and as a problem in reading Aquinas.

Analysis of the article, III

xiii. As to the second job done in this article, mention is made of three other opinions assigning the subject matter of this science. The first comes from the Master of the *Libri Sententiarum** [*I Sent.* d. 1, q. 1]; the second opinion is taken from Hugh of St. Victor [*De Sacramentis, Prolog.*][†]; the third, from the bishop of Lincoln.[‡] But pay attention to the author’s humility here. On the one hand, he excuses these writers, saying that they were looking at the topics treated in theology, as if to say it was never their intention to assign the formal subject. On the other hand, he reduces all their answers to the formal subject assigned by himself, saying that all these topics are treated in relation to God.

* Peter Lombard,
† *PL* 176, 183
‡ Robert Grosseteste

Does this learning proceed by argumentation?

2/2 ST q.1, a.5 ad 2; In I Sent. Prolog., a.5, 1 CG c.9;
In Boethius de Trinitate q.2, a.3, Quodlibet. IV, q.9, a.3

It would seem that this learning does not advance arguments.

c.13;
PL 16, 570 (1) In his *De fide Catholica*, Book I, Ambrose says, "Away with arguments where faith is sought." But in this learning, faith is the thing sought above all. Thus it says in John 20:31, "These things are written that ye may believe." So, the sacred learning does not advance arguments.

(2) Furthermore, if it proceeds by argument, it either argues from authority or else from reason. If from authority, that does not seem to suit its high standing, because an argument drawn from authority is the weakest kind, as Boethius said [in his book *In topicis Ciceronis*]. But if it argues from reason, that does not suit its purpose, since "faith has no merit, where human reason provides palpable proof," (as Gregory said in one of his sermons). Therefore, the sacred learning does not proceed by argument.

c.1;
PL 64, 1166
In Evang. ii, 26;
PL 76, 1197

ON THE OTHER HAND, there is Titus 1:9, where the bishop is described as "embracing that faithful word which is according to doctrine, that he may be able to exhort in sound doctrine and to convince the gainsayers."

ANSWER: just as the other sciences do not argue to prove their starting points, but argue from them to secure other results in those same sciences, so also this learning does not argue to prove its starting points (the articles of faith) but proceeds from them to secure something else. In this way, for example, the Apostle argued from the resurrection of Christ in I Corinthians 15 to prove the general resurrection.

One should bear in mind, however, that among the natural sciences, a subordinate one not only does not prove its starting points but also does not debate with those who deny them, leaving that job to the higher science. Yet the highest among them, metaphysics, does debate with someone who denies its starting points, if the adversary concedes any common premise; if he concedes nothing, there is no debating with him, but his own arguments can still be broken.

So, too, the sacred learning, since it has no science superior to it [in this life], debates with anyone who denies its starting points — debates by constructive argument if the adversary concedes any points from divine revelation. (This is how we use texts that are authoritative in the sacred learning to debate with heretics, and against those who deny one article of the faith we dispute by using another.) But if the adversary believes nothing divinely revealed, no way remains to prove the articles of faith by reasoning; rather, his own arguments against believing, if he advances any, are to be broken.

For since the faith is based on infallible truth, there cannot be a fully conclusive argument against it that starts with true premises. Plausible considerations advanced against believing are not conclusive arguments, then, but breakable arguments.

TO MEET THE OBJECTIONS — *ad* (1): although purely rational arguments can find no ground from which to prove the articles of faith, this learning does argue from the articles to further points, as I said.

ad (2): arguing from authority is most distinctive of this learning because it gets its starting points *via* revelation, and so it has to credit the authority of those to whom revelation was made. This does not tarnish the high standing of sacred learning, however, because while appeal to an authority resting on human reason is the weakest sort of argument, appeal to an authority that rests on divine revelation is very strong.

At the same time, the sacred learning also uses human reasoning: not to prove the faith (for thereby the merit of believing would be taken away), but to discover other things that are handed on in this learning. For as grace does not take away nature but perfects it, our natural reason should serve to support our believing God, just as the natural inclination of our will obeys our loving Him. This is why Paul in II Corinthians 10:5 speaks of "bringing into captivity every understanding unto the obedience of Christ." Hence the sacred learning also quotes and uses as authority passages where the philosophers realized a truth by their natural reason. For example, St. Paul invoked the words of Aratus in Acts 17:28, "as some also of your own poets said, 'We are God's offspring.'"

Nevertheless, the sacred learning uses such authorities as outside material and as merely plausible grounds of argument. The quotes which it uses as internal to itself and as providing compelling grounds for argument are passages from canonical Scripture. Passages from other teachers of the Church [the Fathers] are used as internal material but as providing only plausible grounds. For our faith rests on the revelation made to the Apostles and Prophets who wrote the canonical books — not on revelation made (if any was) to the other teachers. This is why Augustine says in a letter to Jerome: "Only to the books of Scripture that are called canonical have I learned to pay this honor: to believe with utter firmness that none of their authors made any mistake in the writing of them. But when I read what other authors have to say, no matter how much holiness and learning they show, my attitude is that I do not consider it true just because they thought so, or because they wrote it."

Epist. 82;
PL 33, 277

Cajetan's Commentary

In the title, the question whether this science "proceeds by argumentation" means to ask whether it advances supporting grounds for what it teaches, or whether it doesn't. Does it perhaps just assert things, as Scotus maintained against article 2?

Analysis of the article

ii. In the body of the article, there are three conclusions. (1) The sacred learning does not argue to prove its starting points but to reach conclusions from the starting points. (2) The sacred learning debates by constructive argument against those who deny its starting points, if they concede anything pertaining to this learning. (3) Against those who deny its starting points and concede nothing pertaining to it, the sacred learning debates only by breaking their arguments.

Throughout the article, he is talking about the complex [*i.e.* propositional] starting points of knowledge in this science, the articles of faith. Never mind incomplex ones, or even whether there are any!¹

iii. Conclusion (1) is supported thus. No science proves its starting points but only the conclusions it gets from them; ergo [this science does the same]. The second part of the conclusion is confirmed by the authoritative example of St. Paul in 1 Cor. 15.

Conclusions (2) and (3) are first supported together. [*Premise:*] A supreme natural science debates with those who deny its starting points and, if they concede nothing, defends itself just by breaking their arguments. [*Inference:*] So this learning, too, does both. — The premise comes from a difference between lower sciences and a supreme one. The inference is supported: because this learning is a supreme science.

Then conclusions (2) and (3) are shown to be true separately. (2) is true because, against heretics, we prove one article of the creed from another, *etc.* (3) is true because [*premise:*] no conclusive argument can exist against an infallible truth; therefore [*consequence:*] all the arguments against the truths of this science are breakable arguments. The consequence holds because this learning is based on infallible truth.

Must breaking them come from points believed?

iv. As to conclusion (3), notice that there are two ways in which a theologian can break arguments advanced by philosophers against the faith.

— One way is *from points believed*: *e.g.* in case someone were to allege, "Everything numerically one is at most one person," and the theologian answered: "No, because God is three." When the breaking is achieved this way, it only solves the objection for a believer.

— The other is *from points known* (either known entirely* or known to this extent[†]): *e.g.* in case the same allegation were made, and one answered, "Not so in the

case of an infinite thing." One does not make this answer because one knows the contradictory of the allegation to be true (that an infinite thing is multiple persons) but because one knows negatively* that there is no effective means to prove that an infinite thing is hypostatically one (and this situation where the mind is not compelled by any means of proving a proposition *p* is called knowing negatively).² In this example, the theologian is breaking the argument from a point known "in this bearing." But sometimes he can solve objections from points known in themselves. An example would be the case where an objection is made against the accidents in the Eucharist [saying that an accident's existence is its being-in its subject, and so if these accidents are in no subject, they don't exist], and the theologian says, "Not so, because an accident's existence is not being that is actually in another but being that is apt to be-in."

In this article, I understand the text to be talking about theology breaking arguments in the second way. If the objection is made that such solutions are not the work of a theologian *as* a theologian, because they do not spring from theology's own principles. I deny what the objection assumes. For theology doesn't just enjoy its own native principles but also takes over points from outside and makes them its own in those cases where,

² In technical contexts today, one asks whether a proposition *p* is "decidable" within a given formal system: it is "decidable" in case the axioms of the system yield a proof of *p* or a proof of $\neg p$. If neither is provable, *p* is called undecidable in that system. Cajetan's *scire negativè* is an early, informal version of undecidability; he is saying that there are propositions (indeed truths) of theology which are undecidable given the whole of what man is naturally in a position to know.

The undecidability of a proposition *vis-à-vis* certain starting points may or may not be known. When Hilbert launched his meta-mathematical formalization program, it was not known that arithmetic left any points undecidable. Only later was it shown by Gödel that a formal system rich enough to contain arithmetic will always leave some propositions of arithmetic undecidable, even if extra axioms keep being added. A more recent example is the case of the continuum hypothesis. To this day, it is not known whether there is an infinite cardinal number larger than \aleph_0 (the number of natural numbers) but smaller than C (the number of real numbers). The assumption that there is not (so that C is the next bigger cardinal) is called the continuum hypothesis, and it has had supporters since the 1890s. In 1960 it was proved that this hypothesis is undecidable within set theory. So while the hypothesis is still not known *simpliciter* as Cajetan would say, it is now known "in this bearing" (*quoad hoc*). If a mathematics hobbyist submitted a paper to a reputable journal, claiming to have proved the hypothesis in Fraenkel-Zermelo set theory, the paper would not even go to the referees. It would be dismissed out of hand. The theological parallel is that an argument against a matter of faith, in which an adversary pretends to derive its falsity from natural/philosophical knowledge, can often be broken because it is known that some premise of the argument is undecidable from the starting points of such knowledge.

* *simpliciter*
† *quoad hoc*

¹ Incomplex starting points were non-verbal things or observations.

* *scit negativè*

for our sake [since we are weak in understanding], it uses propositions from other sciences in its own defense. This was touched on in article 5, in the answer to the second objection. And although *purely* theological points have to come from theological premisses, points that are ministerially theological do not have to; they only have to serve [e.g. to defend] such premisses. It is in this way that such solutions to arguments are [rightly called] theological.

The upshot is that those writers who have refused to credit theology with solving objections unless it solves them from a point believed — well, they don't seem to have thought very well. They got things wrong because they failed to discern the difference in nature between *solution* and *proof*. Proof comes from points that are clearly true, while solution can also come from points that appear not to be false, even though they are not known to be true. This is why a theologian can always solve objections, his mind never being compelled by a proposition contrary to matters of faith, even if he does not see how the objections are false.

v. Concerning the support given to conclusion (3), you should realize that [a] to know that all the arguments against the faith are breakable, is one thing, and [b] to know how to break them, is quite another. The former [a], is what is supported in the body of the article. The support given to it assumes a proposition which we believe, namely, that *this learning is based on infallible truth*; and, for this reason, the conclusion [that all the arguments against the faith are breakable] is not obvious* to us in this life. [It, too, is a matter of faith.] Knowing the latter [b], on the other hand, depends upon the exercised act of finding solutions, and the *Summa Contra Gentiles* is full of these. Now: since solution [as opposed to proof] does not require points that are obvious or clearly true, as I just said and as we experience for ourselves, but requires only that our intellect not be compelled, and since this fact emerges convincingly in the very exercise of finding a solution in those cases where a compelling reason is absent, it follows that knowing how to solve objections — or actually breaking arguments against the sacred learning — is not an exercise of believing, nor does it come from what we believe, except in the sense that our belief provides the occasion for it. Since we believe, we apply our minds to finding the weak-spots in the reasons and assertions advanced against our beliefs. Pay particular attention to this distinction [between knowing that arguments are breakable, which is a matter of faith, and knowing how to break them, which is not], because failure to notice it is perhaps what allowed certain interpreters of this article to go astray.

Human reasonings as theological sources

vi. In the answer to the second objection, take note of the four kinds of sources listed for sacred theology:

- (1) authoritative passages of holy Scripture,
- (2) authoritative passages from the holy doctors,
- (3) human reasonings, and

(4) authoritative passages from the philosophers.

From kind (1), he says, the sacred learning proceeds as from grounds internal to itself and compelling; from kind (2), as from grounds internal but plausible; and from kind (4), as from grounds that are plausible but external. No status as a ground is assigned to kind (3). One should know, therefore, that the human reasoning he is talking about here is nothing but an argument that gets its force from the natural light alone. Such arguments come in two kinds:

- the kind that support their conclusion necessarily (and are called conclusive proofs), and
- the kind that support their conclusion plausibly (and this kind covers a wide range).

Both kinds are found in any given natural science, and thus such reasonings are “outside material” *vis-à-vis* theology’s kind of knowable object [the knowable by revelation]. So when theology proceeds from human reasoning as such, it proceeds from outside grounds. Since no conclusive proof from naturally known premisses can be put together to support theological points *as such* (since theological points *as* theological have to be traced back to supports evident by the divine light, not the natural light), it follows that, absolutely speaking, theology proceeds from natural reasoning as from grounds that are outside *and plausible*, just as it does from the fourth kind of source, authoritative texts from philosophers. Hence the status assigned to such authorities here [in the *ad 2*] should be understood to be assigned also to the natural reasoning which they knew. A sign of this is the fact that Aquinas treated them both at once. Thus, all four kinds have been given a status as grounds of proof.

Do speculative theologians philosophize too much?

vii. But here a doubt arises, and there is no glossing it over. If theology proceeds from natural reasonings as from external and just plausible grounds, why has so much work of that kind been undertaken by the teachers in this field who theorize? Why bother with four books *Contra Gentiles*, full of natural reasonings? *Etc.* Either these books are not conveying theology at all, or they are too preoccupied with extraneous matters.

viii. TO ANSWER THIS BRIEFLY, metaphysical proofs and supports from the philosophy of nature, brought forward in the sacred learning, are *in themselves* outside matter; but as serving theology, so as

- to tear down positions opposed to theological conclusions or starting points, or
- to break arguments made against theological truths, or
- to establish the truths with which theology deals secondarily [namely, those that can also be proved by natural reason], such as that God exists, is one, immortal, etc.

they are not outside matter; rather, theology proceeds from them as from its own grounds, and sometimes

* *evidens*

compelling grounds, but ministerially so, and not because theology itself needs them but on account of the weakness of our understanding, as was said in a.5, *ad* 2. This is why the holy doctors with strong theoretical talent, desiring to make up for the defect in human understanding, have tried to bring forward many, many philosophical reasons for one or another of these three purposes. Their aim was that educated persons, upon learning that matters of faith are not contrary to reason, might be able to adhere to those matters more firmly, or at least not spurn them or deride them.³

Further indication for thinking that reasonings of this kind, when serving as ministers, become internal

³ The core of Cajetan's answer is this. Whether a point *p* is inside matter to a science *S* or outside matter, depends upon whether *p* is needed for the use to which it is being put. Normally, a science only has one use for any point, to get results in its subject matter, and *p* is inside matter in case *p* is needed for that. But a supreme science has two lines of business. The main line is to get its results, but an auxiliary ("ministerial") line is to defend its starting points (and thus its results, which may be starting points for lower sciences). Now since the sacred learning is supreme in its kind and thus has both a main business (to get further results in revealed subject matter) and a ministerial one (to defend its starting points), Cajetan is saying that a philosophical point *p* is inside or outside matter to theology depending on whether *p* is being used in theology's main business (in which case, *p* is not needed but is only illustrative/clarificatory, as established in a.5 *ad* 2) or is being used in its ministerial business (in which case, it may well be needed and so count as inside matter).

sources of this science for our sakes is given in the body of the article, in the third conclusion and in how he shows its soundness. For apart from philosophical reasonings, there is no other way to solve objections satisfactorily; if we theologians had to meet all the objections advanced by philosophers with solutions coming from what we believe, we should be [begging their questions continually and thus become] ridiculous in their eyes.

α. Regarding the points just made, pay diligent attention to the fact that

– talking about *human reasoning*

is one thing, and

– talking about propositions *known by human reason*

is another. In this article, as I have tried to make clear, Aquinas suggests that when the sacred learning proceeds from *human reasoning*, it proceeds, absolutely speaking, from outside matter, since propositions known by the natural light (rather than the divine), *as so known*, are outside matter. Nevertheless, there are many propositions known by the natural light and by demonstration which, taken in themselves, are truly and distinctively theological *under another light*, as came out in article 1, in the answer *ad* (2). That God exists, that He is one, that He is good, *etc.*, are clear examples. So when a theologian argues from these points, he is arguing from internal grounds distinctive of theology, even though they are not known solely in the manner distinctive of theology, insofar as they are not only revealed but also known by human science.

Should sacred writing use metaphors?

*In I Sent. Prolog., a.5; d.34, q.3, aa.1-2,
3 CG c.119; In Boethii de Trinitate q.2, a.4*

It would seem that what is written in the sacred learning should not use metaphors.

(1) A hallmark of the lowest sort of learning would hardly seem to belong in a science which (it was said above) holds supreme place among the sciences. Well, proceeding by way of images and symbols is the hallmark of poetry, which is the lowest among all the fields of learning. Therefore, using such images, *etc.*, does not suit this science.

(2) Also, this learning seems to exist for the sake of making the truth plain, and this is why a reward is promised for doing so in Sirach 24:31, "they that explain me shall have life everlasting." But thanks to figures of speech, the truth becomes obscure and hidden. Ergo, it does not suit this learning to communicate divine truths under images of bodily things.

(3) Furthermore, the higher the creature, the closer it comes to being like God. Therefore, if any aspect of creatures is applied to God figuratively, the application should come mainly from the higher creatures, not the lowest. Yet this last is frequently found in sacred writing.

ON THE OTHER HAND, there is Hosea 12:10, "I have multiplied visions, and I have used similitudes by the ministry of the prophets." To communicate something under a similitude is metaphor. Therefore, using metaphors belongs in sacred learning.

ANSWER: holy Scripture communicates divine and spiritual things under bodily imagery, and rightly so. God provides for all beings according to what suits their natures. Man's nature is such that he comes to things the mind alone can grasp* by way of things the senses can grasp; for all our knowing takes its start from sensation. It is suitable, then, for spiritual things to be conveyed to us in holy Scripture under bodily metaphors. Denis says the same in chapter 1 of *The Heavenly Hierarchy*: "It is impossible for the divine radiance to enlighten us in any wise but veiled by divers sacred veils."

Also, since sacred writings are put before all audiences (as Romans 1:14 says: "To the wise and to the unwise, I am a debtor"), it is fitting for them to express

spiritual truths under bodily imagery, so that in this way, at least, the untutored may understand them. Such people are not able to grasp intellectual points in themselves [shorn of images that make them concrete].

TO MEET THE OBJECTIONS — *ad* (1): poetry uses metaphors for graphic effect, since graphic imagery is naturally delightful to us. But the sacred learning uses them out of a need and for their utility, as has just been said.

ad (2): as Denis says [in the same place], the light of divine revelation is not extinguished by the sensory imagery veiling it but remains in its truth, so that a mind receiving revelation is not left at the level of the images but is raised up to know what to *understand*; then through [the propositions advanced by] such recipients of revelation, others, too, are instructed about these things. This is why points communicated in metaphors in one Scripture are laid out more clearly in others. Also, the veiling or obscuring effect produced by the images is itself useful; it gives exercise to eager minds and blocks the mockery of unbelievers. Of them it speaks in Matthew 7:6, "Give not that which is holy unto the dogs."

ad (3): as Denis teaches in chapter two of *The Heavenly Hierarchy*, it is more fitting for Scripture to communicate divine matters under images of baser bodies than under images of noble ones. And there are three reasons for this:

— (a) the human mind is better set free from error this way. For it is plain to all that these images do not describe divine things literally; and how literal they are could be in doubt if the images were drawn from noble [e.g. heavenly] bodies, especially among those who have trouble conceiving of anything higher than bodies.

— (b) such images better suit the knowledge we have of God in this life, where it is clearer to us what He is not, than what He is. Images drawn from things distant from God give us a truer appreciation of the fact that He is *above* what we say about Him, or think.

— (c) and by such images the things of God are better hidden from the unworthy.

Cajetan's Commentary

In the title, 'use metaphors' means 'speak of some *x* by using expressions which, in their proper [or standard] sense, are not verified by *x* but which are verified

in some likeness to their proper sense by *x*'. For example, when Hebrews 12 says "Our God is a consuming fire," we are using a metaphor. God is not in fact a fire

PG 3, 136

PG 3, 121

* *intelligibilia*

v. 29

but relates to us somewhat as a consuming fire does. The same will hold for other examples. The author is prompted to address this issue by *Posterior Analytics II*, where metaphors are prohibited in the sciences.

c 13;
97b 37

Analysis of the article

ii. In the body of the article there is one conclusion, giving a yes-answer: the sacred learning suitably uses bodily metaphors for divine and spiritual things.

This is supported on two grounds. First ground:

[*Premise:*] God provides for all as suits their nature.

[*Inference:*] So it is suitable for us that, in the sacred learning, spiritual points are communicated under bodily images. — The premise is obvious, but the inference is supported: because it is natural to us to be led to intelligibles through sensibles. The proof: because all our cognition arises from sensation. Then this argument is confirmed by the authority of Denis, *etc.*

Second ground: [*Premise:*] Sacred teaching is put before all people without exclusion. [*Inference:*] So spiritual things are suitably put across under bodily imagery. — The premise is supported by Romans 1. The inference is supported thus: many people cannot grasp intelligibles in themselves but can grasp them this way.

Clarifying the answer *ad* (1)

iii. In the answer to the first objection, doubt arises as to how it can be true that this learning uses metaphors “out of a need and for their utility,” when no such need is discussed in the answer, and none was established in the body of the article. There, of the two supporting grounds given, the second only supports utility, obviously, and the first only supports suitability, as the text itself says. If one needs to be convinced of this, one can ponder the fact that our connaturality to sensible things does not imply a need for *these* sensible things, namely, metaphors. — And the doubt grows: nothing is conveyed metaphorically in Scripture that *cannot* be taught literally [as Aquinas seems to concede in his answer *ad* 2]. So, there is no “need” to use metaphors in this teaching, even though their use is suitable and has utility.

iv. What to say in response, it seems to me, is that use of metaphors in this learning is in one way needed and in another way not — and I mean this not just in relation to this or that audience, say, the less capable, but in relation to everyone in this life.¹ Use of metaphors is needed to better attain the purpose, *i.e.* knowledge of God. This need is shown in the body of the article, *via* the first supporting ground. For from the fact that we come connaturally to know intelligibles

only through sensibles, it follows that we *must* learn spiritual things through metaphors if we are to learn them easily and in our own way.² For metaphors take the place of the spiritual likenesses [intelligible species or concepts] which we should have about spiritual things in themselves. But the use of metaphors is not needed flatly [*i.e.* for the purpose of knowing God to be attained at all]. For although people cannot understand the things said of God without phantasms [mental images], we can understand them without metaphors, even in this life, though not so easily.³

And thereby a solution emerges to the objections. The first supporting ground given in the article did not show only the *suitability* of using metaphors but, precisely by showing that, also showed *the need* — not an unqualified need but a need “for the better” [*i.e.* for the purpose to be reached more easily, *etc.*]. — Someone may still object to this solution, thinking it does not do justice to a quote from Denis used in the text: “It is impossible ... in any wise but. . .” In response, one may say that ‘impossible’ has a range of uses, just as ‘necessary’ has. In fact [the two have the same range because] ‘impossible’ is equivalent to ‘necessarily not’. So the quote means the same as if Denis had said, “Necessarily, the divine radiance does not enlighten us in any wise but” [as veiled], *etc.* [Hence, since the quote is using an equivalent modality, it can be expressing the same need as I proposed.]

² A strict implication says: necessarily if p then q . In symbols: $\Box (p \supset q)$. Cajetan is saying that man’s connatural way of learning implies a strict implication, namely:

\Box (man learns S easily \supset man learns S through metaphors) where S stands for spiritual things. An adverb like ‘easily’ in the antecedent marks this point as a case of the “necessary *ad bene esse*” or *ad melius*. If the adverb were taken out and the strict implication remained true without it, one would have a case of the “necessary *ad esse*,” which is flat necessity for a purpose, which Cajetan does not allege here.

³ On the connection, or lack of it, between mental images and metaphors, the following needs to be said. There are well known theories of knowledge which try to account for our acquiring general notions — *i.e.* meaningful terms predicable of many individual things — by making appeal to “vague perception” on our part, rather than abstraction. In such theories, a sensory content remains an aspect of what is understood in the general notion acquired. So in such theories, no meaningful term can be applied to an immaterial being in its proper sense and come out true. All talk of God is either nonsense or metaphor. Thus, in all such theories, human inability to understand without phantasms implies that we *cannot* understand the things of God without metaphor.

Cajetan is in a position to say the opposite here because, with Aristotle and Aquinas, he holds a theory of knowledge which appeals to abstraction. Where there is abstraction from the sense image, there is opened up the possibility that sensory content is left behind, so as not to be an aspect of what is understood in the general notion acquired. Then there can be meaningful terms which apply to non-material things without metaphor.

¹ Cajetan has considered the possibility that “out of a need” meant just for the stupid and those sunk in ignorance (and then the sense would be that metaphors are necessary for them but quite dispensable for everyone else) — and he has rejected it. He thinks metaphors are “in a way” needed by all.

Does a given passage of holy Scripture offer plural lines of interpretation?

In I Sent. Prolog., n. 5; In IV Sent. d. 21, q. 1, n. 2, qa. 1 ad 3, De Potentia Dei q. 4, a. 1; Quodl. III, q. 14, a. 1; VII, q. 6; In Pauli Epistolam ad Galatas c. 4, lectio 7

A given passage of holy Scripture does not seem to offer the multiple lines of interpretation usually supposed, namely, the historical or literal, the allegorical, the tropological or moral, and the anagogic.¹

(1) A multitude of valid interpretations in any one text gives rise to confusion and deception; it makes inferences from the text precarious. What comes from multiple meanings is fallacy, then, rather than solid argument. Well, holy Scripture has to be effective at disclosing the truth without fallacy. So multiple meanings should not be conveyed in a given passage.

(2) Furthermore, Augustine says in his book, *De utilitate credendi*, that Old Testament Scripture is communicated "in a fourfold way," but his list is "by history, by aetiology, by analogy, and by allegory." Well, these four seem quite different from the four interpretations mentioned above; so, it can hardly be right for a passage to be interpreted along those four lines.

(3) Moreover, there is another meaning, the parabolic, which is not included in those four.

ON THE OTHER HAND, as Gregory says in the *Moralia*, book XX: "Holy Scripture transcends all sciences in its very manner of speaking: in one and the same passage, while it tells a story, it unfolds a mystery."

I ANSWER: the author of Scripture is God, who has the power not only to arrange words to mean something (as men can do) but also to arrange things themselves to mean something. As it is common to all sciences that words have meaning, what is distinctive to this one is that the things meant by the words have meaning, too. In this arrangement, there is a first meaning, in which words mean things, and this goes with the first line of interpretation, the historical or literal. But then there is another meaning, in which the things meant by the words mean further things, and this is called a spiritual line of interpretation. It is based on

¹ In Latin, each line of interpretation was called a *sensus*, which came into English unaltered: we say that a verse has a literal *sense*, etc. This is regrettable, because our word 'sense' is also applied to individual words, where it means their descriptive force, so that a word, too, is said to have a literal sense and (perhaps) figurative ones. In a dangerous muddle, people think the literal sense of a passage will be the one that gives to each word its literal sense — which quickly leads to ridiculous results. Scholastic Latin did not court this confusion, because the descriptive force of a word was not called its *sensus* but its *significatum*, and the opposite of using a word figuratively was using it *propriè*, not *literaliter*. As a help to restore clarity, the present translation will reserve 'sense' for what individual words have (along with reference); a verse or passage, rather, will be said to have a line of interpretation, or a construal.

the literal line and presupposes it.

Now this spiritual line may be one of three. For, as the Apostle says in Hebrews 7:19, the Old Law is a figure of the New; the New Law in turn (as Denis says in *The Church Hierarchy*) is a figure of the glory that is to come; at the same time the deeds done by our Head in the New Law are signs of how we are to conduct ourselves. Therefore: insofar as things of the Old Law signify things of the New, there is an allegorical line of interpretation; insofar as things done by Christ or by those pointing to Him signify how we are to act, there is a moral line; and insofar as those things signify what goes on in eternal glory, there is an anagogic line.

Meanwhile, since the literal line of interpretation is what the author intends, but the author of holy Scripture is God, who in His understanding comprehends all things at once, it is not unsuitable at all if (as Augustine says in *Confessions XII*) there are multiple meanings even on the literal line of a single Bible passage.

TO MEET THE OBJECTIONS — *ad* (1): a plural number of these lines of interpretation does not make for equivocation or any other kind of polysemy; for (as I said) these several lines do not arise because a given word means many things but because the very things meant by the words can be signs of other things. Thus in holy Scripture no confusion arises: all the lines are based on one line, the literal; and argument can be drawn from it alone, not from the points said allegorically, as Augustine says in his letter against the Donatist, Vincentius. And yet this restriction does not impoverish the Scripture, because nothing necessary for the faith and contained on one of the spiritual lines fails to be gotten across elsewhere in Scripture plainly enough on the literal line.²

ad (2): three of those — history, aetiology, and analogy — belong to the one literal line. As Augustine himself explains, the meaning is history when a matter is just being presented; it is aetiology when a cause is assigned to the matter told, as when our Lord gives the reason (in Matthew 19:8) why Moses permitted divorce, *i.e.*, because of the hardness of their hearts. It is analogy when the truth of one Scripture is found not to conflict with the truth of another. Thus, on Augustine's list of four, only allegory is left to cover the three spiritual lines of interpretation. [And subsuming the other lines under allegory is not unheard of.] Hugh of St. Victor likewise put the anagogic under the allegorical, so as to posit (in the third of his *Opinions*) just three lines: historical, allegorical, and tropological.

² This generalization, sound enough in 1250, proved to be too optimistic when the Reformers attacked many traditional dogmas as unsupported on what they called the "literal line," which ignored the exegetical norms set by the Fathers.

PG 3, 501

c. 31,
PL 32, 844

Epist. 93, n. 8,
PL 33, 334

De sacramentis I.
Prolog., c. 4,
PL 176, 184

ad (3): parabolic meaning is part of the literal line of construal. For it is through words that something is meant in a proper sense and something in a figurative sense. The literal interpretation is not the figure itself but what is presented figuratively.³ For when Scripture

³ The figure is in the text but not in its literal interpretation. This interpretation takes the figure as it was intended to

speaks of the arm of the Lord, its literal interpretation is not that there is a body-part of this kind in God but that what is meant by [talk of] it, operative power, is in God. This shows how nothing false can ever come out of holy Scripture's literal line of interpretation.

be taken, that is, as a figure, as a metaphor. So what emerges as the literal interpretation is an unpacking of the metaphor.

Cajetan's Commentary

Analysis of the article, I

The title is clear. In the body of the article, there are two conclusions. The first answers the question in the affirmative: in its one text, sacred teaching has plural lines of interpretation, literal and spiritual, the latter being threefold, *i.e.* allegorical, moral, and anagogic.

The support is the difference between this science and the others, which comes from the difference between their authors. The Author of this teaching is God; of the rest, man. Therefore, it is in the power of this Author to arrange both words and things to mean something, which is not in the power of other authors. Thus, in the other sciences, words alone have meaning, while in this science both words and things have it. So in this science, there is a double line of interpretation, literal and spiritual. — All the inferences are obvious, and the last is explicated: from the meaning of words, one gets a literal line of interpretation; from the meaning of things, one gets a mystical line.

As to the latter part of this first conclusion [saying how many spiritual lines there are], it is explicated by distinguishing the three figurative lines, as is perfectly clear in the text.

How things get meaning

ii. In this first part, note that to "arrange a thing to mean something" is nothing but to make the thing be not only a thing but also a sign of other things.¹ But

¹ "Things" were *res*, and just as *res* were firmly distinguished from *objecta*, so, too, were they distinguished from *signa*. But whereas a thing became an object in a two-place relation (of the thing to a faculty), it became a sign in a three-place relation. For a thing is a sign of something else to an apprehender.

Formally speaking, the difference between things and signs is a matter of where they stand in this three-place relation: the *x* which means *y* to *z* is the *signum*, and the *y* which is what *x* betokens to *z* is the *res*.

At stake here is the fact that some items occur *normally* as signs of other things (because of a causal connection, as in "natural signs," or because of a mind-dependent system of semantics), and some do not. The word 'rock' occurs normally as a sign of something. A rock in the desert is not normally there as a sign of anything. It is just a *res* and means no-

this idea of things becoming signs can be understood in two ways:

- (1) *in the very coming-to-be of the things*, so that they come into being both to be things and to be signs of other things; and
- (2) *adventitiously*, so that things already there are taken to be signs.

If "arranging" for things to be signs is taken in the second way, it is not unique to God nor beyond human capability, nor is it unique to this science that things should "mean." The events narrated in non-sacred histories can be interpreted by us as signs of other things. And such interpretation is not limited to being a matter of emulation, saying that the strong deeds of the men of yore should be imitated by their successors, but can also be a matter of *meaning*, saying, for example, that those events are typical of what was done.² — But if "arranging" for things to mean something is taken the first way, there are again two ways to understand it:

- (1a) *universally* [all the things come into being both to be things and to be signs], or
- (1b) *particularly* [some of the things come into being to be both].

Understood particularly, it is still not beyond human capability. Anybody can make up an action, or make an artifact, and in so doing intend that it *mean* another thing. But that *all* the events told in a large number of

thing. But God can make the situation abnormal; He can so involve the rock in remembered events that it becomes a sign.

² In the centuries since Cajetan, more attention has been paid to historical writing, and it has become clear that all such writing, as narrative, involves arranging for things and events to have meaning. Emulation and typicality are secondary, however, to something more fundamental. For what is fundamental in narrative is that meaning emerges from the end-point chosen by the historian — the end or climax of the story; other events get their meaning (indeed, their inclusion in the narrative) by being contributions leading to, or hindrances overcome in getting to, this end.

Also since Cajetan's time, Modernism has developed an account of salvation history in which the meaning of events as "divine interventions" was of the adventitious kind. To use Cajetan's word, a projection of religious meaning onto events which were already there, or which would have occurred in any case.

stories — told as bearing on some teaching — should as such, in their very origin and *raison d'être*, be signs of other things — that goes beyond human ability. That belongs to God alone. And that is where the sacred learning outstrips other sciences.

The meaning of the present article, therefore, is this: for all the events pertaining to a discipline to be so arranged that, when they come to be, they arise as signs, is something unique to this learning, because it can be brought about only by the Author of this learning. For the rock whence water flowed in the desert for the Jews did not become a sign of Christ by any meaning imposed by us; rather, the reason water flowed from the rock in the first place was so that it might be in fact a water source *and* be a sign of Christ, who is the font of spiritual water. As the Apostle says, "they drank of the spiritual rock which followed them, and that rock was Christ." Ditto for other examples.

1 Cor. 10:4

Analysis of the article, II

iii. The second conclusion is: it is not unsuitable for there to be multiple meanings in a given passage of Scripture according to its literal interpretation.

This is supported in two ways. First, by reason. [*Premise:*] The author of holy Scripture is God, who grasps all things at once in His understanding; [*inference:*] so it is not unsuitable [that He should intend to convey many things at once] *etc.* The inference is supported on the ground that the literal line of interpretation is what the Author of Scripture intends. — Secondly, by authority. A reference is given to book XII of Augustine's *Confessions*.

iv. Concerning this conclusion a doubt arises. If literal interpretations can be multiple, there will be no certitude as to which meaning is intended as the literal one. Each reader will prefer his own exposition. And since we have no other clue to God's intention, all expositions of the text will have to be accepted as literal — or none.

v. TO ANSWER BRIEFLY, I should say that a text having many expositions can stand to them in two ways.

- (1) It can admit them all both in itself and in comparison with all other matters of faith.

And in that case, the multitude of literal expositions contributes to our industry and attests to God's greatness, as Augustine was saying in that quotation.³

- (2) It can admit them all in itself but not when compared with other texts of holy Scripture.

In that case, comparison can rule out those interpretations which conflict with other texts, and those which do not induce conflict can be accepted.⁴ For as Aquinas says in the answer *ad* (1), nothing necessary for salvation that is contained in holy Scripture fails to be put across clearly somewhere, *via* the literal interpretation (although it can be there obscurely in a given passage, because of the multitude of expositions). — And if this procedure of comparing an obscure text to a clear one should ever fail [to be effective], still, comparison of the obscure to the authority of holy Church is always available. From this authority we can get assurance not only as to Scripture's literal interpretation but also as to Scripture itself: "I would not believe the Gospel," says Augustine in his letter against the *Fundamentum*, "unless the authority of the Church told me to."

*Contra epistolam
Manichaei quam
vocat Fundamentum, c 5*

³ Plurality of valid expositions in the literal line of interpretation provides both a practical fruit (in that many different readers can find different but appropriate divine direction for their lives in a given Scripture passage) and a theoretical fruit (in that one and the same *interpreted text*, interpreted at a basic exegetical level, can admit multiple theological insights as tenable *further interpretations*). It is important that neither the personal directives nor the further theological interpretations be banished from Scripture wholesale, as though they were all eisegetical. Nothing justifies such banishment but the conviction that Scripture's author is less than God.

⁴ This is the first indication of how "proven results" differ from "unproven" ones in theology. The difference was mentioned by Cajetan in § *xii* of his commentary on a.2, but it will not be mentioned by Aquinas until q.32. Here Cajetan seems to understand that proven results are usually negative: an interpretation of Scripture at passage A has been found to conflict with its message at passage B, and so the interpretation is ruled out. Unproven points are usually positive, such as rival interpretations of passage A, which, so far, have not been found to conflict with anything in the revealed message. Hence they are tolerated by the Church and debated freely in the schools of theology. This important part of Christian liberty was not appreciated in some sects of Calvinism, where such debate conflicted with their demand that God's word be perspicuous.

On Neutral Potency¹

Q. 1. Is neutral potency found in natural things?

In my commentary on *1 ST* q.1, a.1, it was left as unfinished business to treat the question of neutral potency; so, the question is whether neutral potency is found in natural things. To answer it, four jobs are to be done. (1) The sense of the question will be clarified. (2) Scotus' opinion will be stated. (3) The opposite opinion will be supported. (4) The points on Scotus' side will be answered.

[Job] (1). 'Natural thing' is taken here as the opposite of 'artificial thing'. 'To be found in natural things' is taken for real occurrence in unqualifiedly individual, natural things (as opposed to things said in the abstract, as happens with the formal properties of quantities and the like, which are not actually found in the real). 'Potency' in this context is taken as receptive potency.² 'Neutral' denies natural inclination to such-and-such an act *and* to its oppo-

¹ The text was written in 1511 and reprinted in the standard collections of the Thomae de Vio Caietani, *Opuscula*. The occasion for the work was Cajetan's desire to finish his criticism of Scotus' opinion on why our last end had to be revealed to us. It was an intramural debate among Christian Aristotelians. Given their faith that man is open in his nature (*capax*) to receive a Vision which God alone has the active power to bestow, the adversaries had a single point in contention between them: should our potency to receive the Vision be called a "natural potency" in Aristotle's sense? Cajetan had dealt with Scotus' argument from authority but not with his two arguments from reason. These were an argument about natural inclination:

- (1) everything inclines naturally to its own highest completion;
 - (2) the Beatific Vision is the highest completion of our soul;
 - (3) so our soul inclines naturally to the Beatific Vision;
- and an argument about natural potency, with the premises
- (4) no potency is supernatural to its act but either natural, forced or neutral;
 - (5) if anything inclines naturally to an act, its potency to that act is a natural potency.

Since the final conclusion sought by Scotus was

- (6) our soul's potency to the Vision is a natural potency,
- the two arguments were needed together. In taking them up, Cajetan divided *De Potentia Neutra* into two inquiries. In the first he attacked premisses (4) and (5), and in the second, he attacked (1), (2), and (3).

² A "receptive potency" is a passive one. A potency is a property defined by specifying some "how" which is how a thing, *x*, can be in "act" (*i.e.* in actuality). Let A_0 be a type of actual state. Then a potency *P* of *x* is the property whereby *x* can be A_0 . If *x* is not actually A_0 , it is actually some other way, \bar{A}_0 , taken as an opposite to being A_0 ; either way, this potency is said to be "reduced to act" or to have "received" its act. To define a potency more exactly, one looks at different species or degrees of A_0 . Let these be the forms A_1, A_2, A_3, \dots , and let the set of them be $A_{(1)}$. Then any potency found to be a potency-to- $A_{(1)}$ (the genus) is automatically a potency to any species of it. By contrast, a potency known only as a potency-to- A_3 (one species) need not admit of being actualized by another species. The definition of a potency thus fixes its extent. Once defined, potencies are classified variously.

site (not just anywhere but) in a potency receptive to both. I say this because "neutral potency" might be imagined two ways. One is by negating potentiality to both: a potency-to-be-colored is not a potency to being a high-pitched sound, nor to being a low-pitched one. This situation is not called neutral potency, however, but "no potency." A potency-to-be-colored is just not receptive to a pitch. The other way to imagine it is by negating inclination in a potency receptive to both, as when we posit a certain surface receptive to being-white and to being-black and yet inclined to neither. This is what is properly meant by 'neutral potency'. So, the meaning of the question is this: is there found in natural things an individual potency receptive to some act and yet not inclined either to it or to its opposite?

[Job] (2). Scotus holds (in his remarks on *I Sent.*, *Prolog.*, q. 1, and on *II Sent.*, d.2, q.6) that there is such a thing as neutral potency. *Vis-à-vis* its act, he says, a receptive potency is either natural, forced, or neutral.

- It is natural in case it (the potency) is naturally inclined to that act;
- forced, in case the act is against its natural inclination;
- neutral, in case it is not inclined to the form it is receiving nor inclined to the opposite form.

An example of the first is the downward motion of a stone; of the second, the upward motion of a stone; of the third, a surface as regards its having whiteness or blackness.³ Scotus also holds that this neutral sort of potency

- Some are active (a can-do), while others are passive or receptive (a can-be-made). This division depends on whether the defining act-state A_0 is a type of operation (like flying) or a type of being-acted-upon (like being heated up).

- Some potencies arise from individual features of a thing, *x*, but others are nature-resident, *i.e.* arise from features which *x* shares with all members of its natural kind. This is the issue of the potency's "subject" or residence.

- In the case of receptive potencies, the phrase "ways to be made A_0 " is ambiguous. Besides suggesting various species or degrees of the act-state A_0 itself, it can be taken two other ways.

– On one construal, the ways are different causes (as a pot of water can be made hot by a stove or by a lightning strike). This is the issue of how a potency compares to the agent impressing an act-state upon it.

– On another, the ways are different adverbs, the most important of which are "naturally" and "forcibly", as water will become cool naturally but requires force to make it hot. A potency can thus be reduced to one act-type naturally and to another, its "opposite," forcibly. In some cases, the opposites are qualitatively different (contradictory opposites), and in other cases they differ only in degree (contrary opposites). This is the issue of the potency's "mode." The present inquiry asks whether "neutral" is a mode, and settling it requires determining criteria for judging a receptive potency "natural in mode" to a given act.

³ Since an undefined potency can hardly be compared to anything, Scotus must have assumed that an already defined potency was to be called natural or forced by looking at the inclination in

is found quite clearly in the angels, since the passive potency in the angel to be located in a place is neutral. He supports this on two grounds: (a) this passive potency is not inclined naturally to this form [location] nor to its opposite, and (b) if the angel were naturally in one place, it would be in any other place by force. He proves this latter by appeal to Avicenna, who wants to say that if the motion of a heavenly body were natural, it would terminate at a natural rest, and motion from there would be forced motion.

Other arguments for this opinion can be multiplied; but since they will all be dissolved by establishing the opposite opinion, the above points suffice.

[Job] (3). First, I set down a proposition and a distinction, by which the point I intend will be supported.

* The proposition is this: a natural thing's every potency [a] concerns* some act *per se primo* and [b] concerns it naturally.⁴ Part [a] is supported by *Metaphysics IX*, text 13, where it says that potency is defined through act. Beyond doubt, the act defining such-and-such a potency is one it concerns *per se primo*, since the potency would not correspond to an act it only concerns accidentally, and since an act it concerned *per se secundo* would not match the potency fully.⁵ Part [b] is supported from *Physics II*, text 78, where it says that each thing arises as it is naturally apt to arise, and *vice-versa*. But potency arises from nature and is for the sake of an act, as is clear in *Metaphysics IX*, texts 15 and 16. So potency arises naturally and is for the sake of an act. Therefore, it is for the sake of the act which it concerns *per se primo*. Thus, every potency concerns its *per se primo* act naturally. The reasoning here is clear enough from the texts cited and the points made in *Physics II* to the effect that nature acts for an end,

it. Inclination to the act A_0 would suffice to make the potency-to- A_0 a natural potency thereto, whereas such inclination to some opposite \bar{A}_0 would suffice to make the potency-to- A_0 a forced potency to A_0 . Given these assumptions, it seemed to Scotus that the potency might be receptive to A_0 and to \bar{A}_0 without inclination to either. It will be clearer to express the mode with a subscripted 'n', 'f' or 'i' attached to a verb like 'can'. If x has natural potency to A_0 , x can_n be made A_0 and can_f be made \bar{A}_0 . If x can be made A_0 but neither can_n be made A_0 nor can_f be made \bar{A}_0 , then x can_i be made A_0 and can_i be made \bar{A}_0 . This last is neutral potency, with 'i' for 'indifferently'.

⁴ '*Per se primo*' can mean different things in different contexts. Here it means 'of itself in the first sense of 'of itself''. Four senses of 'of itself' were recognized. In the first sense, a thing was related "of itself" to whatever appears in its scientific definition. A potency P will "of itself" concern the type of act mentioned in the definition of P .

⁵ '*Per se secundo*' means 'of itself in the second sense of 'of itself''. In this sense, a thing is related "of itself" to anything in whose definition it appears. For example, lines are curved or straight "of themselves" in the second sense, because 'line' appears in the definitions of 'curved' and 'straight'. Notice that 'line' appears there as the genus, while curved and straight are species of line. Thus, a defined potency P will concern "of itself" in the second sense any act-species falling under the type by which P is defined, for that type will appear as the genus in the definition of each species.

thanks to which those things which arise by nature are naturally inclined to the end, *etc.*⁶

* The distinction is this: a receptive potency can be compared to acts in four ways. For example, the potency-to-be-colored can be compared (a) to color, (b) to a species of color, (c) to a contrary of color [*i.e.* colorless, transparent], and (d) to disparate things, such as sounds. If it is compared to color, it is compared naturally and *per se primo*; if to a species of color, it is compared naturally but not *per se primo*; if to the contrary, forcedly;* if to disparate things, in no way [*nulliter*], unless perhaps incidentally. These points need no proof, since they are self-evident by the terms in which they are stated.⁷ Someone might raise the problem of acts to which a potency stands obedientially; but since the next inquiry is about this, and since Scotus does not put such cases under neutral potency, they are no obstacle to the present discussion.

Now, from these preliminaries, the opposite opinion is readily deduced, namely, that every potency in the real, in relation to an act receivable in it, is either natural or else forced, so that none is neutral⁸ (leaving aside for the moment obediential potency, as not bearing on the present topic). The conclusion is proved thus. [*Major:*] Every potency receptive to an act either concerns that act *per se primo* or concerns it *per se secundo* or concerns a contrary to these; [*minor:*] but it concerns naturally both the act it concerns *per se primo* and the one it concerns *per se secundo*, while it concerns forcedly a contrary to them. So every potency receptive to an act is either natural to that act or else forced to it. The minor is self-evident, and the major is supported thus: if there were a fourth kind of acts receivable in a potency, it would be disparate from what the potency concerns *per se*; but this is not possible; ergo a potency cannot receive any kind of

⁶ Cajetan is saying: the proximate basis for calling a potency P natural or forced is the scientific definition of P itself. This picks out the act-type to which P is reduced unless impeded. Relevant evidence about inclination would therefore have been gathered from observed frequency and taken into account in making that definition. So once P is defined as a potency-to- A_0 , there is no more room for asking about the inclination in it; there is nothing left to do but compare P to the act which is in fact received in it on a given occasion. Call this received act A_r .

⁷ He means: thanks to the definitions of 'natural' and '*per se primo*'. If A_r is identically A_0 or a species of A_0 , then it is truly-by-definition that a potency defined as potency-to- A_0 is a natural potency to A_r . And if A_r is an opposite to A_0 , it is again truly-by-definition that a potency defined as potency-to- A_0 is a forced potency to A_r . Thus, if some receptive potency of x is defined as a generic potency-to- $A_{(i)}$, then x can_n be made A_1 and thus can_n be made A_2 , A_3 , *etc.*; and if it is receptive at all to an act which would count as \bar{A}_1 , say B_2 , then it is forced to B_2 (*i.e.* x can_f be made B_2). If the potency is defined as just to A_0 , then x can_n be made A_1 ; and if it is receptive at all to an act counting as \bar{A}_0 , such as A_2 , it is forced to A_2 (x can_f be made A_2).

⁸ Beyond the modes *natural* and *forced*, Cajetan now argues that there is no other. He will appeal to the well-known Aristotelian points that opposites are in the same genus, and that a potency and its act are in the same genus.

act but the three enumerated.⁹ The impossibility just mentioned stands up inductively: the potency-to-be-colored has no potency to sounds, and the potency-to-be-heated has none to colors, and so on for the rest. It also stands to reason: a potency of one genus is not a potency to an act of another genus, as is clear in *Metaphysics XII*, in the treatise on the sources of the categories. And since this view stands to reason, we embrace it.¹⁰

c 4:
1070a 33ff

[Job] (4). The tripartite division made by Scotus is thus arbitrary as to its third member. What he adds about a surface does not help. For it is one thing to talk about surface in utter generality, and quite another to talk about such-and-such a physical surface found in the real. For “surface” taken in utter generality abstracts not only from white and black but from every sense property. There is even a surface which is repugnant to any color, such as the surface of a heavenly sphere. When one speaks of such-and-such a surface, then, *i.e.* one open to color, it as such is not said to be indifferent to white and black by exclusion of natural inclination but by exclusion of more such inclination to one than to the other. Such a surface looks naturally to color and to all its species — but to color *per se primo*, and to a species *per se secundo*. The case is similar with prime matter and the several substantial forms; it looks *per se primo* to form acquirable through change in any manner, while *per se secundo* it looks to this and that form. Thus it is naturally inclined to them all, or to many of them, not by exclusion of natural inclination to them, but by exclusion of more inclination to one form than to another.

As to what Scotus says about an angel’s potency to be located, it rests on a false assumption — namely, that an angel has passive potency with respect to place. For as is said in the treatise on angels, an angel’s being in a place is

1 ST q. 52, a. 1

⁹ The proof has gone as follows. If there is to be another mode, the receivable act A_r must be neither A_o nor any species of A_o nor any opposite to A_o or a species of it, in that case, A_r must not share a common genus with A_o . But then since a potency and its act cannot fail to share a genus, it follows that the potency-to- A_o is no potency at all to A_r , since that act is not receivable in it. Hence there is no other possible mode, and hence there is no third, “neutral” type of receptive potency.

¹⁰ As this first *quaestio* draws to an end, the reader will need to retain the following points for use in the next one.

First, since obediential potency has not been under discussion yet, “obediential” must not be a *mode* of potency.

Second, it does not follow that an obediential potency is either natural or forced. Mode is a division of the potencies discoverable in a natural science; it has no application to potencies knowable only by revelation. Why? Because potencies are not overt properties. Things must be seen *in act* in various circumstances, before their potencies are discovered. Supernatural act-states are not normally observable items: things cannot be seen to tend toward them or be impeded from them in normal circumstances.

Third, if a supernatural act-type, e.g. the Beatific Vision, is a *species* of a naturally known genus, e.g. acts of understanding, then if we have natural potency to the genus, we have it to the Vision *per se secundo*. Ergo, if our potency to the Vision is not natural, the Vision is not a species in that genus; in which case, supernatural Vision is only analogous to human understanding. Ditto for other supernatural act-types.

not a case of the angel’s receiving or “undergoing” placement but a case of its acting, touching the place through its power.* So there is nothing to concern us here but the angel’s active potency, which is natural but freely exercised. Furthermore, the remarks Scotus makes to prove his point about angels are not cogent because this inference of his,

* *virtus*

if x is naturally in a place, x is forcedly in any other, is invalid when construed formally.¹¹ This is clear from the several parts of the moon’s orb: each is naturally in the west and likewise in the east, but nowhere forcedly. And yet it changes place in itself† as well as in our account of it. The confirming argument from Avicenna also fails to convince, since what he says is only true of purely natural motion.¹² The motion of heavenly bodies is very natural as far as their potency to be located [*principium passivum*] is concerned (and this is why there is no “work” in it for the mover, as one sees from *De Caelo II*, text 3), but its active principle is animate. So the matter appears to be rather against Scotus’ intent: [if an angel’s motion were like a heavenly body’s] the angel’s motion would be natural as to its potency to be located [not neutral], but nothing unsuitable to my position would follow, as I just said about the motion of the heavens.

† *in subiecto*

c. 1:
284a 14

Q. 2: Is a potency receptive to supernatural acts a natural potency to them?

In connexion with the same article [1 ST q. 1, a. 1], an inquiry had to be made about whether a potency receptive to supernatural acts would be a natural potency to them. Four jobs need to be done. (1) The question will be clarified. (2) Scotus’ opinion will be stated. (3) That opinion will be examined. (4) The question will be answered.

[Job] (1). ‘Receptive potency’ is taken here formally, so that we are asking about the *potency as receptive* of its act, irrespective of how it may be as elicitive of its act.¹³ ‘Supernatural act’ means one which cannot be acquired in the course of nature, such as grace, charity, the Vision of God, and the like. A potency is being called “natural” not in the residential sense, *i.e.* as the potency in a nature, but in the formal sense, *i.e.* as potency naturally inclined. So, the sense of the question is this: are the potencies (found in natural things) in which supernatural act-states are received naturally inclined to those act-states?

[Job] (2). Scotus takes the affirmative side in his com-

¹¹ It is invalid because any place a thing can be located at all differs at most in species from any other place it can be located; so if x has potency to a genus of places, it will be “naturally” in any place in that genus, “forcedly” in none of them.

¹² The motion of the heavens is not “purely natural” because, while each heavenly body has natural potency to be moved [*principium passivum*], an animate and voluntary agent (an angel) is thought to move it as *principium activum*.

¹³ Some potencies or faculties both receive an input and elicit an output. Thus, our intellect is a receptive potency *qua* taking in an impressed species but active *qua* eliciting an act of understanding.

ments on *I Sent. Prolog.*, q.1, and on *IV Sent.*, d.49. He thinks that a potency can be compared both to the act it will receive and to the agent impressing that act. In the first comparison, he thinks there is no supernaturalism; rather, a potency is natural, forced, or neutral. Only in the second comparison does he think the split between natural and supernatural arises, since *vis-à-vis* an agent naturally impressing a certain act there is naturalness, and *vis-à-vis* one *not* naturally impressing it there is supernaturalism.¹⁴ Scotus confirms his position by the claims that a potency receptive to a supernatural act is [a] of itself capable of it (receptively), and is [b] naturally completed by that act when it has it, and [c] naturally seeks it. From these, it follows that the potency is naturally inclined to that act and so is a “natural potency” in respect to that act. He offers proof for each claim used. As to [a], a faculty* of the soul needs no intermediate [entity] in order to receive the act of charity, and the intellect needs none to receive the light of glory, etc. As to [b], a potency is naturally completed by an act-state which is a perfecting of it [and the Vision of God is the perfecting of human intellectual potency; ergo]. As to [c], each thing naturally seeks its own completion but most strongly seeks its greatest completion (by *Metaphysics I*); but a supernatural act-state such as the Vision of God is the greatest completion; ergo, etc. According to these statements, then, we are in natural potency to supernatural completions, even though we cannot acquire them in any way but supernaturally, because our acquiring them has to be caused by the supernatural agent, who is God all glorious.

[Job] (3). Three things seem poorly said in Scotus’ case, namely, the main conclusion, its support, and the use of terms. To begin with the last, he uses the term ‘super-

¹⁴ Christianity accepts possibilities alleging that one can be cured instantly by God, can be raised from the dead, can be made to “see” God. If Christianity is true, a supernatural possibility bespeaks a real potency — call it a can_s . How are we to add them to the kinds of potency discovered in natural science? Aquinas called the revealed potencies “obediential” and put them outside the natural-science types, because they were potencies to act-states connatural to God alone, not knowable without revelation, while the natural and forced potencies are to act-states connatural to creatures and knowable by natural science. Call them possible with can_n . Scotus did differently. He introduced a new division (natural vs. supernatural potencies) distinguished not by the character of the acts they receive but by the kind of cause it takes to reduce them to act. If the potency P could be reduced to A_n by a natural cause (he meant: a finite cause acting out of its nature), then the potency was “natural” to A_n (can_n); but if it could only be reduced to A_n by God, who acts *ad extra* only by choice (so that He is a Free Cause), then the potency was “supernatural” to A_n (can_s). In this new, cause-wise division, Scotus put all the revealed potencies into the supernatural slot; but in the pre-existing Aristotelian division (to which he had added neutral), Scotus put the revealed potencies into the slot of natural, on the ground that God does nothing by force. Notice, then, that the central technical term being fought over, ‘*potentia naturalis*’, could mean either can_n or can_s . In Thomism, can_n implied can_n , but in Scotism, can_n could naturally see God (can_n) but could not see Him naturally (can_n)!

natural’ badly.¹⁵ He calls every action of God *ad extra* supernatural, because God is a free agent rather than a natural one. But the use of ‘natural’ as an opposite of ‘supernatural’ is different from its use as an opposite of ‘free’. In the first use, one’s soul is produced “naturally;” in the second use it is not. Unless we wish to abuse words at the arbitrary pleasure of each speaker, we should use ‘supernatural’ to denote that in things which is above and beyond the reach of the order due to creatures. In ordinary use, we all distinguish natural things from supernatural on the basis that the one arises by the due order of nature, while the other arises above and beyond that order.¹⁶

Next, Scotus’ case either assumes a false [major] premise or else begs the question [in its minor premise]. His major says a potency is *naturally* completed by its own act own act and *naturally* seeks its own completion. Here the phrase ‘its own’ either means “its own” by form-reception* (actual or possible) or else means “its own” by *natural* proportion or inclination. If it means the first, his major is false; for a heavy thing existing high up is not naturally but forcedly completed by being high up, and yet being-high-up is “its own” act and completion by form-reception. But if ‘its own’ means the second, his minor premise [that the supernatural Vision is the greatest completion] begs the question. For this is the very point to be proved, namely, that a natural potency has a

¹⁵ In Job (3), Cajetan is rebutting Scotus’ case for the affirmative. In Job (4), he will present his own case for the negative.

¹⁶ The conflict between Scotist usage and ordinary language will be explored more deeply below, in the case for the negative. Here in the rebuttal, Cajetan is content to point out a glaring example. It was standard doctrine that the matter involved in human generation can receive the rational soul, but only God reduces this potency to act. Scotus’ definitions of can_n and can_s yielded the awkward result that human gametes, even upon uniting, do not naturally become human beings. Scotus tried to evade by saying that human germinal matter “disposes” to the soul and that anything to which a creature disposes is cause-wise natural (can_n). Cajetan pays no attention to this move, because despite any disposition from the matter, infusing the soul remains God’s act, and so the reception should be a can_s .

Cajetan thinks Scotus fell into a muddle by failing to think through clearly the meaning of ‘natural’ in the distinctive theological use in which it contrasts with ‘supernatural’. In theology, one sees that this contrast requires the following account. What pertains to the creation-and-interaction-of-creatures is the *ordered set of naturally knowable causes and their effects* — and this is what is “natural.” Everything connatural to creatures and/or “due” to them is within that set. (On the notion of what is “due” to creatures, see *De Veritate*, q.6, a.2.) By contrast, what God effects beyond that set, like the salvation of creatures, and what He is in Himself, is “above” creatures, connatural to God alone, and knowable by revelation alone — and this is what is “supernatural.” Such is the Christian *public use* of these terms, and any other use is at best a private jargon. Scotus fell into jargon by giving every use of ‘natural’ a meaning contrasting with ‘free’. The unsatisfactory character of the result is seen in the same example: God’s infusion of the human soul is free (since it is not from any necessity of God’s nature, not coerced) and yet it is called “natural” in theology, *not* supernatural, because having a soul after conception pertains to the *creation* of human beings and is connatural, *i. e.*, nature-set, for us.

* *potentia*

c. 1.
980a 23–28

* *informatio*

supernatural act as “its own” completion *in this way* [i.e. by natural proportion or inclination].¹⁷ Also, what he says about immediate reception makes no difference. With immediacy, bronze receives the shape of [the god] Mercury; yet it does not receive it naturally [but by art].

At the end, then, Scotus’ conclusion is left hanging in thin air, and it will be shown to be unreasonable by establishing the opposite.

[Job] (4). The [right] conclusion in answer to the question is that potency to supernatural acts is not “natural” but obidental. This is supported on three grounds.

The first looks at acts. Supernatural act-states are of two kinds those that are supernatural in themselves, like grace, and those that are supernatural in how they occur, like sight given to a blind man. In itself, seeing is a natural act in man, but its being given to a blind person in-

¹⁷ Cajetan finds an ambiguity in the premise that everything naturally seeks (seeks_n) its own completion. Does it mean that every potency seeks_n the completions receivable in it, especially the greatest? Or does it mean that every potency seeks_n the completions proportionate to it, especially the greatest? On the first reading, the argument becomes this:

every potency seeks_n the fullest completion receivable in it;
the Beatific Vision is the fullest receivable in our soul;
so our soul seeks_n the Beatific Vision.

The first premise of this reading is false according to the cosmology common to both schools. For in that cosmology, high places are fuller completions than low places; a high place is receivable in a stone’s potency-to-be-located, but no stone seeks_n such a place. On the other reading, the argument becomes this:

every potency seeks_n the fullest completion proportionate to it,
the Vision is the fullest completion proportionate to our soul;
so our soul seeks_n the Beatific Vision.

But now the second premise is false, unless the Beatific Vision is proportionate to our soul, which was the very point that had to be proved. Thus Scotus begs the question.

Behind this rebuttal, lie divergences over analogy and proportionate object. For Scotus, an act-type can remain generically the same in finite and infinite tokens, so that a name of that act-type can be used univocally of creatures and of God. For Aquinas, not so. An act-token in God has to be diverse in its *ratio* from any act-token in a creature (1 ST q.13, a.5), so that any name applied to both will be used analogously and cannot serve as the name of a genus. So for Scotus, there can be (and there are) supernatural species of a naturally known genus. But for the Thomists, there are not and cannot be. This is one of the issues that tie the two questions in *De potentia neutra* together (see above, note 10).

On the topic of proportionate object, Aquinas had a scheme correlating what is knowable to a kind of intellect by its natural powers with the mode of being enjoyed by that kind of intellect. The scheme was laid out in 1 ST q.12, a.4, and Scotus disagreed with it radically. It was in dispute, then, between the schools, whether what the human intellect could know *naturaliter/proportionaliter* was just the quiddities of material things (as Aquinas taught also in 2/1 ST q.3, a.6, and in *Compendium Theologiae* c.104). It was in dispute between the schools whether knowing God’s essence exceeded the proportion of human nature as Aquinas taught in *De Veritate* q.27 a.2, with the corollary that our seeking after it was not the seeking that flows from our nature but the one infused as *charitas*. So Scotus’ argument about inclination begs many questions. Its weakness is suggested by a paraphrase:

everything inclines naturally to its own sort of completion;
the Vision is merely analogous to our sort of completion;
so, we incline naturally to it anyway (?!)

stantly is supernatural. Charity, on the other hand, and such acts are supernatural in themselves, with the result that it would imply a contradiction to say they are nature-set* (or come about in a nature-set way) for any creature real or possible. Scotus agrees and says the same at *II Sent.* d.23.¹⁸ So then: if there is no natural potency to an act which is supernatural in how it occurs, *a fortiori* there is no natural potency to acts which are supernatural in themselves. Our ordinary use of language, in which we deny a natural potency to miracles, shows clearly that in nature there is no natural potency to those acts. [Ergo there is none to acts supernatural in themselves.] Furthermore, from this it follows that supernaturality does not arise solely in comparing a potency to an agent [as Scotus supposed], because of supernatural acquiring of the act, but also arises in comparing a potency [directly] to an act, because of the act’s supernaturality in itself.¹⁹

* *connaturalis*

¹⁸ Scotus did not deny that act-states such as grace and the Vision are supernatural on an intrinsic basis. But he would only call *potencies* supernatural on the cause-wise basis explained above (note 14). So ‘supernatural’ in ‘supernatural potency’ differed in meaning from the same word in ‘supernatural act’ for Scotus, because “what the Free Cause alone can bring about” need not be a thing “connatural to God alone.” The infusion of the soul was one example, and created existence is another: only God can bring it about, but what is connatural to Him alone is Uncreated existence, not created.

¹⁹ This *a fortiori* argument is quite powerful. The public standards of Christian discourse demand two standards of possibility: a natural can_n, under which miracles are not possible, and a supernatural can_s, under which they are. For miracles are “beyond nature,” can’t “naturally” happen, we are not “naturally” able to be healed this way or raised from the dead, etc. Cajetan’s first proof appeals to this standard. It will be well to approach the proof with a reminder of what he did to prepare for it. If Scotus’ way of using ‘natural’ and ‘supernatural’ had been left standing, it would have been uncertain at this point what bearing the natural standard of possibility had upon the talk of natural potency (can_n). For Scotus had said that man can_n see God, though he can’t naturally (can_n) do so but only supernaturally (can_s). He had thus allowed a natural potency to be affirmed in cases where all natural possibility was being denied. But now, with Scotus’ usage exposed as an arbitrary private jargon, there is nothing to support so counter-intuitive an outcome. The talk of possibilities and potencies is free to resume along sensible, unnumbered lines. Well, the sensible thing to say, surely, is that if it takes a miracle to bring a state of affairs about, its components are not in natural potency to it. Allow the subscript ϕ to be replaced by adverbial phrases, such as ‘instantly’ or ‘without medicine’. Then A_n may be replaced by an item like ‘cured instantly’, so that we have a typical case of miracle:

(1) if it is only possible_s for x to be cured instantly,

then it is not the case that x can_n be cured instantly.

Claim (1) conforms to standard Christian discourse. From this conformity, Cajetan launches his *a fortiori* argument. If a creature x is in non-natural potency to a mere cure, which is only adverbially different from an act-state belonging to its nature (to get well gradually), then it is *all the more* in non-natural potency to things like grace, which are intrinsically different from any act-state belonging to x ’s nature. In a word: if adverbial difference un-naturalizes potency, any greater difference does so. If this is persuasive, then it is correct to go from (1) to the more general claim

The second ground looks at potencies. "To every natural passive potency there corresponds a proximate active potency;" ergo there corresponds a natural active potency. The antecedent is the very general major assumed by Aristotle to prove that there exists an agent intellect (*De Anima III*, text 17); it is based on his point that, in every nature, there has to be an active factor where there is a patient [receptive] one; and it is certain that he was talking about a proximate agent, not the [remote] First Agent; otherwise he would not have quantified over natures, saying "in every nature," etc. Scotus is thereby precluded from saying that the First Agent suffices [to provide the active factor corresponding to a natural passive potency]. [So the antecedent is sound.] The inference [from there to the point that the corresponding active power is natural] is valid because a supernatural power is not the proximate active factor to a natural potency, as is evident from the meanings of the words. For the natural is cognate only to the natural.²⁰

c.5
430a 10ff

(2) if it is only possible_s for x to be A_4 , then it is not the case that x can, be made A_4 where the substitution values of ϕ need no longer be adverbial but may also be any act-species. But if (2) is correct, so is its transposition

(3) if x can_n be made A_4 , it is not only possible_s for x to be A_4 and all of Scotus' counter-intuitive cases are excluded, along with the cause-wise definitions that generated them.

But if the public standards of Christian discourse exclude Scotus' approach, do they impose Aquinas'? To answer, one needs to grasp the heart of the two approaches. In Scotus, the logical relation between the two standards of possibility is inclusion: whatever is naturally possible is supernaturally possible, because whatever a natural cause can do, the free Cause can do:

if anything is possible_n, it is possible_s but not conversely. In the Thomist school, the logical relation between the two standards was exclusion:

if anything is possible_n, it is not possible_s and so, by transposition,

if anything is possible_s, it is not possible_n. For if some thing or event were possible under both standards, it would have the contradictory character of being connatural to some creature and connatural to God alone. Once the heart of the two approaches is clear, one can see that the public standards of Christian discourse impose Aquinas' approach simply by giving the word 'supernatural' the same meaning in 'supernatural potency' as it has in 'supernatural act'. For as soon as 'supernatural potency' means one connatural to God alone, 'natural potency' will mean one connatural to some creature, and then no potency can be both.

²⁰ Since natural was opposed to forced potency for Aristotle, a "natural passive potency" was not just any vulnerability to be changed. It was a thing's receptivity to change towards a more complete state along its own line of development. Since our specific difference is rationality, Aristotle thought, a human being's development lay along the line of understanding. Thus our receptivity to the means of understanding (*the species intelligibiles*) was a "natural passive potency." Scotus had this thinking in mind, when he argued that the sight of God was the greatest "completion" for our understanding, and that our receptive potency to it was therefore "natural." Having already criticized this move on other grounds, Cajetan now shows that it destroys Aristotle's argument for the existence in us of an active power-to-understand, called an agent intellect. That argument required the premise that, to every natural passive potency P in a given

The third ground looks at the subject [in which the alleged natural potency to a supernatural act would inhere]. Since ideal scientific knowledge* of a thing x is a sufficient basis for knowing [deducing] all x 's properties, and since all difficulties that come up about x are solved by appeal to this kind of knowledge, as it says in *Physics IV*, it follows that all of x 's natural potencies can be known if x itself is known in the ideally scientific way. And since knowledge of a potency depends upon knowledge of its act (as it says in *Metaphysics IX*, it follows that the acts to which these natural traits are potencies would be known. And since such acts are supernatural in Scotus' view, it follows from all of the above that [on his view] supernatural things would be known from ideal scientific knowledge of a natural thing which is transparently false. And here is a confirming argument. We know for sure this major premise: no natural potency is entirely unactualized*. Therefore, suppose we know this minor premise: there is found in something (be it matter, or the soul, or whatever) a natural potency to a supernatural act. Then there is no dodging our knowing this conclusion: supernatural things have to be. We will know the future resurrection of the dead [in a natural science] and sanctifying grace [in a natural science], etc. Which is ridiculous.

No harm is done to this argument by Scotus' parry that the soul remains unknown under this description ['naturally in potency to supernatural acts']. For ideally

nature, there corresponds an active power P' in that nature. So, if rocks get complete by being in low places, they have an active power (a heaviness) to get there. And if man develops by receiving the means to understand, he has an active power (agent intellect) to do so. For Scotists as well as Thomists, this argument of Aristotle's had to hold water, because it was their defense against the Averroists. Thus neither school could allow the above premise to be false. But, says Cajetan, Scotus' move makes it false. It posits a natural passive potency (to the Vision) in man with no corresponding active power in human nature to secure it (both schools admitting that the agent intellect could not). Therefore, *contra* Scotus, our potency to the Vision must not be natural but obdiential (a can_s).

At this point, however, the reader needs to appreciate the differences between the argument about natural potency and the argument about natural desire (raised by the commentary on 1 *ST* q.12, a.1). First, the issue here is naturalness in mode, not in residence. Second, intellectual desire bears upon an intentional, propositional object. Potency does not. (*Cf. De Veritate* q.27, a.2, *sed contra* 6). Hence Cajetan's argument here, that our natural-in-mode passive potencies cannot be to act-states exceeding the scope of our natural active powers, says nothing against his argument elsewhere (on 1 *ST* q.12, a.1) that, if we are considered theologically, our nature-resident intellectual desire is seen to extend to an object which our natural active powers cannot secure. For man considered theologically is in an environment of revelation, which provides new topics for knowing and desiring, to which an already nature-resident desire in us will extend without ceasing to be nature-resident. But our natural-in-mode potencies remain just what they are, regardless of how we are considered. Hence Cajetan saw no contradiction in holding that our potency to see God is obdiential, while our desire to see Him is (residentially) natural. (This "desire," by the way, is just nature-resident wonder, not a salvific inclination to seek God. The latter is not natural at all; it is the infused gift of *charitas*. See *De Veritate* q.27, a.2.)

* *quidditativa*

c.4;
211a 5-11

c.8;
1049b 15ff

* *frustra*

scientific knowledge of any x leaves nothing natural to x unknown, since it formally or virtually contains the whole knowledge of x . This cannot be evaded by saying that x cannot be known to us in this life in the properly and ideally scientific way; for whether this is so or not, my argument goes through — *i.e.*, that from ideally scientific knowledge of natural things (whether we may have it in this life or not) one can have knowledge of supernatural things. And thus, *revelation* about grace, the blessedness promised to the saints, the resurrection, and so forth — all things to which Scotus posited a natural receptive potency which is not entirely unactualized — will not be necessary

absolutely but only in a certain respect, only for our present state of life. And that is transparently false.²¹

²¹ In Aristotle's sense of 'natural', if man has *natural* potency to supernatural acts, ideal natural science will predict their occurrence. Does anyone seriously expect this? Surely not. For even in the next life, supernatural realities are revealed (see *De malo* q.2, a.5; 1 *ST* q.12, aa.4-5; Cajetan's comments on 1 *ST* q.1, a.2, §§ *viii* and *x-xi*, and on 1 *ST* q.1, a.3, §§ *viii-ix*). Faith yields to sight because divine light revealing in obscurity yields place to the divine light *revealing* with evidentness — not because we do better natural science in Heaven. Ergo our potency to such acts is non-natural in Aristotle's sense.





Treatise 2. The one God: That He exists and what He is not

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Inquiry Two: Into whether God exists

According to the points made above, the main intent of this sacred learning is to communicate knowledge of God not only as He is in Himself but also as He is the origin of things and the ultimate purpose or goal of things — especially the goal of rational creatures. Therefore, in our undertaking to expound this learning, we shall deal

(I) with God

(II) with a rational creature's movement towards God

(III) with Christ, who, as man, is the way for us to move by inclination towards God.

Part I, the treatment of God, will itself cover three areas. We shall deal (A) with the topics that pertain to God's essence; (B) with those that pertain to the distinction of persons; (C) with those that pertain to the flowing out of creatures from God.

Concerning area (A), God's essence, then, the first problem to tackle is whether God exists. (The second will be what characteristics He has, or rather, does not have. The third will pertain to His activities of knowing, willing, and exercising power.) On the first problem, three questions are asked:

- (1) is it self-verifying that God exists? (2) is it open to demonstration? (3) is there a God?

article I

Is the proposition that God exists self-verifying?

In I Sent d.3, q.1, a.2, 1 *CG* cc.10-11, 3 *CG* c.38; *de Veritate* q.10, a.12;
De Potentia Dei q.7, a.2 ad 11; in *Psalm* 8, in *Boethius de Trin.* q.1, a.3 ad 6

That God exists would seem to be self-verifying [or self-warranting or self-evident].*

* *per se notum*

(1) We call points self-evident in case the knowledge of them is naturally put into us. First principles are clear examples. Well, John Damascene says at the beginning of his book that "knowledge of God's existence is naturally put into us all." Therefore the proposition that God exists is self-evident.

De fide orthodoxa
I, c.1; *PG* 94, 789

(2) Besides, we call propositions self-verifying in case they are known to be true as soon as their terms are understood. Aristotle says in *Posterior Analytics I* that the starting points of conclusive proofs[†] pass this test. As soon as one knows what "a whole" is, for example, and what "a part" is, one knows at once that the whole is greater than its part. Well, as soon as one understands what the term 'God' means, one immediately gets the point that God exists. For the sense of 'God' is that than which nothing greater can be meant. But what exists in the real as well as in thought is greater than what exists in thought alone. So, since God exists in thought as soon as the term 'God' is understood, it follows that He also exists in the real. Ergo, the proposition that God exists is self-verifying.

c.2; 72a7-8
† *demonstratio*

cf. Anselm,
Proslogion

ON THE OTHER HAND, no one can even think the opposite of what is self-verifying, as is clear from Aristotle's remarks about the starting points of demonstration in *Metaphysics II*[‡] and in *Posterior Analytics I*.[§] But a person can think the opposite of the proposition that God exists, says Psalm 52:1, "The fool hath said in his heart, there is no God." Therefore it is not self-verifying

‡ c.3; 1005b 11
§ c.10; 76b 23ff

ing that God exists.

I ANSWER: a point can be self-verifying in two ways: [a] in itself but not to us, or [b] in itself and to us. A proposition is self-verifying by virtue of the fact that its predicate is included in a scientific account of its subject.¹ An example is "Man is an animal", because being animal is included in the right account of man. Thus if everyone knows the predicate and subject well enough to know the what-it-is of each,* the proposition will be self-verifying to all. This clearly happens with the starting points of those demonstrations whose terms are general notions that no one fails to know, like 'is' and 'is not', 'whole' and 'part', etc. But in a case where the subject or predicate is not well enough known in some circles as to what it is, the proposition will be self-verifying in itself but not to the people in those circles. Thus it can happen (says Boethius in *De Hebdomadibus*) that some points

* *quid est*

Pl. 64, 1311

¹ The Latin says a proposition is *per se nota* in case its predicate is included in *ratione subjecti*. One is tempted to think, "in the definition of the subject," since '*ratio*' meant this in one of its uses. But the temptation should be resisted. 'Definition' today is rarely used as '*ratio*' was. Today a definition is just a linguistic convention, taken to have no empirical content. For Aquinas, a *ratio* was a scientific achievement, with good empirical content, yielding knowledge of what it takes to fit a given description. Thus the *ratio* of a term *T* was what it took for anything to be a *T*-thing, and this in turn was captured by an explanatory account of *T*-things. So, '*ratio*' will be rendered with 'account', 'explanation', 'basis', or the what-it-takes idiom — not with 'definition' unless modified by 'real' or 'scientific'.

are general acquisitions of the mind and self-verifying, but only to the learned. An example is 'Incorporeal things are not in a place'.

I say, then, that this proposition, 'God exists', taken in itself, is self-verifying, because the predicate picks out the same *reality* as the subject: God is His existence, as will emerge below. But since we do not know enough about God to know what He is, it is not self-verifying to us. It needs rather to be established by appeal to points better warranted to us (even if less warranted in nature), *i.e.*, by appeal to His effects.

TO MEET THE OBJECTIONS — *ad* (1): insofar as God is our fulfillment, what is naturally put into us is a vague knowledge that God exists, latent in the general idea [of fulfillment]. After all, people naturally desire fulfillment, and what we naturally desire we naturally know about. But this is not the same as knowing that God exists in the straight-forward sense of 'knowing it'.² For example, knowing that someone is coming is

² If we naturally desire happiness, we know there is such a thing: but knowing this is not the same as knowing there is a God, even though God "is" our happiness (in a sense to be explained in 2/1 ST q. 1, a. 7). The reason is that verbs of thinking, knowing, or desiring create an opaque context, in which ordinary identicals (such as Peter = the one coming) cannot be substituted for one another *salva veritate*. So even if (in real terms) man's happiness = God, the state of affairs

not the same as knowing that Peter is coming, even if Peter is in fact the one coming. After all, many people think our fulfillment (complete good) is riches; some think pleasure is where it's at; others have another opinion.

ad (2): perhaps the audience that hears the word 'God' does not understand it to mean "something than which nothing greater can be thought." [Then 'God exists' will not be self-verifying to that audience; and there is no reason to disallow such an audience.] After all, some people have believed that God was a body. But even supposing that the audience understands 'God' to mean what is claimed, *i.e.*, 'that than which nothing greater can be thought', it still does not follow that the audience understands this sense of the term to be instantiated in the real; it only follows that the sense is apprehended by the mind. And there is no way to argue that it *is* in the real, unless it is granted that an item than which no greater can be thought is in the real which is not granted, of course, by those who hold that God does not exist.

ad (3): that truth in general exists is self-verifying, but that a First Truth exists is not self-verifying to us.

that Jones *desires* happiness does not imply that Jones *desires* God, any more than his being enough of an optimist to believe in real happiness (fulfillment) implies his believing in God.

Cajetan's Commentary

In the title question of this first article, the 'self' in 'self-verifying' means 'not through another term as means of proof', and 'verifying' connotes 'with obviousness'. For the sort of proposition we call self-verifying is the sort recognized as true with unmistakable obviousness just from its own terms, as one learns from *Posterior Analytics I*. So the title is asking whether 'God exists' is obviously self-evident.

c. 3:
72b 25

Analysis of the article, I

ii. In the body of the article Aquinas does two jobs: (1) he subdivides 'self-verifying proposition', and (2) he answers the question. As to job (1), the subdivision is this: a self-verifying proposition may be so in itself alone or both in itself and to us; in the latter case, it may be so to us all or to the learned alone. Thus emerges the tripartite division in the text.

The difference and subdivision are clarified as to how they emerge from the root idea of a self-verifying proposition in general. A proposition whose predicate is contained in the scientific definition of its subject is a self-verifying one. Hence a proposition such that (a) its predicate is contained there and (b) its subject and predicate are terms whose appropriate definitions are known to us all, is self-verifying in itself and to us. An example is 'Anything is or isn't'. A proposition whose predicate is contained in the real definition of its sub-

ject, but that definition is unknown to us, is one that is self-verifying only in itself. Therefore, a proposition whose predicate is contained in the scientific definition, *etc.*, and such a definition is familiar to the experts, is one that is self-verifying in itself and to the learned. An example is 'Incorporeal things are not in a place.' This member of the division is confirmed by the authority of Boethius.

On self-verification

iii. Concerning this part, be aware that the reason a self-verifying proposition *p* is called "self" (*i.e.* not through another term as means) verifying is because 'self' excludes any other term as middle and hence excludes any other premise *q* that could serve to make it known that *p*. And since a proposition can be made known *a priori* and *a posteriori*, the term 'self' has to be distinguished as to whether it:

- excludes only a means of proof *a priori* or
- excludes both *a priori* and *a posteriori* means.¹

For in every case of a self-verifying proposition whose predicate is contained in the real definition of its subject, 'self' must always exclude a means of proof *a priori*-

¹ The proof of a proposition *p* was called *a priori* if its premisses stated a cause or explanation of what *p* stated. The proof was called *a posteriori* when its premisses stated consequences or effects of what *p* stated.

ori; but since terms may be immediately connected as they are in themselves and yet have a middle term between them as they are known to us, 'self' does not always exclude a means of proof *a posteriori*. This is why, in the article, 'self-verifying proposition' was subdivided with the difference between known and unknown terms — a difference among propositional subject or predicate terms as they are known to us.² Those propositions whose terms are immediately connected both in themselves and as they are known to us are self-verifying to all. Those whose terms are immediately connected as they are in themselves, but are not so connected as they are known to us, are self-verifying only in themselves, not to us. Likewise, those whose terms are immediately connected as they are known to the learned, are self-verifying to the learned.³

² Terms are "as they are in themselves" when they are taken as optimal science (which we may not have) would define them.

³ Inevitably, people compare *per se notae* propositions with the ones called "analytic" in more recent philosophy. Both are said to have the predicate contained in the "definition of the subject." But analytic propositions are restricted to being those whose predicate is in the *verbal or nominal definition* of the subject, with the result that analytic propositions are restricted to being those that are (in the vocabulary of this article) self-verifying to us all. The idea of a proposition's being analytic "in itself but not to us" is thus excluded, and the idea of a proposition's being analytic only "to the learned" has been allowed to be transformed in a relativistic way.

Take this example: 'A lunar eclipse is the shadow of the earth cast upon the moon'. Aristotle prized this as a *definitio* (*Posterior Analytics* 93a 23). But it reflects a discovery of what causes eclipses, and "definitions" today are supposed to be rules of use gathered just in acquiring the ability to speak one's native tongue. Children learn that 'eclipse' means a temporary disappearance without learning what causes the phenomenon; so the cause is not part of "what 'eclipse' means" verbally. Hardly any recent philosopher, then, would call our example analytic. At the same time, however, it is acknowledged that specialized definitions are accepted in various cultures, world-views, or theories. Our example is then called "analytic to Western astronomers." If 'A lunar eclipse is a warning of plague' is analytic to Hutu astrologers, then since the phenomena discussed in the two theories are taken to differ *by definitio*, it follows that our astronomy and their astrology are not rival accounts of the same object. Our science is about an object that does not even exist in the Hutu universe, and *vice-versa*. Thus, when the notion of analyticity is extended to cover specialized definitions, it results in the epistemological relativism of Kuhn and Feyerabend.

This result should be seen as a *reductio ad absurdum* of the idea that a term's reference is set by its definition. But it also casts doubt on the modern effort to isolate definitions from empirical content and thereby put a hermetic seal between analytic and "synthetic" propositions. No such seal is tight, because there is no hard frontier between what we mean by our words and what we learn about the world. There is at best a porous and shifting frontier.

In its post-medieval beginnings, concentration on verbal definitions was occasioned by despair at finding the real definitions that Aristotle called *logoi* and Aquinas called *rationes*. Early modern science had shattered confidence in Aristotle's *logoi* and had not yet provided better ones. Today the despair is an affectation. *Rationes* are available by the thousands, for

iv. Concerning this part there are many doubts, and arguments have been advanced against it by Scotus, Aureol, and Gregory. But since these issues pertain to my book on the *Posterior Analytics*, where I treated the matter at length in chapter 3, interested readers can see the whole debate there, with my solutions to the objections. I shall not repeat them.

There is one point, however, which needs mention. In the article above, 'self-verifying proposition' is not being *defined* by the words saying that its predicate is contained in the real definition of the subject. Rather, a causal condition is being given: *because* the predicate is contained there, the proposition is rendered self-verifying, and this transposes [if a proposition is not self-verifying, its predicate is not contained there].⁴ I say this because, for St. Thomas, it is quite true that every proposition whose predicate occurs in the scientific definition of its subject is self-verifying, but the converse is not true.

[Not every self-verifying proposition has its predicate in the proper definition of its subject.] For when one category-term is denied of another [e.g. 'substance is not quantity'], and when a first modification is predicated of its immediate subject [e.g. 'a line is what is curved'], the resulting propositions are without middle term in themselves and hence are self-verifying in themselves. [Yet the proper definition of 'substance' does not include 'is not quantity', and Euclid did not include 'what is curved' in his definition of a line. So not every self-verifying proposition has its predicate in the *ratio* of its subject.]

If St. Thomas seems to write elsewhere* as if he were defining 'self-verifying' this way, the talk of being "in" the definition of the subject should be glossed with 'formally or proximately virtually'. But one should not adopt or extend this way of speaking, because it is less correct.

* e.g. in q 17, a 3 ad 2

Analysis of the article, II

v. As to job (2), the conclusion answering the question is this: 'God exists' is self-verifying in itself but not to us. — The first part of it is supported on the basis that the predicate picks out the same reality as the subject. The second part is supported on the ground that we do not know the *what-it-is* of the subject. — Thence a corollary follows: the truth of this proposition needs to be shown *via* a means of proof from our point of view, that is, by an effect *a posteriori*. This last is clear because the proposition in question is not evident to us and has no means of proof *a priori*.

everything from stars to atomic particles. Scientific definitions seem almost within reach for biological species. The idea of a real definition that we seek and do not yet possess is thus coherent again, even familiar. So the idea of a proposition "self-verifying in itself but not to us" should no longer seem odd.

One must admit, however, that the gap between real definitions and verbal ones has turned out to be wider than Aquinas could have anticipated. Thought without experiment can no longer bridge it.

⁴ The truth of the transposition meant that the causal condition stated was what we call today a sufficient condition.

To silence Anselmian resistance

vi. In the answer to the second objection [where two responses are given.] you should know that some writers have made a rather annoying rejoinder to the second response, as if to strengthen their argument:

So according to you, what exceeds all thought does not exist; but [*inference*:] in that case it does not outstrip every thinkable thing, which is contrary to what the term 'God' means.

To support this inference, they say:

because it doesn't outstrip an existing thinkable thing; and if it did exist, it would be thought greater than any thinkable thing.

vii. But this rejoinder is just a restatement of the original objection, and so it can be met with the same response, distinguishing the consequent. "Outstripping every thinkable thing" happens in two arenas: (1) in the real, (2) in being thought. I do not mean that being-in-the-real or being-thought is itself the advantage. I am using these phrases just to situate the things thought. For example, think of the traits of the perfect orator. They can be [depicting him] outstripping every orator in two ways: (1) with his advantage in the real, (2) with his advantage in being-thought. In the first way, one must posit that the perfect orator exists. In the second way, one need not; it suffices that "the perfect orator" have the being of an object of thought. For we say that the basis of his advantage lies in the nobility of the thought-up traits in themselves.

So, in the present context, from a premise saying,

What exceeds every thinkable thing does not exist,

it follows perfectly well that

therefore what exceeds every thinkable thing does not outstrip in real existence every thinkable thing.

Indeed, it does not outstrip in that arena a grain of sand, or the least thing existing. But it is not valid to infer

therefore what exceeds every thinkable thing does not exceed in itself, as an object of thought, every thinkable thing.

For in this arena it does outstrip every thinkable thing.

— And when the rejoinder goes on to say,

It would be a greater thinkable, if it did exist in the real,

I deny this flatly. A rejoinder like this comes either from mistaking the sense we give to the word 'God' — with these writers believing that, when our response accepts their verbal definition of 'God', we mean to say, "Since 'God' has this sense, *i.e.*, 'a greater than any other thinkable thing', it means an item full of every perfection *setting aside existence*" (and they rejoin, "Let it mean an item full of every perfection *including existence*, and then it will mean something still greater") — or else from ignorance of the difference between signified act and exercised act. We are in fact granting their view of what the word 'God' means and are not quibbling over its sense in any way. We withhold from that sense nothing contributing to

advantage [to being greater], and we withhold nothing in signified act. (We must set aside, of course, existence in exercised act.) We concede, in other words, that what is meant and thought is a thing greater than every other thinkable thing, having every perfection and even that of existence in the real (but in signified act). Even so: from '___ is meant' and '___ is thought' there is no valid inference to '___ exists'. This is why, in the article above, St. Thomas says the argument proves nothing. Its adversaries do not concede that a thing greater than every other thinkable thing exists in the real, although they do concede that exactly such a thing is signified and *thought of* as real. And since the item is already so thought of, it is *not* the case that a still greater thing is signified when the item is signified as existing. No: if it existed, it would not be greater; all that would happen is that what is only in thought would exist.

We get a similar example in the case of a species.

Suppose "the noblest animal" is elusive to us, and we want to prove that it exists just from the terms used in stating the problem. The result would go like this:

the noblest animal exists; for if it did not, it would not be the noblest of animals.

Here it is clearer still that the advantage, the basis for being nobler, is the nobility of the thing meant [the sense] in itself, while being-in-thought and being-in-the-real are just arenas of the very noble thing meant. And it is clearer still how the argument fails to be valid, as is obvious to one who thinks it through.

viii. From a logico-linguistic point of view, you can silence these annoyances by saying just one thing. 'A thing greater than any other thinkable thing' implies real existence *either* in exercised act *or* in signified act. The second alternative is conceded here, but not the first. If the first alternative were accepted, 'A thing greater than any other thinkable thing exists' would be self-verifying, no doubt, just like 'What there is exists'. — Now the reason why this phrase, 'a thing greater than any other thinkable thing', does not imply existing in exercised act, but only conceptually, is because it is a noun phrase. Things meant by nouns are meant as conceived, while things meant by verbs are meant as exercised. Hence this proposition,

Existence does not exist

involves no contradiction, but this one

What there is does not exist
involves a contradiction.

A difference with Scotus on truth

ix. In meeting the third objection, the reply concedes that 'truth in general exists' is a self-verifying proposition. Notice that the argument for this is seen to accept the following implication as sound:

If no truth exists, it is true that no truth exists.

Scotus, however, rejects this implication in his remarks on *I Sent.* d.2, q.2, *ad* 3; he says it commits a fallacy of the consequent by moving from the many causes of truth to just one of them. As a first point, he grants that

If no truth exists, then it is not true that some truth exists

is valid; but if you change this negative consequent to

the affirmative one

... then it *is* true that no truth exists, he thinks the implication becomes invalid. For, as a second point, he says that 'truth' is either taken basis-wise [*fundamentaliter*] or else formally. If no truth exists, neither interpretation will support the affirmative consequent. The basis-wise interpretation won't, because [so taken, the premise would mean that no *thing* exists on whose basis any point would be true, and so] no thing would be left to make the point in question [the point that there is no truth] true. The formal interpretation won't support it either, because [so taken, the premise would mean that no conformity of intellect to thing exists, and so] there would be no intellect left [to entertain the point that there is no truth]. So [concludes Scotus] the affirmative consequent does not follow, but only the negative one, as indicated.

x. The SHORT ANSWER to this is that, in good logic, you can go perfectly well from a true proposition, *p*, to 'It is true that *p*', and *vice-versa*, because the truth-modality, 'it is true that ...', does not add anything to the underlying proposition which it modalizes. I am amazed that he has put himself at odds with this. For the following is valid:

if Socrates is running, it is true that he is running.
And so is this:

if Socrates is not running, it is true that he is not running,
and so on for every case. So, too, in the case at hand:
if no truth exists, it is true that no truth exists.

A confirming argument is that 'no truth exists' is a proposition; therefore, by *De Interpretatione I*, it means a true point or a false one. Well, where it means a true one, it means that it is true that no truth exists.

xi. So, to answer the first point, there is no fallacy, because either consequent [the affirmative or the negative] follows with specificity from the antecedent. In fact, the affirmative version,

(1) ... then it is true that no truth exists,
follows first and prior to the negative version,
(2) ... then it is not true that some truth exists.

For (1) follows immediately, and (2) follows mediately, *via* (1). The reason is that (1) pertains to the consistency of the proposition in itself, while (2) pertains to negating its contradictory, 'some truth exists'. Again, while the direct negation of a proposition's contradictory follows immediately from the proposition itself, *e.g.*,

if no truth exists, then not (some truth exists),
nevertheless, the negation of its truth-modalized
contradictory follows only *via* the rule mentioned
above, namely,

$p \supset$ it is true that *p*.

[For thus

not-*p* \supset it is true that not-*p*.]

And by this route, 'no truth exists' implies 'it is not true that some truth exists', since 'it is not true that some truth exists' is equivalent to the contradictory of 'some truth exists', namely, 'not (some truth exists)' [which in turn is equivalent to 'no truth exists']. Thus,

by denying our implication, Scotus unwittingly conceded it, since he conceded an implication based on it.⁵

To answer his second point, 'truth' is taken here at least basis-wise. If one objects that no basis for truth would remain [if nothing existed], I deny it. In order for there to be a basis for negative truths, there do not have to remain any *things*. This truth, for example.

The void has no traits [*nihil est nihil*] would remain basis-wise, in the absence of any thing or intellect whatever. For in that case, if any intellect were there, it could conform [*adaequare*] its judgment to that truth as an object-of-thought [*objectaliter*] by forming the proposition, 'the void has no traits', and this would suffice [for truth to emerge formally]. Hence, even in the real case, 'the void has no traits' has no other basis coming from the "thing meant" than the sort just indicated. The familiar dictum, "truth basis-wise is being," holds good for positive truth, not negative. The basis of negative truth is not-being, rather than being, as is obvious.⁶

You see the issues of this article discussed at length in *De Veritate*, q.10, a.12.

⁵ Let *p* be 'some truth exists', and let *Tp* mean 'it is true that *p*'. Scotus admitted $Tp \supset p$ and so $\neg p \supset \neg Tp$. But Cajetan held the stronger $Tp = p$, from which $\neg p \supset T\neg p$, which Scotus rejected, also follows. Easy moves introducing a truth-modality into the classical, bivalent propositional calculus can be made to vindicate either position, for all acceptable values of *p*. But is 'some truth exists' an acceptable value of the variable? And did Scotus accept a bivalent propositional calculus, that is, one in which 'true' and 'false' are the only values a proposition can take? See the next footnote

⁶ This dispute over what follows from 'no truth exists' raised problems that would not be handled adequately until (a) propositional and predicate calculi were formalized, (b) Tarski provided a formal account of 'true', (c) Łukasiewicz pioneered many-valued logic, and (d) others developed free logic. It is not necessary to discuss these developments here; rather, one should appreciate the root of this particular Thomist-Scotist dispute.

St. Augustine had developed an argument linking truth and God. The gist of it was that, if truth exists, God exists. The third objection raised in this article was drawing on the authority of that argument. Aquinas introduced distinctions that blunted the force of Augustine's argument, while Scotus hoped to preserve it, even in the new intellectual climate created by Aristotle's *Organon*. To achieve this aim, Scotus tied the existence of truth to the existence of things in such a way that, if there were no things, no proposition would be true. For if he was granted this claim, plus a premise which was not in dispute between Thomists and Scotists, namely, that if there were no God, there would be no things, Scotus had the lemma that, if there were no God, there would be no true propositions. Then, by transposition, he felt he had: if there is truth, there is God.

But set aside the troublesome talk about truth, and take the proposition, 'there are no things'. Wouldn't that be *true*, if there were no things? Scotus had to deny it. He admitted that 'there are things' would *not be true* in that case, but he denied that 'there are no things' would be *true* in that case. In this form, the dispute today is about extending predicate logic to an empty domain (at least, one empty of real things). Cajetan can be read as assuming that the logic will remain two-valued.

Is it open to demonstration that God exists?

1 ST q.3, a.5, *In III Sent.* d.24, q.1, a.2, q^m 2; 1 CG c.12; *De Potentia Dei* q.7, a.3; *In Boethii de Trinitate* q.1, a.2

The existence of God does not seem open to conclusive proof.

(1) That God exists, after all, is an article of faith. The articles of faith do not admit of conclusive proof, because such proof makes a thing evident to us,* while faith is about things not evident, as is clear in Hebrews 11:1. So God's existence is not open to demonstration.

(2) Besides, the middle term by which points are proved about a thing is [the real definition of] what that thing is. But where God is concerned, we cannot know what He is, but only what He is not, as Damascene says. Hence we cannot prove that God exists.

(3) Furthermore, if it were demonstrated that God exists, it would have to be from His effects. But His effects are not proportionate to Him. He is infinite; the effects are finite, and the finite bears no proportion to the infinite. Therefore, since a cause cannot be demonstrated by way of an effect not proportionate to it, God's existence does not seem open to demonstration.

ON THE OTHER HAND, there is what the Apostle says in Romans 1:20, "the invisible things of God are clearly seen, being understood from the things that have been made." This statement would not be true, if God's existence were not open to demonstration by way of the things that have been made. After all, the first thing to understand about any item is whether it exists.

ANSWER: there are two kinds of demonstration. One explains a fact by way of a cause of it, and this kind is called a proof of *why*.[†] Such a proof is achieved by way of things which are prior in themselves [to the fact explained]. The other kind establishes a fact by way of an effect of it, and this kind is called a proof *that*[‡] [the fact holds]. It is achieved by way of things which, to us in our learning process, are prior [to the fact established]. After all, an effect is often more obvious to us than its cause, and so we go from the effect to learn the cause. Now, from any effect whatever, one can establish that a distinctive cause of it exists — provided only that the effect is well enough known to us. Here is why: an "effect" depends on a cause; so, necessarily, if the effect is given, the cause is in place. Ergo, as "God exists" is not self-verifying to us, it is open to being established by way of effects that are known to us.

TO MEET THE OBJECTIONS — *ad* (1): the point that God exists and other such points about God which can come to be known (as it says in Romans 1:19) by natural reason are not articles of faith but preambles to the articles. For faith presupposes natural knowledge as grace presupposes nature itself — and as any completion presupposes what can be completed by it. Of course, nothing prevents a point provable and scientifically knowable in its content from being taken on faith by someone who does not un-

derstand the proof.

ad (2): when a cause is established *via* an effect, one has to use the effect in lieu of the cause's real definition in one's proof that the cause exists, and this is especially the case with God. After all, to prove that an item exists, one has to [start with a description of it and] take as middle term what the description means. One does not start with a scientific definition of the alleged item, because the question of what-it-really-is does not arise until the does-it-exist question has been resolved in its favor. The names and descriptions we give to God are drawn from effects, as will be shown below. So, in establishing that God exists by way of an effect, we can take as middle term what "God" means.¹

ad (3): from effects not proportionate to a cause, one cannot get a full grasp of the cause. But from any effect at all (as I just said) we can prove that the cause exists. So we should be able to prove that God exists from effects of His, even though we cannot get to know Him fully for what He is through those effects.

¹ The meaning of "God" as *cause of this-or-that* will thus be crucial in the next article, where the proof-strategy described here will be executed. The execution will have five parts (the five "ways"), in each of which Aquinas will make a claim about what "God" means. These claims will not be so scientific as "electron" and "cause of the cathode ray-tube phenomenon" but will come from what "god" meant in the historical setting in which divine revelation was received.

Biblical revelation presupposed that its human addressees understood what "god" meant. An adequate pre-understanding was secured by cultural conditions throughout the ancient Near East and the Greco-Roman world. A god was one who was worshipped. Worship involved sacrifices, petitions, *etc.*, intended to be heeded by the god and accepted; divine acceptance was desirable because it was believed to make a difference in the course of terrestrial events. Most events of human interest were believed to turn on the favor of a god or the disfavor. Thus "god" was understood to mean what biblical revelation required it to mean: *a higher, decision-making being whose effects are felt on earth*. Let us call this the core meaning, CM, of "god"; to it, each ancient people added traditional beliefs; to it, revelation added saving truths.

The same CM was understood by the pioneers of philosophy. They reasoned that a god worthy of the name must be a being of the highest kind, eternal, supremely good, and beyond change. This conviction could lead to opinions inconsistent with worship, since a worthy god could come to be viewed as too detached to hear prayers, or too abstract. But insofar as philosophers preserved the CM, they elevated its components thus: *a supreme, changeless, eternal and all-intelligent decision-making being whose effects are felt on earth*. Let us call this the enhanced core meaning, ECM, of "god". Congruent with biblical revelation, the ECM provided the sense of "God" in which the church Fathers supposed natural reason could prove there was a God. The five meanings used by Aquinas in the next article, as being "what everybody means by 'God'," are parts taken from the ECM.

1 ST q.13, a.1

 Cajetan's Commentary

The title-question is clear. — In the body of the article two jobs are done. First, he divides demonstrations into proofs of the fact and proofs of *why, etc.* Second, he gives the question a yes-answer by reaching a single conclusion: God's existence is open to proof *a posteriori*, *i.e.*, by way of an effect.

This conclusion is supported. An effect depends upon its own distinctive cause; therefore, necessarily, given the effect, its cause is in place. Therefore, from any effect at all, provided only that it be well enough known to us, we can establish that its distinctive cause exists. Ergo, that God exists is open to demonstration through effects well enough known to us.

All these points are clear, supposing that God *has* any effects that are well known to us, and this will emerge below [in the next article].

On the answer ad (1)

ii. In the answer to the first objection, bear in mind that facts about God which are known by natural reason can be considered either (1) in themselves, or (2) as points known to us. Likewise the [facts which are] articles of faith can be considered (1) in themselves, and (2) as points believed by us. When both are taken in themselves, it is not true to say that the naturally known ones are all "preambles" to the articles of faith; rather, *some* are antecedent — such as the facts that God exists, is one, is good, and other non-relational facts — while others are really consequent [upon facts which, to us, are believed], such as the fact that God is the first cause of things and other such [relational] matters.¹ This does not imply that there are points in theology that come before the starting points. It only implies that there are points prior to *those*

¹ Certain facts naturally knowable to us are causal consequences of divine choices knowable only by revelation. Thus, God would not be the first cause of the effects we see (as he is naturally known to be), if He had not chosen a world-plan in which creating them is a part (as He is known to have done only by revelation). Any point *n* which is naturally knowable is conceptually independent of any point *r* that is knowable by revelation alone. So Cajetan's point here is that the conceptual inde-

starting points which are articles of faith. For the naturally knowable points that are antecedent are among the starting points of theology. Recall what I said about the articles of faith in commenting on a.2 of q.1: it is *in themselves* that they are the *per se* starting points of our theology, while as points believed they are *incidentally* starting points. But when both kinds of facts are taken as points held by us, then, indeed, all the ones known by natural reason are preambles to the faith, for the reason given in the text.² And this is all that St. Thomas intended to say. So tread carefully.

On the answer ad (2)

iii. In the answer to the second objection, bear in mind that this teaching about resolving the does-it-exist question is correct relative to us: as one thing follows another in *our* learning process, the question of what-it-really-is comes after the question of whether-it-exists. But in itself,* the order is the reverse [what-an-entity-is is prior to the entity itself], as it says in *Posterior Analytics II*.³

* *secundum se*

pendence of *n* from *r* does not imply a causal independence of the fact that *n* from the fact that *r*.

² In other words, any natural knowledge of God, as knowledge, is subject to being perfected by the Good News of the faith, if and when one acquires it.

³ In this statement about the order "in itself," Cajetan is not making the metaphysical claim that the essence factor as such is prior to the existence factor (*esse*) as such; no Thomist would say that. He is only making the point that the form of an *ens* is an inner cause of it and hence "prior in nature" to the *ens* as a whole. Aristotle's *an est* question is about an item in our vocabulary, such as 'top quark', and asks whether it has a referent in the real, whether an *ens* corresponds to it. This is quite different from the metaphysical question asking

what is that by which an *ens* is, if it is?

to which *esse*, really distinct from essence in creatures, is the Thomistic answer.

Also, the scholastics used 'x is prior to y' in many senses. Besides 'x is earlier than y in time', it could also mean 'x explains y in some line of causality'. In that case, x was called prior "in nature" to y.

Is there a God?

In I Sent. d 3, 1 CG cc 13-16, 44; 2 CG c 15; 3 CG c 64; De Veritate q.5, a 2; De Potentia q.3, a.5; Compend. theol. c.3; In VII Phys., lectio 2, In VIII Phys., lectiones 9IT, In XII Metaphys., lectiones 5IT.

It would seem that there is no God.

(1) For if one of two contraries is infinite, the other will be wiped out completely. But the noun 'God' is understood to mean an infinite good. So if God existed. [evil would be wiped out, and] no evil would be found. But evil *is* found in the world. Therefore, there is no God.

** principia* (2) Besides, what can reach its completion from fewer causes* does not reach it from more. But it seems that all the events that turn up in the world can be brought to completion from other causal sources, leaving God out. For those events that occur naturally go back to the source which is nature, while those that occur artificially go back to the source which is human reason or will. There is no need, therefore, to posit a God.

ON THE OTHER HAND, there is Exodus 3:14, where God says of Himself, "I am who am."

ANSWER: the proposition that there is a God can be supported in five ways.¹

W₁ The first way, more readily apparent than the others, is taken from change.[†] It is certain and evident to the senses that some things in this world are undergoing change. But everything undergoing change is being changed by another. For nothing undergoes change towards a new state except insofar as it is in potency to that state. By contrast, a thing induces change [towards a given state] insofar as it is in act [in that state]; for inducing change is nothing but bringing some state out of potency into act, and no potency can be reduced to act except by some being which *is* in act. For example, a log is potentially hot, and what makes it be hot actually is a thing that *is* hot actually, like fire, which thereby induces change in the log and alters it. Now, it is not possible for the same thing to be at once in act and in potency *vis-à-vis* the same state, but only *vis-à-vis* different states. (When a thing is actually hot it cannot be, at the same time, potentially hot; rather, it is then potentially cold.) So it is not possible for something both to induce and undergo change to the same state at once and in the same way — or in other words change itself. So, necessarily, whatever is being changed is being changed by another. And necessarily, if this other is itself undergoing change [so as to start inducing one], it is being changed by still another, and so on. But this [chain of dependency in changing and

being changed] cannot reach back to infinity.² If it did, there would be no *first* inducer of change. But then in consequence there would be no other inducer of change, because the subsequent changers do not induce change except by virtue of being changed by the first inducer — as a stick does not move anything unless moved by a hand.³ Necessarily, then, one comes to a first inducer of change which [in causing change is not undergoing change and so] is not being changed by anything. Everyone understands 'God' to mean this [a first and unchanging cause of change, or "unmoved mover"].

The second way is taken from the scientific account of efficient causes.⁴ We find, among the objects of our senses, efficient causes depending one upon another. But we do not find (nor is it possible) that any of these is an efficient cause of itself. For if it were, it would be prior to itself, which is impossible. [So everything efficiently caused is so caused by another.] But it is not possible [for a chain of dependency] among efficient causes to go back to infinity. For all efficient causes on the same chain are such that (a) the first is the cause of the middle, and the middle is the cause of the last, whether the middle be ma-

² The sort of chain meant here is an ordered set in which each element *y* which is undergoing change is not inducing change in any posterior element *z*, unless *y* is undergoing a change induced by a prior element *x* in the set. Such a set of causes was called "essentially" ordered in Aquinas' era; today, it is called well-ordered.

³ Although Aquinas did not distinguish infinity here from what we call well-orderedness, it is clear that the latter is what he had in mind as the real issue. A well-ordered set is one so ordered as to have a first element. An infinite set can be well-ordered (like the natural numbers) or not well-ordered (like the integers). Aquinas' claim is that any well-ordered set of changed or change-inducing elements in which each changed element is dependent on a prior element to be changed, must be well-ordered under this dependency relation, if it has any changed element. Given Zorn's lemma, his claim is sound; it cannot be rebutted by appeal to transfinite induction, because the latter is a theorem about well-ordered sets.

⁴ This *via* comes next because efficient causation is a common way of inducing change, and the best known in human experience. Its scientific account (*ratio*) held that a terrestrial efficient cause, like a river making its channel through rock, is dependent in this operation on at least one higher efficient cause, *i.e.*, the sun pouring out heat and light. In the medieval understanding, this higher cause was also more universal: the sun appeared on every chain of efficient causes which terminated with a terrestrial event of efficient causation and its effect. Indeed, every such chain was the same from the sun back, so that any element prior to the sun (*i.e.* any efficient cause on which the sun depended in order to be giving heat and light to the earth) was also on every such chain. So if each such chain has a first element, its first will be the same element as on every other such chain.

¹ The ways are labelled in the margin *W₁*, *W₂*, *etc.* Each way [*via*] was a traditional argument. Aquinas is commonly read as taking them independently; but there is good reason to think he intended the ways to be taken cumulatively. See below, note 11.

ny or one, and (b) if any cause is removed, so is its effect. So, if there has been no first efficient cause, neither will there be a last or a middle. If the chain reaches back to infinity, there will be no first efficient cause. And thus there will be no last effect nor any intermediate efficient causes — which is clearly not the case. Ergo it is necessary to posit a first efficient cause. People mean this by 'God'.

W₁ The third way is taken from [a temporal sense of] 'can be' and 'must be'.⁵ It goes as follows. We encounter things which temporarily are and are not, since we find things that arise and perish. Thus they can be and can fail to be. But it is impossible for anything like this to *always* be; for whatever can fail to be *does* fail to be at some time.⁶ So, if all entities are such that they can fail to be, then at some time nothing was.⁷ If so, then nothing would be now. For what-is-not does not begin to be except by virtue of something which *is*. If there was a time, then, when nothing was, it was then impossible for anything to begin to be, and so there would still be nothing — which is obviously not true. Hence, it is not the case that all entities are such that they can fail to be. There must be something that [can't fail to be and so] is a perpetual being. Now, every perpetual being either has an outside cause of its perpetuity or else does not have such a cause. But it is not possible to go back infinitely in [a chain of] perpetual beings each having [another as] its cause of perpetuity, just as one cannot go back infinitely among efficient causes, as was proved above. Thus one must posit that there is a self*-perpetual being, not having a cause of its perpetuity outside itself, but causing others to be perpetual. Everyone means this by 'God'.

* per se

W₄

↑ verior

The fourth way is taken from the degrees found in things. We find some things better, more real,⁸ more noble, *etc.*, and some less so. But things are called more and less by how they stand to something which is most. A hotter thing is one coming closer to the hottest.⁸ So, there is something which is best, most real, most noble, and so most fully a being.⁹ For the things

⁵ In the temporal sense of the modalities, 'x can be' means 'x temporarily is'; and 'x must be' means 'x always is'. So 'x can fail to be' means 'at some time x is not'. Thus a 'necessary' being in the temporal sense is just a perpetual one.

⁶ This inference is invalid in the normal, alethic sense of 'can' but sound in the temporal sense defined in footnote 5.

⁷ So long as W₁ is taken independently, this premise commits a fallacy of scope, trying to move from the hypothesis, $\forall x \exists t (x \text{ is not at } t)$, to the conclusion, $\exists t \forall x (x \text{ is not at } t)$. There is no salvaging such a move so long as the values of *x* are unrelated individuals. But Aquinas probably had in mind the first efficient cause, on which any produced being depends, as a value of *x*. It seems plausible that if everything (including that first of causes) had a time when it was not, there was a time when nothing was.

⁸ 'More and less' are also said from how things stand to a least; so the 4th way needs another premise; cf. q.49, a.3 ad 3.

⁹ Shorten 'maximum' to 'max'. The idea that the max of goodness = the max of truthness/realness = the max of being is borrowed here from a standard doctrine of the transcendental terms, which are discussed below in qq.5, 11, and 16.

that are most real are the fullest beings, as it says in *Metaphysics II*. But in any kind, what is most of that kind is the cause of all [other] things of that kind — as fire, the hottest in the hot-kind, is the cause of all [other] things' being hot (as it says in the same text). Ergo there is something which, for all the beings, is the cause of their being and of their goodness and of any other perfective trait. This we mean by 'God'.

c 1; 993b 30

993b 25

The fifth way is taken from the governance of things. For we see that there are things lacking cognitive capacity, like natural bodies,¹⁰ which nevertheless function to a purpose.* This comes out in the fact that they not only function uniformly but also reach by their functioning an optimal state. So it is clear that they do not reach [this state which is] their purpose by chance, but by intention. But things without cognitive capacity do not tend toward a purpose unless they have been directed to it by something that knows and understands — as an arrow [does not go to a target unless aimed there] by an archer. Ergo there is some intelligent entity by which all natural things are directed to a purpose. This we call 'God'. [Therefore there is a God.]¹¹

W₅

* fins

TO MEET THE OBJECTIONS — ad (1): as Augustine said in the *Enchiridion*: "Since God is supremely good. He would not allow any evil in His works in any way, unless

c 11, PL 40, 236

¹⁰ 'Natural' had several senses, and the one used here is 'operating by blind causal process or instinct'. This is still our narrowest sense of "the natural."

¹¹ Let us refer to the "five ways" as the W₁₋₅. To decide if they are independent, we must take into account the fact that they have been edited to carry out the proof strategy announced in a.2. There we were told that a proof establishing God's existence uses as "middle term" a meaning of 'God' as 'something having what it takes to account for an effect *e*'. In line with this strategy, each of the five W_i notices an occurrent effect *e*, and argues that accounting for it takes one back to a certain type of causal entity *c_i*. Each way claims that a cause of the *c_i*-type is meant by a meaning *m_i* of 'God'.

The problem is that meaning *m₁* ('unmoved mover') is not synonymous with *m₅* ('intelligent governor of nature'), nor is either synonymous with *m₄* ('fullest being') or *m₃* ('self-perpetual being'). How are these non-synonymous *m_i* being used, then, as middle terms? Is the operative meaning of 'God' a disjunction of the *m_i* — so that, if any one of them has reference in the real, God exists (and the independent reading is correct)? Or is the operative middle term a conjunction of the *m_i* — so that the proof requires all five to have reference in the real? The text does not say. But there is evidence.

(1) The independent reading does not yield the result that there is a God but that there are things (perhaps five) which are God-like in some respect. If one wants to prove more — that there is at least one thing which is God-like in five respects — one must not take the W_i independently. To see this, suppose the core meaning of 'God' is something which causes both φ-ing and ψ-ing. To prove that God exists, will it suffice to prove (a) that something causes φ-ing, and (b) that something causes ψ-ing? No; for perhaps nothing causes both.

(2) The next inquiry in the *Stimma*, q.3, takes no pains to establish that some unmoved mover is also a maximum of being, *etc.* Aquinas just borrows the result of any W_i and applies it to God. For this procedure to be licit while leaving the W_i independent, he would have to be using 'God' as a generic label for anything which is god-like in at least one respect. If this last

He were so almighty and so good that He could make even the evil yield good." Permitting evils to exist and bringing good out of them is therefore part and parcel of God's infinite goodness.

ad (2): since nature works to a definite purpose under the direction of a higher agent, the events that occur naturally must also go back to God, as to their first

seems wrong, so does the usual reading of the W_i as independent.

(3) By contrast, there is no problem about q.3 if the W_i are cumulative in such a way that, under the surface, co-referentiality is being secured. The m_i are co-referential in case some $c_1 = a c_2 = \dots = a c_3$. This is precisely what is suggested by the order in which the W_i are presented. W_1 establishes that there is an unchanged inducer of change, using the lemma that whatever is being changed is being changed by another. The lemma implies that change-induction is often a case of efficient causality, so that W_2 discusses some of the same phenomena as W_1 , but from another angle. The new angle takes one to a first and maximally universal efficient cause, on whose influence all other efficient causes depend, if they are to produce an effect. One type of change resulting from efficient causality is the generation and corruption of things; it, too, can occur only under the influence of the first efficient cause, proved to exist in W_3 . Can that first efficient cause be a being which at some time was not? No, because then nothing could have been generated at that time, according to W_3 , nor at any subsequent time. Hence some efficient cause of

cause. Likewise, what occurs artificially must go back to a higher cause, which is not human reason and will, because these are changeable and can fail to be. As has already been shown, all changeable things, and all that can fail to be, have to go back to some first source which is immune to change and intrinsically perpetual (or intrinsically necessary).

generation and corruption has always existed, because the very first such cause, which is uncaused, must have existed "of itself." What always has what it takes to exist is more of a being than something which only sometimes has what it takes, and what "of itself" has this is the most "beingly" of all. Therefore, the first efficient cause is the fullest being and, by W_4 , causes others to be. What has intelligence has fuller being than what does not, and so the first cause who is the self-perpetual maximum of being is fully qualified to be the governor of nature said to exist in W_5 . Thus, by the end of W_5 , it has been established that at least one c_1 is also a c_2 , a c_3 , a c_4 , and a c_5 ; so the philosophically enhanced meaning (ECM) of 'God' has been shown to have reference in at least one case. The next order of business will be to see whether this referent (a co-referent of all the m_i) can be a body, can have a double, *etc.*

The comment by Cajetan on the five ways in general (below, § *iii*) is unclear, because his two ways to "push them" are not clear. None of the five taken independently, he says, can yield "God exists" in the sense many have wanted. But taken together, he says, they yield instantiation in the real of five traits proper to God. If this last is not a fallacy, it is the cumulative reading.

Cajetan's Commentary

^{e.1;}
^{17a 11-15} In the title question, a problem arises at once from *Posterior Analytics I*, where it says that no science proves the existence of its subject matter. As Averroes said (in comment 26 on *Physics II*), neither *a priori* nor *a posteriori* does a science prove this; it assumes, rather, that the existence of its subject is self-evident to sense or intellect, or else it borrows the point from another science. Well, in this science, the subject matter is God, as was settled in 1 *ST* q.1. Therefore, Aquinas should not be trying to prove here that there is a God. Inserting this article is bad form.

^{a.7} My reply is that, in doing what is strictly its own business,* no science proves the existence of its subject matter. But there is nothing wrong with a science's doing so in its auxiliary business. That is what is going on here. There are two incidental factors that prompt this science to prove that there is a God.

* *per se loquendo*

• The first is the imperfect share that we have in this science. If we took part in the divine light more fully, it would be clear to us immediately that God exists.

• The second is the character of our means of proof here, *i.e.*, their rather non-theological character. What a science *S* does *not* do is prove that its subject matter exists with means that are fully native and distinctive to *S*; but it can do this with non-native means that have been borrowed by *S*, provided only that they are better known to us than the existence of *S*'s subject matter. That, again, is what is going on here. As you can see by running through the drift of the article above, theo-

logy is proving that God exists not from its fully native and distinctive resources [like Scripture and the Fathers], but from things that belong to it ministerially, things known by the natural light of reason (which are outside matter for theology, absolutely speaking, as we said above).

Analysis of the article

ii. In the body of the article there is one conclusion, answering the question with yes: there is a God. — Five ways are put forward to support this, which we have no need to review, since statements of them are found not only here but in 1 *Contra Gentiles*, in the questions *De Potentia*, in the questions *De Veritate*, and in Book I of [St. Thomas's Commentary on Peter Lombard's] *Libri Sententiarum*.

On the five Ways in general

iii. On these arguments in general, note very carefully that they can be pushed in two directions.

In the first, they are pushed to conclude to the existence of just that bodiless, immaterial, eternal, supreme, changeless, first, most perfect, *etc.*, Being, which we hold God to be. So pushed, these arguments are subject to much dispute:

• the first way, as Aquinas himself says in 1 *CG*, c.13, leads to a change-inducer which is only as unchanged as the agent intellect;

q 1, a.8; commentary § vi

Comment 22 on *De Caelo et mundo I* and comment 44 on *Metaphysics XII*

• the second way, as Averroes says, leads only to a heavenly body and its mover;
• and the rest do not seem to get much further. But the arguments are not intended to be pushed in this direction, as we shall see right now.

In the other direction, they are pushed to conclude that certain traits in fact distinctive of God are found in the real, never mind how or to what degree. This is the direction intended here; and so taken, the arguments give rise to little or no philosophical difficulty.

For a better grasp of this reading, let us clarify the force of the Ways one by one. By the first Way, taken from change, it is enough if we get to the conclusion, ∴ there is a first unchanged inducer of change, regardless of whether it is the soul of a heavenly sphere, or the world-soul, etc., because this will be taken up in the next Inquiry [q.3]. By the second Way, taken from efficient causes, it is enough if we get to a first efficient cause, regardless of whether it is a body or incorporeal, because that will be taken up in the next Inquiry. By the third Way, taken from what [can-be and] must-be, it is enough if we get to a first self-perpetual being, regardless of whether there are one or many such, because that will be taken up in Inquiry 11. By the fourth Way, too, taken from the degrees of things, it is enough if we get to at least one fullest being which is realest, best, most noble, in which all others participate. And likewise by the fifth Way, taken from governance, it is enough if we get to a first governor-by-intellect, whoever He may be.¹ For all these traits or rôles — unchanged changer, first efficient cause, self-perpetuating being, fullest being, and first governor by intellect — are in fact distinctive of God; by concluding that they are instanced in the real, one is concluding directly, though *per accidens*, that there is a God; in other words, one is concluding that God, not *as* God, but *as* playing such and such a rôle, exists; and thence one gets to the underlying point that God as God exists.

From these remarks it should be clear that neither Averroes' arguments against Avicenna [in comment 44 on *Metaphysics XII*] nor Aureol's against these Ways [in remarks on *I Sentences*, q.1], are really against the intent of this article — except for Aureol's objection to the fifth Way and his attacks on some points assumed.

Defending the first Way

iv. In the first Way, taken from books VII and VIII of the *Physics*, two propositions have been attacked.

* *primo* The first is that *nothing first-off* changes itself*. Scotus argued against this in his material on [the natural motions of] heavy things, light things, and the will. But pursuing this would go beyond the scope of this work; it will be the topic of a special inquiry.²

¹ These remarks of Cajetan's on the first Way scandalized even excellent neo-Thomists, like Fr. Joseph Owens.

² First-off self-changing would be done without any extrinsic factor starting it. But even a thing whose nature requires it to be changing will not do so without first existing.

The second is that *the first is the cause of the middle*, which is assumed in the first Way as well as in the second and third Ways, to prove that the chain of causes does not go back to infinity. Against this, although it is explicit in Aristotle in *Metaphysics II* [c.2] and in *Physics VIII* [c.5], an argument has been put forth by Aureol, as follows.

[*Assumption:*] If a middle cause or change-inducer necessarily depends on a first cause or change-inducer, it has this dependency either because it is "middle," or because it is a "cause," or because it is a "middle cause." But none of these holds up. Therefore a middle cause need not depend on a first. — The assumption is sound by adequate enumeration of the alternatives. Eliminating each alternative is supported as follows:

(1) not because it is "middle," because it is so called relative to any two between which it is a middle, and not necessarily relative to a first and a last, as is clear in the middle proportional parts of a circle:

(2) not because it is a "cause," because a cause, as a cause, relates to an effect and not to a dependency on a prior or a first, as is obvious:

(3) not for the compound reason that it is "middle cause," because being a middle cause as such requires only that it mediate in causing, and this is salvaged well enough if, between a prior cause and the effect, there is some middle causality.

Therefore a middle cause, just by reason of being a middle cause, does not require a dependency on a *first* cause but only on a *prior* cause. Aureol then offers a confirming argument. According to us, he says, this conditional is true:

if the causes went back to infinity, they would all be middle causes.

Thus, meeting the definition of a middle cause does not require dependency on a first but only on a prior cause, by relation to which a posterior cause is called "middle."

v. THE SHORT ANSWER IS: necessarily, a middle cause, by virtue of being a middle cause, depends on a *first* cause. To see this, recall that efficacy is part of the definition of a cause. Unless a cause effects something, it cannot be called a cause in act — and causes *in act* are what we are talking about here. Further, the efficacy of a cause depends on actual causal functioning,* so that if its functioning is incomplete, its being a cause in act is not salvaged, nor is efficacy, nor is any efficient causality. If, therefore, *x* is to meet the definition of a cause, its causal functioning has to be complete; and so whatever conflicts with the getting-to-be-complete of *x*'s causal functioning conflicts with *x*'s being a cause. Ergo, since a middle cause is really a cause, its own causal functioning has to be complete.

* *causalitatis*

Now we proceed thus. [*Antecedent:*] The completeness of a middle cause's causal functioning cannot be there without dependence on a first cause; [*inference:*] ergo a middle cause, as such, depends on a first. (Aristotle was quite right, therefore, to say — and we have this in the article above, too — that the first is the cause of the middle.) Here the inference is clear, and the antecedent is supported like this. [*Conditional:*] If a first cause were

absent, so that prior to every cause there were another cause, the causal functioning of the essentially dependent causes would never be complete; [*inference therefrom:*] ergo the completion of the middle ones depends on there being a first. This conditional is clearly true, because the infinity of a run backwards or forwards conflicts with completing it.³ The inference from there is obvious, because the completion of a middle cause depends on an antecedent one but not just on the prior one (as is clear from the conditional); therefore, it depends on a *first*.

vi. To reply to what Aureol says on the other side, I concede this much: “being a middle cause as such only requires that it mediate in causing.” But when he goes on to say that this is salvaged just in relation to a prior cause, I deny it. For it is impossible for the middle cause’s functioning to be complete, unless it is supported by a first; if its causal functioning depended on infinitely many prior causes, it could never be complete.

As to what he says by way of confirmation, I deny that this conditional of his,

if the causes went back to infinity, they would all be middle causes,

is held by Aristotle or by us. It belongs rather to our *ad hominem* argument against someone who posits an infinity of such causes. For in such a thinker’s mind it follows quite well that, if all the causes are posited, and none is first, *then they’re all middle*. But in truth, from this antecedent,

if the causes went back to infinity,

what follows is

then there would be no causes,

as Aristotle and Aquinas deduce. For we should have then there would be no first cause, and so there would be no middle cause either, because the first is a cause of the middle, as shown.

Defending the fourth Way

vii. A proposition assumed in the fourth Way, saying, “In any kind, say ϕ -things, what is most- ϕ is the cause of all other ϕ -things,” has also been attacked by Aureol. In it, pay attention to three terms. (1) It is one thing to be “what is most- ϕ ” and something else to be the first or most perfect species in the ϕ -genus. The fourth way does not assume that the most perfect species is the cause of the others. Its claim, rather, is about the most- ϕ thing. (2) The phrase ‘is the cause’

can mean two things in this context: a properly effective cause or an exemplary cause. In this proposition either meaning is allowed, because it does not matter by which sort of causal function the fullest-being, best, and realest is the cause of the being, goodness and realness of the others. For being either an exemplary cause of these things or an effective cause is peculiar to God. (3) The phrase ‘other ϕ -things’ can be taken two ways: inclusively, covering all that they are, or narrowly, covering just what it takes to be ϕ -things. In this context, the phrase is not being taken broadly but narrowly. We do not say that the hottest thing is the cause of other hot things in their substance and all that they are, but just in their being hot. — So the sense of the proposition assumed is this: the thing which maximally possesses what it takes to be ϕ is either an exemplary or effective cause of other things’ having what it takes to be ϕ (as distinct from their having anything else).

Aureol’s alleged counter-example — that white is the maximum shade of color but does not cause the other colors — is therefore worthless. White is not the most colored thing. And if it were, it would not have to cause the other colors in all their aspects, but only in having what it takes to be colors. And calling white the exemplary cause of other colors as colors would be unobjectionable in any case. After all, things more perfect in being- ϕ are naturally exemplary of ϕ -ness for those less perfect in being- ϕ ; and all colors are such that, the closer they come to white, the more light they have in them, and thus more perfection as colors.

Defending the fifth Way

viii. Aureol poses an objection against the fifth way, too, but on a ground which St. Thomas had already excluded in 3 *CG* c.64, namely, that the very essences* of natural things might be sufficient cause for the regularity which nature exhibits everywhere, etc. Look that passage up (and also *De Veritate* q.5, a.2), and you will find that the reason those essences alone do not suffice is [that they do not account for] the unity of order among things, their mutual benefits to each other, the connection of contraries, etc. This is a further reason, beyond the one given here in the answer *ad* (2), i.e., that nature acts for an end (which is straight out of *Physics II*), and so either:

- nature is pursuing an end conceived by itself, or
- nature is directed to an end intended by another.

* *quidditates*

Rounding out the answer *ad* (1)

ix. When it comes to solving the first objection, notice that Aquinas’ answer *ad* (1) depends on holding that an implication [if one of two contraries is infinite, the other is wiped out] is not sound. But he does not give a general reason why — only a particular reason stemming from the matter at hand. To arrive at a general reason, you should know two pieces of information.

(1) The talk of one opposite, O, excluding the other one, \emptyset , can be taken two ways: form-wise[†] and effect-wise.[‡] O form-wise excludes \emptyset only in the subject re-

† *formaliter*

‡ *effectivè*

³ The sheer infinity of a set ordered under relation *R* may conflict with its physical completion, as Cajetan says, but what conflicts with its completion even in principle is lack of well-orderedness under *R*, which is precisely lack of a first element. To see the issue, think first of the positive integers ordered under the less-than relation, and imagine that you have been assigned to write the numerals for them, from the least to the greatest, with the rule that writing each lesser one is required for writing the next greater one. Physically, you can never finish the assignment, of course, but you can begin. You can write 0, then 1, then 2, and so on. But now imagine being given the same assignment for the negative integers, going again from least to greatest. Now you can’t even begin.

ceiving O, of course. In the case at hand, the divine goodness, by being infinite, form-wise excludes all evil from God, but not from His creation, since it is not received in a creature. By contrast, O *effect-wise* excludes \emptyset by producing something similar to itself. In this way, the influence of the sun drives coldness from the air by making the air similar to itself in being warm. The objection posed in the article is proceeding along this line: if O is infinite, \emptyset is not only excluded form-wise by it but also effect-wise wherever it would be found, because of the infinitude of O's efficacy, which nothing could resist unless \emptyset were also infinite.

(2) Scotus looks at this implication [if O is infinite, \emptyset is wiped out] in his remarks on *I Sent.* d.2, q.1 *ad* 1, and says it is true not only form-wise but also effect-wise for opposites acting by nature, but not for one acting voluntarily. He solves the objection at hand by saying that infinite good acts voluntarily. — What we have in Aquinas, by contrast, is just a denial that the consequent follows, plus a reason given to the effect that what follows from the infinite goodness of the agent is that evils exist from which good is to come.

x. But since, as I said, this answer brings in the mode of causing (*i.e.* voluntarily) by attributing evils to divine permission, which is a matter of will, it is a particular answer. To proceed more generally, one should distinguish the antecedent, I think. For 'O is infinite' turns up true in two cases. In the one, O is *communicable* to others under a constant definition.* This is how it would be if a fire were infinitely hot, because its heat is communicable to others under the same definition it has in the fire. In the other case, O is *incommunicable* to others under a constant definition but is *participatable [by others] under an analogy* of some sort. This is how it is with God's infinite being.† His being is not communicable to others under a constant definition (else there could be many Gods), and yet it is participatable by all things (some more so, some less).

What I should say, therefore, is this. If an opposite O communicable under a constant definition is infinite, \emptyset will vanish not only from the original thing that has O but from everything else that can receive O. But [*major:*] if an O that is participatable but incommunicable under a constant definition is infinite, then,

while O does indeed exclude \emptyset form-wise from itself, this other consequent.

then O excludes \emptyset effect-wise from everything, does not follow, even on the proviso that O acts by nature. (The reason is: an infinite influence O, finitely participated, does not exclude \emptyset totally from its participants.) [*Minor:*] Such is the case with infinite good. Ergo [*conclusion:*] the infinite good that exists in case there is a God does not exclude evils from the world].

My major is clear from a thought-experiment.* Suppose the sun were infinitely hot, but heat were not communicable to lower things under a constant definition but only by some analogous imitation. Then the sun would be an infinite influence as hot; but, for lack of a constant definition [of 'hot' as verified by the sun and 'hot' as verified by lower bodies], it would be only finitely participatable. As a result, the sun would produce in a body outside itself only a finite participation of heat; so it would not exclude all coldness from its participants, because some level of coldness is compatible with finite heat communicated. My major is also clear from reason. No matter how great the strength of the influence of O may be, it only excludes \emptyset effect-wise to the extent that O is incompatible with O's effect. Well, so long as O is infinite in itself but only finitely participated, its effect does not have to be incompatible with each and every level of \emptyset . For the effect has but a finite measure of what it takes to be O. Ergo, an infinite influence that is only finitely participated does not wipe out its opposite effect-wise.

Therefore our glorious God, who is infinite good, would not wipe out evil from the universe even if He were acting upon it by nature [rather than voluntarily]. For He is only finitely participated by everything; and out of His goodness there flows forth the whole panoply of goods constituting the various levels [of beings] in the world, and out of *their natures* evil arises necessarily. Out of the wolf's nature comes death to the lamb, and out of the elements' natures comes break-down to the mixed things composed of them. So, when the reason given in the text is generalized, it is still right to deny the soundness of the implication. What follows from God's infinite goodness is that evils do exist in the world (though for the good of the whole) — and not that they do not. It is a feature of God's infinite goodness that evil should exist in His effects but not in Himself.

* *inductivè*

* *secundum eandem rationem*

† *esse*

Inquiry Three: Into God's simplicity

After one knows that a thing exists, one still has to learn the traits it has, if one is to learn what it really is. But since in God's case we cannot know what He is, but rather what He is not, we cannot study the traits He has. We must study the ones He does not have. The areas to cover, therefore, are:

(A) what God is not [qq.3–11], (B) how He is accessible to our knowing [q.12], and (C) how He fits our descriptions of Him [q.13].

As to what God is not, one proceeds by thinking away what does not suit Him, such as being composed, undergoing change, and the like. The first topic, then, will be His simplicity, by which we think away composition. In the material world familiar to us, "simple" things are inchoate and are just parts of more complex things; so, the next topic will be God's status as finished or complete [q.4]; the third topic will be His unlimitedness [q.7]; the fourth, His unchangeableness [q.9]; and the fifth, His oneness or uniqueness [q.11].

Under the first topic, non-composition or simplicity, eight questions are asked:

- | | |
|---|---|
| <p>(1) is God a body? (2) is there composition of form and matter in Him? (3) is there composition of quiddity (<i>i.e.</i> essence or nature) and a subject having it? (4) is there composition of essence and existence?</p> | <p>(5) is there composition of genus and specific difference in God? (6) is there composition of subject and accident? (7) is He composed in any way, or utterly simple? (8) does He enter into composition with others?</p> |
|---|---|

article 1

Is God a body?

1 *CG* c.20; 2 *CG* c.3; *Compendium Theologiae* c.16

It seems that God is a body.

(1) What has three dimensions, after all, is a body. The Bible attributes three dimensions to God in Job 11:8–9. "He is higher than heaven, and what wilt thou do? He is deeper than hell, and how wilt thou know? The measure of Him is longer than the earth and broader than the sea." Therefore God is a body.

(2) Besides, everything with a figure is a body, since figure is a quality having to do with size. But God seems to have a figure, since Genesis 1:26 says, "Let us make man in our image and likeness," and His image is called His figure in Hebrews 1:3, "who being the brightness of His glory, and the figure," that is, image, "of His substance." Therefore God is a body.

(3) Also, anything having bodily parts is a body, and Scripture attributes such parts to God. Job 40:4 asks, "Hast thou an arm like God?" and in the Psalms it says "the eyes of the Lord are upon the just," and "the right hand of the Lord hath wrought strength." So God is a body.

Ps 33:16
Ps 117:16

(4) Only a body assumes a posture. Yet the Scriptures describe God in terms of posture. Isaiah 6:1 says, "I saw the Lord sitting," and Isaiah 3:13 says, "The Lord standeth up to judge." Ergo God is a body.

(5) Furthermore, only a body or something corporeal can serve as a point of departure or arrival. God is presented in Scripture as a point of arrival in the Psalm that says, "Come ye to Him and be enlightened," and as a point of departure in Jeremiah 17:13, "they that depart

Ps 33:6

from Thee shall be written in the earth." Therefore God is a body.

ON THE OTHER HAND, there is what it says in John 4:24, "God is spirit."

ANSWER: God is not a body, absolutely not. This can be shown on three grounds. First, a body never induces change without being changed, as one learns by experience in each particular case. But it was shown above that God is a first and unchanging inducer of change. Hence God is clearly not a body.

^{W1} in 1 *ST* q.2, a.3

Second, it is necessarily true that an entity which is a "first being" is in act — not in potency — in every respect. Admittedly, inside a given thing passing from potency into act, its being in potency comes first in time, before its being in act. But in the broader picture, act is prior to potency. For the thing in potency is only reduced to act by an entity which is already in act. Now it was shown above that God is a "first being." It is thus impossible for anything in God to be in potency.¹ But

^{W2} in 1 *ST* q.2, a.3

¹ What had been shown above was that God is the first efficient cause; a cause is a being, so the first efficient cause is a first being. Now more implications emerge. By definition, a first being is one on which no causally prior being acts. Let x be such a first, and suppose there is a trait ϕ such that x is potentially ϕ . As was shown in ^{W1}, x cannot reduce itself from potentially- ϕ to actually- ϕ ; and since by stipulation there is no prior entity to act on x to make it actually- ϕ , it is impossible for x to become ϕ . But this contradicts the assumption that x is potentially ϕ . For nothing is in potency to a trait whose acqui-

any given body is in potency [in at least one respect], because a continuous thing as such is divisible into smaller and smaller parts indefinitely.² It is therefore impossible for God to be a body.

W, in 1ST q.2,
a3

Thirdly, God is what is maximally noble among all beings, as came out above. But it is impossible for a body to hold that status. For a body is either alive or not alive. As between those two, obviously, the living body is the nobler. But a living body is not alive just because it is a body, because then each and every body would be alive. So it has to be alive thanks to something else, as a human body is alive through a soul. But that through which a body is alive is nobler than the body itself. Ergo it is impossible for God to be a body.

1ST q.1, a9

TO MEET THE OBJECTIONS — *ad* (1): holy Scripture communicates spiritual and divine truths to us under bodily imagery, as I said above. Thus, when it attributes three dimensions to God in an image of bodily size, Scripture is indicating the size of His power. By depth it means His power to know hidden things; by height, the preeminence of his power over all things; by length, the duration of His existence; by breadth, the scope of His love towards all. — Or, if you prefer, you can interpret the imagery as Denis does in chapter 9 of *De divinis nominibus*, where

PG 3, 909ff

sition by it is impossible. Therefore there is no trait to which a first being is in potency.

² Aquinas resorted to this abstract potency because medieval science featured an immovable body (earth) and incorruptible ones (in the heavens). Modern science removes these obstacles; if it posits indivisible quarks, they have other potencies.

God's depth is taken to be the incomprehensibility of His essence; length, the procession of His power, penetrating all things; breadth, His extending Himself to all things, in that all things are contained under His protection.

ad (2): man is not said to be made in the image of God with respect to his body, but with respect to his superiority over the other animals. This is why Genesis 1:26, after it says, "Let us make man in our image and likeness," adds, "and let him have dominion over the fishes of the sea," etc. Man's superiority over all the animals lies in reason and understanding. So it is along the lines of his understanding and reason (which are non-bodily traits) that man is in the image of God.

ad (3): bodily parts are attributed to God in the Scriptures on the basis of some likeness to the acts they perform. The act of the eye is seeing, and so the "eye" attributed to God means His power to see (which He does in an intellectual way rather than through a sense). And likewise for the other parts.

ad (4): descriptions having to do with posture are also used of God merely on some basis of likeness. For example, He is said to be sitting on account of His unchangeableness and His authority; He is said to be standing on account of His power to beat down everything that opposes Him.

ad (5): one does not draw near to God with bodily steps, because He is everywhere. One approaches Him with changes of heart, and one moves away from Him the same way. Thus under the imagery of local motion, 'coming' and 'departing' refer to spiritual change.

Cajetan's Commentary

As to the title [and why this issue comes up next], observe the following. Given the conditions God was said to meet in the previous article, where His existence was proved, no one would imagine that God was an accidental property; He would be thought of as a substance. So, with the does-it-exist question answered, telling us that 'being' applies to God, and with the other conditions mandating that He be substance, Aquinas turns immediately to the question of whether God is a body, meaning, a bodily substance. Thus 'body' is being used in its proper sense here, to mean a body in the category of substance — irrespective of whether a body is a simple thing, as Averroes believed a heavenly body to be, or non-simple. All authors agree that a bodily substance has three dimensions connected with it, whether the dimensions are exactly the same as such substance or not. None of that matters in this context. What does matter is that 'bodily substance', properly taken, is distinguished not only from 'incorporeal', e.g. 'non-material substance', but also from 'non-body', i.e. from a

De substantia orbis, c.2

form which is the act of a body. Neither of these is "bodily" substance as 'bodily' marks an intrinsic difference constituting [the substance as] a body (although in a looser sense natural forms are called bodily substances after the bodies whose forms they are). Here, though, 'body' is being used strictly, as you can see from the beginning of *De Anima II*, where Aristotle asks if the soul is a body. Aquinas is using 'body' the same way, as you see most clearly in the third ground advanced in this article. — So, the sense of the title is this: is God a body, i.e., a substance which is truly and properly sized or extended, or is He not? Is He rather quite unextended, or perhaps the act of an extended thing, or whatever else you like that is set off from the bodily as such?

Analysis of the article, I

ii. In the body of the article, a single conclusion answers the question with a no: God is not a body.

This is supported on three grounds. The first goes as follows. [*Antecedent:*] God is a first unchanged inducer of change; [*consequent:*] therefore He is not a body. The antecedent is clear from the previous article. Inference to the consequent is supported: because no body is an unchanged inducer of change. This last is supported by experience.

Can a body be an unchanged changer?

iii. As to the proposition that no body induces change without undergoing change, observe that it can be understood in two senses. (1) One can take 'without undergoing change' to mean *actually or potentially*. So taken, the proposition is plain and really emerges from experience. It also fits with the minor that

God is an unchanged inducer of change to yield the conclusion sought. Or (2) one can take 'without undergoing change' to mean *actually*. So taken, the proposition is beset with difficulty; it is not evident from experience but needs to be reasoned out and narrowed in scope. Getting it from experience faces the hurdles that a magnet draws iron without undergoing change, snow chills without undergoing change, and a colored thing, without undergoing change, affects one's sight; *etc.* In my judgment, therefore, the proposition is being used here in the first sense.

Nevertheless, when one is talking only about change of place, the proposition is true in that second sense. The reason for this is given in 1 *CG* c.20, namely, that the thing inducing change has to be together with* the thing undergoing change. From there it follows that a body inducing motion cannot stay in place while the thing moved changes place. For if only the latter changes place, it ceases to be "together with" the body making it move, which is alleged to stay in place at a point contiguous with the place from which the moving thing has been displaced.

The way to discount the hurdles, then, is to point out that they are not about change of place. This is obvious with snow and the colored object. But as to magnets and things like that, you learn from Averroes' *On Physics VII*, comment 10, that they do not induce motion; rather, other things are moved towards them (though not from just anywhere, because in other places the iron pieces lack the disposition which they acquire from the magnets after the fashion of a spiritual alteration). But more will be said about these matters later, when our topic turns to how other motions depend upon celestial motion; no more needs to be said here, where the issue is local motion.¹

Analysis of the article, II

iv. The second ground is this. [*Antecedent:*] God is a first being; [*1st inference:*] therefore He is pure act; [*2nd*

¹ This section illustrates how obsolete science posed pseudo-problems. When snow chills me, it gains heat and so undergoes change. The eye is not hit by the colored thing but by the light it reflects, which is changed (absorbed) in the process. A body is only a magnet thanks to the force in the magnetic "field," which does undergo change in drawing the iron. Also, the theory of local motion in which the mover has to push the moved is obsolete.

inference:] therefore He is not a body. — The antecedent is clear from the previous article. Drawing the first inference is supported as follows. [*Assumption:*] In overall terms,* act is prior to potency; [*sub-inference:*] ergo a first being is act without potency, which is to say: pure act. The assumption is clarified by showing the difference between

- how act stands to potency overall
- and
- how act stands to potency in some one thing admitting of both

— namely, that relative to this one thing potency is prior, while overall (and not just in this or that thing) act is prior. This claim is supported as follows: in every case, a thing in potency is not reduced to act unless by some being which is [already] in act. — The second inference is then supported. [*Assumption:*] each and every body is in potency; ergo [it is not pure act]. This assumption is supported: each body is continuous, and potency-to-division is in the definition of the continuous. For it is always divisible into parts that are further divisible, as it says in *Physics VI*.

c.1
231a 24ff

v. The third ground is the following. [*Antecedent:*] God is the noblest of all beings; [*inference:*] therefore He is not a body. — The antecedent is again clear from the previous article. The inference is supported thus: being the noblest conflicts with being a body. This claim in turn is supported. A body is living or not living, and in either case it is not the noblest. For if it is not living, a living body is nobler; if it is living, then that whereby it is living is nobler still. That this latter is other than the body itself is proved: a body is not living just insofar as it is a body, otherwise each and every body would be alive. — All these points are clear.

Is an ant nobler than a star?

vi. On account of objections from some quarters, the proposition that a living body is nobler than a non-living one does not seem true to some people. It would entail that an ant is nobler than a heavenly body, since the latter is generally held to be non-living.

Well, suppose a heavenly body is a living thing after all. Still, if it is compared to the ant not insofar as it lives but just insofar as it is a heavenly *body*, the answer to the objection is easy. One will say that the ant *as living* is nobler than the heavenly body *minus life* — and necessarily so, because this is only to say that a soul is nobler than any body. For the whole order of souls is above the whole order of bodies, as is obvious.

But suppose a heaven is not a living thing. Then the answer is more difficult. It will not do to say that this comparison [a living body is nobler than a non-living one] is true formally but not unqualifiedly.[†] In other words, it won't do to say the living as such is nobler than the non-living as such. For this comparison is *puerile*. Even a stone as such is nobler than a non-stone as such. Across the board, any positive trait is better than its negation. Also, this maneuver does not yield an answer

† *simpliciter*

* *simul cum*

to the objection. Aquinas is trying to exclude God from the whole range of bodies, on the ground that life is nobler than corporeality. For it is clear that the level of life is universally higher than the level of nature (taking nature as distinguished against the soul) and that corporeality in its whole range falls below the level of life. It is not in this or that respect, then, but unqualifiedly, that the whole range of body is below the range of life. And so if God is the noblest being, He cannot be a body, because there is a higher order of things than bodies (the vital) in which living things, of course, appear. [So a construal of the comparison which makes it true formally but not unqualifiedly will not meet the objection in the way that Aquinas' argument requires.]

The thing to say, therefore, is that living things unqualifiedly are nobler than the non-living for the reason given in the body of the article, and as one learns from *De Animalibus XVI*. If a heavenly body is not alive, then, unqualifiedly speaking, an ant is a nobler *being* than a heavenly body. However, the heavenly thing is a nobler *body*

than the ant. Because of its higher standing within the genus of bodies, many relative advantages belong to it, even when compared to life, such as incorruptibility, etc.²

Aristotle, of course, in *Ethics VI*, says the heavenly bodies are nobler than man because he holds them to be living things; he is explicit in *De Caelo II* that this is to be assumed.

c.7,
1141b 1/
c.12,
292b 5ff

² The problem with which Cajetan was wrestling was again posed by obsolete science — this time by the idea that the heavenly bodies, even if non-living, are incorruptible and, if material or composed at all, composed of some higher stuff, nobler than any of the elements found on earth. This idea is what created the objection: perhaps there are non-living things which are nobler than any living ones. Short of going all the way back to Aristotle and holding that the stars and planets are living things, Cajetan saw no way to respond except to divide the question. Two bodily things can be compared, he suggested, either *as beings* (as which the living ant is nobler than the star) or *as bodies* (as which the star is nobler than the ant). Now that the planets are cold rocks or gasses, and the stars are hydrogen-fueled fires, the problem has disappeared.

Is there composition of form and matter in God?

In 1 Sent. d.35, a.1, 1 CG c.17; Compendium theologiae c. 28

It seems that there would be composition of form and matter in God.

(1) For everything that has a soul is composed of matter and form, because a soul is the form of a body. Scripture attributes a soul to God, as one sees in Hebrews 10:38, where God is represented as saying, "But my just man liveth by faith; but if he withdraw himself, he shall not please my soul." Therefore God is composed of matter and form.

(2) Furthermore, anger, joy, and the like are emotions [and these are states] of a composed being, as it says in *De Anima I*. But such states are attributed to God in Scripture. It says in a Psalm that "the anger of the Lord was kindled against His people." Hence God is composed of matter and form.

(3) Moreover, matter is the source of individuation. God seems to be an individual, since there are not said to be many gods. Therefore He is composed of matter and form.

ON THE OTHER HAND, everything composed of matter and form is a body. For what first inheres in matter [as a result of its composition with a form] is volume* [and matter-having-volume is what is meant by 'a body']. But God is not a body, as has been shown. Ergo He is not composed of matter and form.

ANSWER: there cannot be matter in God. A first reason is that matter is what is in potency.¹ It has been shown that God is pure act, having nothing in potency.

¹ *'Materia'* was used both relatively and absolutely: in either use, it was defined as potency to form. Form was specifying act. Surface specifications were accidental forms, while deep ones were substantial forms. Forms receivable in *materia* stood to it as a structure stands to the potential of stuff to be structured. A composite of structure *f* with stuff structured in *f* but otherwise structureable was a *res materialis*. Such a *res* had measurable quantity and was an empirical entity, while *materia* itself, taken absolutely, was not. So taken, *'materia'* was used more abstractly than our word 'matter'. We use 'matter' to mean a material thing, while *'materia'* taken absolutely meant that whereby a material thing is open to being structured otherwise than it is. We usually think of matter as what has mass, and we contrast it with energy. But since (by Einstein's equation) mass is potentially re-structureable as energy, and *vice-versa*, both would have counted as *res materiales*. It is interesting that energy does have quantity, though not three-dimensional volume.

Absolute *materia* was also understood to elude human knowing. All our descriptions of material things, including simple measurements, are derived from structures present in things, so that apart from the structures/forms, we have no way to des-

Hence it is impossible for God to be composed of matter and form.

Second, everything composed of matter and form becomes complete and good *through* its form. So every such thing has to be good by participation, inasmuch as its matter participates in its form. But the *first* good thing and the best — God — [is prior to the rest and so] is not good by participation, because the good by essence comes ahead of the good by participation. So God cannot be composed of matter and form.

Third, every agent acts thanks to its form; hence a thing stands to being-an-agent as it stands to its form. That thing, therefore, which is firstly* and of itself† an agent has to be firstly and of itself a form. God is the first agent, since he is the first efficient cause, as shown. Therefore He is by essence [*i.e.* of Himself] His form and is not composed of matter and form.

TO MEET THE OBJECTIONS: — *ad* (1): a soul is attributed to God because of a similarity of actions. When we will something for ourselves, it is out of our soul; so what pleases God's will is said to please "His soul."

ad (2): anger and the like are attributed to God because of a similarity of effects. Since it is characteristic of an angry man to punish, God's punitive sanction is called "His anger" metaphorically.

ad (3): forms receivable in matter are individuated through the matter. For the matter cannot be in another, since it is the first subject standing under [received traits], whereas the form, for its part, can be received in many, unless it is impeded by something else. But a form not receivable in matter, subsisting on its own, is individuated by the very fact that it cannot be received in another. God is such a form. From His being "individual," then, it does not follow that He has matter.²

cribe what is *there* to be formed. Thus form was identified with the "understandable," and *materia* itself was not understandable except in relation to form — it became *intelligibilis* through the forms received in it, as the subject of a proposition is known *through* the descriptions predicated of it. Hence the comparison of *materia* with "first subject."

² Those forms which structure stuff otherwise structureable are forms receivable in matter, and if such a form exists in an extramental case, that case is individual solely because of the stuff structured. A form not receivable in matter, by contrast, will be an "act-of-being-specifically-thus" that does not structure any stuff distinguishable from it and otherwise structureable. Hence, if such an act exists in an extramental case, that case will be distinct from anything else "of itself."

W₁ in q 2, a.3

* *primo*
† *per se*

W₂ in q 2, a.3

c 1;
403a 3

Ps 106:40

* *quantitas*
dimensionis

Cajetan's Commentary

In the title, be aware that while being-a-body and being-composed-of-form-and-matter are equivalent and identical in St. Thomas' doctrine, there are other writers in whom they are not the same and are not equivalent.

*De substantia
orbis, c.2
Fons vitae*

Thus Averroes posited a body in heaven that is not composed of form and matter. In the opposite direction, Avicenna thought there was form-and-matter composition in spiritual substances, but no body. Therefore, to make his teaching cover all points of view, St. Thomas now takes up the question whether God is composed of form and matter. This is why all the arguments which he advances in this article use means of proof which abstract from corporeality and quantity. They are meant to exclude even "spiritual matter."

Analysis of the article

ii. In the body of the article, there is one conclusion, answering the question in the negative: it is impossible for there to be matter in God. — This is supported on three grounds. The first is that God is pure act; so He has no matter. The support for drawing the inference is that matter is in potency.

The second ground goes as follows. [*Antecedent:*] God is the first good and the best. [*1st inference:*] So He is not good by participation but by His essence.

[*2nd inference:*] Therefore He is not composed of form and matter. — The antecedent is clear from what has gone before. The first inference is supported: what is good by essence is prior to what is good by participation; so, if God is the first good, [He is good by essence]. The second inference is also supported: a composed thing is good thanks to its form, therefore by participation, namely, as its matter participates in its form. Ergo if [God is not good by participation, He is not composed and has no matter].

The third ground is this. [*Antecedent:*] God is the first efficient cause; [*1st inference:*] so He is firstly and of Himself an agent; [*2nd inference:*] therefore He is firstly and of Himself a form. Therefore He is not composed of form and matter. — The antecedent and the first inference are left as obvious. The second is supported as follows. Every agent acts thanks to its form; therefore each thing stands to being-an-agent as it stands to being-a-form, and *vice-versa*: therefore if God is firstly and of Himself an agent, He is firstly and of Himself a form, *etc.*

Two senses of 'first'

iii. Concerning that first inference [from 'God is the first efficient cause' to 'therefore He is firstly and of Himself an agent'], be aware that there is some change of meaning between 'first' as used in the antecedent and 'firstly' as used in the consequent. In the antecedent, 'first' is used to mark the priority of a thing over other efficient causes; in the consequent, 'firstly' is used to mean 'according to what the thing is itself', which is how the word is used in the *Posterior Analytics I*, where how a thing is 'first' is distinguished from [how it is]

c.4,
73a 20-74b 5

'of itself' and from [how it is] 'in every case'. The result is that, from the fact that God is first among the efficient causes, Aquinas infers that He is of Himself "firstly" active as such a cause, that is, according to what He Himself is. This inference is good because being the first among efficient causes belongs to God not contingently but necessarily, because of His essential causal influence upon the other efficient causes. Such being the case, it is already obvious that being-an-agent does not belong to Him thanks to another, while being-an-agent belongs to other things thanks to Him. So He is "firstly" an agent, according to the usage taught in the [*Posterior*] *Analytics*.

l, c.4,
73a 20 ff

Agency and form

iv. In establishing the second inference [from 'God is firstly and of Himself an agent' to 'ergo He is firstly and of Himself a form'], Aquinas uses the point that an agent acts thanks to its form, *etc.* Concerning this point, be aware that if the form is what-it-takes to act* (as the antecedent assumes and Aristotle says many times), then it must be the case that, as each thing stands to form, so it stands to what-it-takes to act, and hence to being-active (going in a *priori* order); and *vice-versa* (going in a *posteriori* order), as a thing stands to being-active, so it must stand to what-it-takes to act, and hence to form. On this basis, the second inference is valid: if anything is "firstly" active, it is "firstly" what-it-takes to act and so a form, and thus it is not composed of matter and form. Also, the text of the article suggests an equivalence here: first it says that as anything stands to form, so it stands to being an agent, and then it says (implying equivalence) that what is of itself firstly an agent is firstly and of itself a form.

* *ratio agendi*

A doubt

v. Concerning these points doubt arises. The argument seems fallacious. Under the cover of a general expression, 'stands to form', the argument shifts down to the quite special case of being a form. That

each thing "stands to its form" as it stands to being an agent

is perfectly true, but one may not permissibly subsume under it this other claim:

each thing stands to *being* a form as it stands to being an agent.

To do so is a fallacy of the consequent, and the result is false. Fire does not stand to *being* heat as it stands to making things hot. Fire "firstly" makes things hot but is not "firstly" heat (it is not the case that fire *is* heat at all; fire *has* heat of itself firstly); and yet heat is the form that is what-it-takes to make things hot. So, from the fact that something is "of itself firstly" an agent, one can infer nothing more than that it "of itself firstly" *has* the form which is what it takes to act. One cannot infer that it *is* a form "of itself firstly," as this article does.

vi. TO ANSWER THIS, one need only pay attention to two things. They are (1) what 'of itself firstly' means, and (2) the rule that words are always to be interpreted in keeping with the subject matter to which they are being applied. From better attention to these, all the problems will clear up.

c.4.
73b31ff • As *Posterior Analytics I* says, the expression
x is of itself firstly ϕ

means that x is ϕ but not thanks to another, and that other things are ϕ thanks to x. The stipulation 'not thanks to another' excludes not only other things outside of x but also parts of x, as it says in *Physics VII*, so that what is ϕ by reason of a part of itself is not "of itself firstly" ϕ .¹ As a result, that which gets to be an agent by reason of a part of itself — its form — is not of itself firstly an agent. But neither is it such incidentally [*per accidens*]. No, it is an agent thanks to another [*per aliud*], namely, the part. And so nothing composed of matter and form can be of itself firstly active; no such thing is acting from itself as a whole, because it is not the case that it is acting by reason of its matter (matter cannot be what it takes to act, since, by its definition, matter is potency as opposed to the act which is what-it-takes to act).² From these remarks, it becomes clear how, from a thing's standing towards being an agent, one can infer licitly not only its standing towards form but also its standing towards being a form, as the above article did, and how an inference can also go the *a priori* way (from form to agency), and how there is no fallacy.

• As to the alleged counter-example from heat, I say that if words were weighed in keeping with their subject matter, this objection would not come up at all. For [the subject in this article is a most perfect being, and] the

¹ Aristotle developed this use of 'firstly' as part of his quest for the right sort of fact to serve as the starting point — *archê* — of a chain of explanations. Such a starting point will not itself admit of explanation: it will serve to explain other facts. Well, suppose it is a fact that all K-things are ϕ . Call this fact F. Suppose it turns out that all K-things are inescapably under the influence of an outside entity y, thanks to which they are ϕ . Then F will have been explained by that influence from outside, and so F will not itself be a starting point. K-things will be ϕ *per aliud* in the strong sense in which '*per aliud*' is opposed to '*per se*'. Alternatively, suppose it turns out that all K-things have a part, say, a gene, thanks to which they are ϕ . Then F will have been explained by that gene, and so again F will not be a starting point. This time, K-things will be ϕ *per se* (thanks to what-all is involved in K-things), but they will not be *per se* ϕ in the way of a "first" — in the way of an *archê*. They will be ϕ *per aliud* in the weak sense in which '*per aliud*' is consistent with '*per se*'. So, in order for all K-things to be ϕ not only *per se* but also in the manner of a "first," Aristotle thought, they must be ϕ not "thanks to another" in either sense but thanks to themselves in the whole of what they are.

² Every case of x doing A (where A is some operation) depends upon x having (or being) some form of actualness, ϕ . If x is a material thing, the matter in x is its potential to be ϕ (and, typically, to be other than ϕ when x is ϕ); hence, even when this potential is reduced to act (so that x is ϕ), the potential is not itself the ϕ -ness which is what-it-takes to do A. For what is reduced to ϕ -ness is not ϕ -ness itself.

general talk of "being an agent" implies no imperfection; hence it can be applied to [such a being, *i.e.*] a thing subsisting in nature of itself firstly "most distinctively," as we say. But the more particular talk of "making things hot" does imply imperfection. It speaks of being an agent *this way, i.e.*, after the fashion of a material thing. And "making things hot" cannot apply to anything "firstly" in the outright and absolute sense of 'firstly' [explained above], because it has to apply to a composite of matter and form, which can only act *via* a part of itself. — Nevertheless, when such matter-bound activities are taken according to their own definitions, they are said to apply to something "firstly" [in a lesser manner, *i.e.*] in the manner in which acts can be found firstly in such things, *i.e.* in material agents, and not in the absolute manner. For this reason, the objection is not a genuine counter-example. Granted, the soundness of St. Thomas' inference is not exhibited by the case of fire and heat, nor by other material ways of acting; but this is because what occurs in such cases is not being-an-agent "firstly" (nor being-such-an-agent "firstly") but just being it firstly in the *genus of material agents*, where 'firstly' does not exclude 'thanks to a part'. But 'thanks to a part' is excluded by 'firstly' in its absolute manner.³

The force of the inference stands, then: if God is of Himself firstly [*per se primo*] an agent, then He is *per se primo* a form. For what is *per se primo* an agent is an agent "not thanks to another," nor even thanks to a part, but thanks to itself as a whole. So it was a whole has to be a form, not a composite of matter and form.

A quarrel with Durandus over individuation

vii. In the answer *ad* (3), a difficulty is raised by Durandus against the cause of individuation assigned there by St. Thomas, *i.e.*, being received in matter or [alternatively] being unreceivable in matter.⁴ [*Major:*] An x is called "an individual," says Durandus, thanks to the absence from it of the sort of division by which a higher [term, kind] is divided into its lowers [the cases falling under it]. If a form ϕ is an individual, it too is such thanks to the absence from it of being-in-another *as in a case falling under it* — not thanks to the absence from

Durandus,
In I Sent, d.3,
q.2

³ Cajetan's way of handling this example of fire and heat, please note, makes Aquinas' third ground for saying there is no matter in God dependent upon his first two grounds, as follows. Cajetan concedes a sense of '*per se primo*' that has application among material things. The reason this sense is out of place in the talk of God, he says, is because it implies imperfection. But the imperfection, it turns out, is just the fact that matter is involved. One who opposes Aquinas on the main issue will think there could well be matter (of some sort) in the first and best being there is. Such an opponent, then, will not concede that having matter is an imperfection — not unless Aquinas' first two grounds force him to do so.

⁴ Durandus of St. Pourçain, O.P., flourished under two Avignon Popes, until his death in 1334. At one time a loyal Thomist, he eventually developed a strong taste for his own, highly eccentric opinions, some tending towards nominalism. Writing his commentary on the four *libri Sententiarum* occupied his entire life.

it of being-in-another *as in a subject informed by it*. But [*minor*:] both ϕ 's being-received-in-matter and ϕ 's being-unreceivable-in-matter have to do with being-in-another (or not being-in-another) as in a subject informed by ϕ . Therefore neither of them pertains to individuation. Rather, Aquinas has equivocated on 'be in another' and on 'subject'. — The major must hold, Durandus says, otherwise this [case of] white would not be an individual, since it is in another as in a subject informed by it, namely, in this substance. And the minor is self-evident.

Durandus also adds a confirming argument. [*Antecedent*:] Matter is not the first subject of predication, *i.e.*, not the lowest item that can be a subject, but it is the first subject of information. [*Inference*:] So it does not individuate by being the first subject. — The inference [he says] is clear, and the antecedent is supported as follows. Although [matter does not inform anything, and so] it is a hallmark of matter that it fails to be in another as in a subject informed by it, nevertheless matter does not fail to be in another as in a lower subject [a case falling under it]. After all, matter is something of a universal: it is predicated, obviously, of this and that matter, as a higher and universal term is predicated of the cases falling under it. Otherwise, matter would not be scientifically knowable, since science is only of universals. — In this article, therefore, St. Thomas seems to have done a bad job of drawing the reason for individuation from matter.

Answering Durandus

viii. The SHORT ANSWER to this goes as follows. Yes, there is a difference between how ϕ is in another as in a case falling under it and how ϕ is in another as in a subject informed by it. And yes, being a "subject" is also different in the two cases. But these points are fully consistent with the fact that ϕ 's being in another as in a case of ϕ — not just any case of it but a singular case of ϕ — and its being in another by informing it are the same. I don't mean: *formally* the same. But they are *causally* the same. The story is this: upon a quiddity ϕ 's being in another by informing it there naturally follows ϕ 's being in the other as in a singular case falling under ϕ . And upon a quiddity ψ 's inability to be in another by informing it, there follows ψ 's inability to be in a singular as a case falling under it; rather, ψ is singular already through itself. This is what Aquinas is saying in the text [of his answer *ad* (3)]. He is taking being-in-another (or not being-in-another) by informing it *as the root* of individuation. He is not taking it *as the formal constitutive*

of an individual, as Durandus' objections badly interpret him as doing. To prove that this is the root of individuation goes beyond the limits, alas, of the present topic; but it will come up below,* where individuation is the focal issue on the table. Here, to understand the present article, it is enough to know that, for us Thomists, this business of being in another by informing it is not what is formally constitutive of an individual but what is causally constitutive.

ix. Moving on, then, to Durandus' main objection, I say as follows. From the fact that this [case of] white is an individual and yet is in another by way of informing it, no conclusion follows except that being-in-another by informing it is not the formal constitutive of an individual. This is perfectly consistent with our point that if the nature of whiteness were such that it could not be in another by informing it, white would never be in this white thing as a higher in a case falling under it; furthermore, this white would not be *this* thanks to the presence of an individual difference alongside its nature but thanks to the absence of any possible individual difference: for white would not be divisible into many individuals, as St. Thomas says above about forms which are not receivable in matter.

Moving on now to his confirming argument: I deny the inference. From the fact that matter is the first subject to be informed, it *does* follow that matter is the first root of individuation, positively or negatively. — I also deny the antecedent. Matter is indeed the first item that can be a subject, the lowest — not in the sense of a total subject, however, like a complete individual, but in the sense of a partial subject. — As to Durandus' further objection that matter is a universal: I answer that matter in itself is not a universal nor a predicable. This is clear from the fact that matter in itself is not understandable and hence is not scientifically knowable. Rather, matter is understood in [a way that makes] an analogy to a universal form, and thereby it becomes a quasi-predicable and a quasi-object of science, *etc.* This is why it says above, in the article, that form, just as such, can be in many, while matter is the first subject. For as a result, all universality is from form, and matter in itself is not a universal; and since matter is the first subject of all the category-terms, it is the lowest (though partial) subject, and the first subject to be informed, and hence the root, indeed, of individuation.

This subject has been adequately discussed elsewhere, in *De Ente et Essentia* [c.5] and in two questions in my commentary on that work [qq.4, 9]. It will also get a fuller treatment below [in the places cited above].

* See the commentaries on 1ST q.29, a.1; 1ST q.41, a.6; 1ST q.54, a.1.

Is God the same thing as His essence or nature?

In I. Sent. d.34, q.1, a.1; 1 CG c.21; Q. Disp. de unione Verbi a.1, De Anima a.17 ad 10; Quodl. II, q.2, a.2; Compendium Theologiae c 10; Opus. de quatuor oppos. c 4

It seems that God is not identically the same thing as His essence or nature.¹

^{* dentas} (1) After all, nothing is inside of itself. But the essence or nature of God, divineness,* is said to be “in” God. Thus it seems God ≠ His essence or nature.

^{† suppositum} (2) Furthermore, an effect ends up resembling its cause because every agent produces something resembling itself. Well, in God’s created effects, the referent[†] is not the same as the nature. A man, for instance, is not identically the same as his humanness. In God’s case, too, therefore, God ≠ His divineness.²

ON THE OTHER HAND, it is said of God that He is “life” and not just “alive.” One sees this in John 14:6, “I am the way, the truth, and the life.” But as life stands to the one alive, so divineness stands to God. Therefore God is divineness itself.

I ANSWER: God is identically His essence or nature. To

¹ The question is whether an identification can be made between what the concrete noun ‘God’ stands for and what the abstract noun ‘divineness’ stands for. The sense of ‘God’ is ‘a thing having the divine nature’, and the sense of the abstract ‘divineness’ is ‘the nature whereby something is God’; so the question can be rephrased thus: is one having the divine nature flatly identical to that nature itself?

What this in turn is asking is best explained as follows. One having a given nature is a value of an individual first-order variable. Does ‘God’, then, name a case where the nature itself is identical to the value of such a variable? If ‘x’ is such a variable, is there a value of ‘x’ for which ‘x = divineness’ comes out true? This question translates easily into medieval idiom, where being a value of an individual first-order variable was “subsisting.” So the question is: does the divine nature have of itself what it takes to subsist, or does it have this thanks to being composed with another factor?

To grasp why this question comes up here, after Aquinas has determined the divine nature to be a pure “form” but before he asks if this form is existence, one needs to realize that, for him, subsisting was a logical prerequisite to existing. Only what subsisted *could exist* in the primary sense of ‘exist’. Today this view is found in Saul Kripke’s model for quantified modal logic. In such a model, a possible individual in the domain is the value of a first-order variable such as ‘x’ prior (logically) to existing in a given possible world.

² ‘Suppositum’ meant referent in medieval semantics; see I ST q.13, a.1, footnote 1. The word ‘laps’, used as normal, stood for a stone, say, the Blarney Stone, and conveyed a description of it, like ‘thing having a mineral nature’. The nature was the word’s sense; the stone it was being used to stand for was its *suppositum* referent. In metaphysical terms, a referent was what “subsisted” and “had” a given nature and “did” the existing. The proof that there is a God gave ‘God’ a referent. The objector thinks that this referent is not just divineness (as the Blarney Stone is not just mineralhood) but a larger “whole” having it.

understand this, one needs to know the following.

In things composed of matter and form, there has to be a difference between the nature (or essence) and the referent. Here is why. The essence/nature of a thing *x* comprises only those factors that appear in the makeup defining the species to which *x* belongs. Thus humanness comprises the factors that appear in the makeup defining man; for it is by these factors that one is a human being; and this is what ‘humanness’ means, namely, that whereby* a man or woman is a human being. But individual matter, along with all the accidents individuating it, does not appear in the makeup of the species. *This* flesh, *these* bones, white, black, *etc.*, do not appear in the makeup defining man. As a result, this flesh and these bones, with the accidents marking this matter, are not included in humanness. Yet they *are* included in what *a given* human is. Thus what *a given* human is has in itself something that humanness does not have. So a man or woman is not wholly the same as humanness. Rather, humanness is described as the “formal part” of a human, since the defining principles stand as “form” to the individuating matter.

Well, then: in things not composed of matter and form, in which individuation is not a result of individual matter (*i.e.* this matter) but the forms are individuated of themselves, it must be the case that the forms themselves are subsisting.[†] In them, there is no difference between the referent and the nature. Since God is not composed of matter and form, as was shown already, it must be the case that God is identical with His divineness, with His life, and with whatever else is attributed to Him in that way.

TO MEET THE OBJECTIONS — *ad* (1): we have no way to speak about uncomposed things except after the manner of the composed things [which we experience and] from which we get our knowledge. So when we speak about God:

- we use concrete nouns to indicate that He subsists, because in our experience only composed [concrete] things subsist,
- and we use abstract nouns to indicate that He is uncomposed [like a pure form].

The fact that divineness or life or the like is said to be “in” God, then, is due to a difference found in our understanding of the terms [‘divineness’ and ‘God’]; it is not due to any difference in the thing [indicated by those terms]. [So the objection is moot.]

ad (2): God’s effects resemble Him not perfectly but as best they can. There is defect of resemblance where a thing that is one and simple can only be represented by things that are many. Thus, composition turns up in each of the latter, and out of that comes the fact that, in each, the referent is not identically the nature.

* quo

† subsistentes

Cajetan's Commentary

Already in the title query, "Is God the same thing as His essence?" uncertainty arises as to what 'God' stands for. From the thrust of the second objection, and from the gist of the reasoning in the body of the article, one gets the impression that 'God' stands for a divine referent. For nothing else is under discussion here but whether a referent having divine nature and that nature itself are identical. But when one looks at the definition of 'referent', this impression is shown to be wrong. For there are five requirements in what it takes to be a referent. It has to be a substance, complete, individual, subsisting incommunicably. It has to be

- a substance, to exclude accidents;
- complete, to exclude parts;
- individual, to exclude species;
- subsisting, to exclude the humanity of Christ;
- and doing so incommunicably, to exclude the divine essence, which is common to three referents.

And thus, since 'a divine referent' means the same as 'a divine Person,' and there is no mention in this article of what constitutes the Persons, it follows that 'God' here does not refer to what is in fact a divine referent. — In confirmation of this: the question of whether a Person in God is identical with His essence comes up explicitly below. Therefore [it is not being treated here].

ii. To settle this, the thing to say is that 'God' can be taken three ways:

(1) to stand for the concretely taken quasi-species with divine nature: in other words, for *what has divineness*, as 'man' stands for [mankind, the species] having humanness;

(2) to stand for a concretely taken instance of divine nature: in other words, this thing having divineness, or *this God*, as 'man' can refer to this man;

(3) to stand for a referent of divine nature: *i.e.*, this one incommunicably having divineness, or *this divine person*, as 'man' can refer to Socrates.

But there is a difference between God's case and a man's (or a concrete case of any other nature). In these others, one does not distinguish the concretely taken instance of the nature from the referent (for one does not distinguish this man from a human referent or *vice-versa*): in God, however, the concretely taken instance of the nature ("this God") is distinguished from a divine referent, *i.e.*, Father, Son, or Holy Spirit. Why? Because "this God" is *at once* a particular and common to the three referents. That cannot happen in the individual instance of other substances.

Of these three ways in which 'God' can be taken, then, I should say that, here, it is not being taken in the first. For as is clear in the body of the article, what it takes to be what 'God' is standing for includes the principles individuating God (and includes them as doing just that); these would not be meant by 'God' standing for a quasi-species. Nor is it being taken the third way,

For there is no mention of Personal issues here, and taking 'God' that way would presuppose many issues yet to be sorted out — which is why that use of 'God' is discussed a long way ahead, in the treatise on the divine Persons. Rather, 'God' is being taken in the second way here. So the sense of the question is whether God, *i.e.* this God, is identically divineness. But notice further that if 'this God' is to stand for a concrete individual of divine nature, it must, in the nature of the case, satisfy two conditions, one negative, the other positive. They are

- (1) that it *not* stand for that which truly is a referent endowed with divine nature, and
- (2) that what it does stand for be equivalent to such a referent for purposes of settling whether it is identical to or distinct from the nature, because it, too, stands to the nature as thing having stands to thing had, as *what* is stands to *whereby* it is, as a subsistent stands to the nature in which and with which it subsists, *etc.*

Then, too, there is a third condition for 'this God' to satisfy from the viewpoint of philosophers — indeed, from the viewpoint of all human reason to the extent of its natural ability, namely,

- (3) that what 'this God' stands for be *taken* for a referent of divine nature, since it lacks no trait of such a referent except incommunicability.

What 'this God' stands for does lack this (because what 'this God' stands for is shared in common by the three Persons), but we do not know this by reason. We know it only by revelation of the Faith. Hence there follows a fourth condition, which 'this God' meets from our point of view:

- (4) that while 'this God' does not stand for what is ultimately* a divine referent, it does stand for what counts as such for the limited purposes of a treatise on the non-relational attributes of God, which is the sort of treatise we are now in.¹

Thanks to condition (1), St. Thomas chooses his

¹ To summarize: for any created nature ϕ -ness, an individual ϕ -thing is a referent of ' ϕ '; but the individual God is not a referent of 'God', though it will serve as an adequate approximation therefor to some purposes. More deeply: a created nature ϕ -ness is at best the value of a second-order variable, and only the values of first-order variables are referents of ' ϕ '. But for divineness, the situation is twofold. (1) There are values of a second-order variable ' X ' for which 'God X ' comes out true and $V(X)$ is a referent of 'God' (*i.e.* the cases where $V(X)$ = Father, Son, or Holy Spirit); but (2) there is also a value of a first-order variable ' x ' such that $V(x)$ = a non-relational Thing for which 'God x ' comes out true, but $V(x)$ is only an approximation to a referent of 'God'. The reason for this unique situation is that the referents of 'God' as distinct from one another are not first-order entities but relations: Father, Son, Spirit are distinct second-order things (relations) but simply coincide in being the non-relational first-order Thing which = this God = divineness.

1 ST q.29

* *simpliciter*.

words very carefully in the article above, both in asking the question and in reaching a conclusion and in answering the objections. When he speaks of the special case of God, he uses 'God' and 'divineness' but never uses the expression 'divine referent'. Thanks to the other three conditions, when he speaks generally [of what holds in other cases and not uniquely in God], he uses the words 'referent' and 'nature'. And he settles the question by appealing to the general rules about identity or distinction between a referent and a nature. For one judges whether "this God" is distinct from "divineness" by the same rules as one judges whether a referent is distinct from its nature, because that individual is equivalent to a referent in this respect. The referent contrasts with its nature as *thing having* contrasts with *thing had*; as *what is* contrasts with *whereby it is*; and as the subsistent contrasts with that with which it subsists, etc. It did not suit orderly teaching to mix relational [Trinitarian] questions into the treatise about God's non-relational attributes — questions which are not only revealed but so remote from these basic starting points, that they need to be decided by a great many inquiries still to come.

Analysis of the article

iv. In the body of the article, one conclusion answers the question with yes: God is just the same as His essence or nature. — The proof goes thus. [*Antecedent*:] The basis for a difference between a referent and its nature is the distinction between its nature and its individual matter; [*1st inference*:] so in forms that are not composed with matter but individuated of themselves, the referent does not differ from its nature; [*2nd inference*:] hence God is His divineness, is His life, etc.

The antecedent is supported by the reason why there is a distinction between nature and referent in material things, since these are better known to us. [*Assumption*:] The nature of *x* comprises only those items that fall into the definition of the species to which *x* belongs; [*1st consequence*:] therefore the nature of *x* does not include the individual matter of *x*; [*2nd consequence*:] so by this the nature of *x* is distinguished from the referent. — The assumption is obviously true, and the first consequence drawn is supported on two grounds. (1) Individual matter is not contained in the definition of the species, as is clear in the case of *these bones* and [the definition of] human nature. (2) The principles defining the species stand as form *vis-à-vis* the individuating matter. A sign is this is the fact that humanness is called the formal part of a human being. — The second consequence drawn is supported, too: if what it takes to be the referent were defined, the individual matter would be in it, as Socrates' particular matter is in Socrates.

[With the antecedent thus established], the first inference is left as self-evident. — But the second inference is supported: God is not composed of matter and form.

How to interpret the antecedent

v. Going back now to the antecedent [that the basis for a difference between a referent and its nature is the distinction between its nature and its individual matter], and looking at the key terms used here and in the rest of the reasoning, one needs to make distinctions.

First, distinguish the ways we use 'nature' and 'referent'. We can use these words (1) to talk of things alone, or (2) to talk of *how* they mention things.

'Nature' and 'referent' are used to talk of things alone when they are used to talk about the distinctive makeup of a thing conveyed by 'nature' and of a thing conveyed by 'referent', setting aside how they are conveyed. An example is when 'human nature' is used to talk about our distinctive makeup as human, and when 'Socrates' is used to talk about what it takes to be him, paying no attention to whether the nature is conveyed in an abstract word or a concrete one, etc.

They are used to talk about how they mention things when 'nature' and 'referent' are talked about as standing among *nouns of first intention*, such as 'humanness', 'man', 'Socrates', 'Socrateity', etc.²

In the present article, the talk is of nature and referent as things alone, not how the words mean. (The latter is mainly the business of language theorists, while the former is work for metaphysicians.) This should put an end to quibbles and ripostes that drag in 'is signified in the manner of a part' or 'excludes from its sense' or 'neither includes nor excludes', etc. For these quibbles bear on how words differ in their way of mentioning things, not on the things they mention.

This interpretation is not undermined by the fact that in the body of the article, in his proof that a nature does not include individual matter, Aquinas brings up the point that humanness is *described as* the formal part of a human being. For this is brought up as a sign better recognized *a posteriori*, to show even from semantic evidence that there is a distinction in the real between a nature and individual matter.

vi. Second, please distinguish the ways we use 'differ' or 'difference'. There are again two:

(I) we can use them to talk about differences arising from how we conceive and explain.* or

(II) we can use them to talk about differences arising from a real factor.^{† 3}

Real differences then subdivide into

(A) the difference between one thing, *x*, and another thing, *y*, and

² Terms of first intention were object language. Those of second intention were meta-language. 'Referent' was originally meta-language but became object language when used as a synonym of 'individual'.

³ The contrast is between (I) differences that arise purely from how things come into language and thought (*secundum rationem*) and (II) differences that arise from a factor independent of human thought (*secundum rem*). For concision, I shall call them conceptual differences vs. real or thing-wise differences.

* *secundum rationem*

† *secundum rem*

(B) the difference between a given thing x as including something real and the same x as not including it

* *modus significandi*

(using 'include and 'not include' here not as they apply to the grammar of words* but as they apply to the formal makeup of the x described, taken precisely as so described).⁴ And (B) subdivides further into

† *intrinsecē*

(1) including something real as a defining factor[†]

as [one's makeup as] a man differs from [one's makeup as] an animal by including as a defining factor [the trait of being] rational, and

‡ *extrinsecē*

(2) including something real as a non-defining factor.[‡]

For example, suppose teachableness were thing-wise the same as humanness; even so, [one's makeup as] teachable would differ from [one's makeup as] human, by including as a non-defining factor the act of teaching, in relation to which a teachable one is defined, while one's makeup as a man includes no such relatum.⁵

vi. Since there are four ways to differ, then —

differ₁: conceptually, man differs₁ from humanness

differ₂: as one thing from another, Socrates differs₂ from Plato

differ₃: a given thing including some reality mentioned in its definition differs₃ from the same thing as abstracting from that reality, and

differ₄: a given thing including some reality outside its definition differs₄ from the same thing as abstracting from it —

the talk here in the antecedent (and throughout the argument and conclusion of the article) is using 'differ' the third way: a referent and its nature differ as x including a defining-factor differs from x abstracting from it.

The talk here is not about difference as to concept alone, because referent and nature differ₁ in all cases, even in God. For 'God' and 'divineness', thanks to how they mean, are far enough distinguished that

divineness begets divineness

is heretical, while

God begets God

c 2, *De summa Trinitate*

is Catholic; see the *Decretalium*, near the beginning.

Likewise, the talk here is not about the sort of real

⁴ As will emerge in q.13, Aquinas distinguishes (1) the scientific definition (*ratio*) laying out what it takes to be a ϕ -thing, (2) the sense of the word ' ϕ ', and (3) the grammar of how ' ϕ ' conveys its sense (with what gender, tense, etc). Cajetan says he is talking of what is or is not in (1).

⁵ "Intrinsic" to x or ϕ was any component of its *ratio*; "extrinsic" to x or ϕ was any non-component of its *ratio*, and I have translated accordingly. So "this matter" was intrinsic to Jones but not to his nature. Existence was not intrinsic to him or his nature (as Aristotle noticed) Cajetan's example is modeled on this. In order to understand 'teachable' (*cf.* 'essence'), one will have to understand 'act of teaching' (*cf.* 'act of being'); but in order to be teachable, one doesn't have to *have* such an act in one's makeup. An account of one's make-up would not list that act as a component of being teachable, but

difference where one thing differs₂ from another. A referent and its substantial nature cannot naturally be so distinct as to be two quite different things.

Nor is the talk here about real difference by inclusion of a non-defining factor, because then the antecedent would be false [*i.e.* 'a referent differs₄ from its nature because its nature is distinct from its individual matter' would be false], and it would also be false to say in this sense that referent and nature do not "differ" in immaterial substances [*i.e.* 'referent and nature do not differ₄ in immaterial substances' would be false]. For in the substances separate [from matter] the referent does differ₄ from the nature: the referent as such includes *subsisting* (*i.e.* existing through itself) not as a component of its definition but rather as the distinctive act in relation to which it would need to be defined, if it were defined, whereas the nature does not so include this. Thus St. Thomas was speaking in terms of this kind of differing in *Quodlibet II* q.2, a.2, where he said that in the angels the referent differs₄ from the nature [but does not differ₄].

By process of elimination, then, the talk here is of differing by defining-factor inclusion. For one thing, the argument in the body of the article plainly contrasts referent and nature in material things as differing in this way [differing₃]: the referent includes individual matter, which the nature does not include, and the 'include' here is plainly to be understood as defining-factor inclusion. For another thing, in forms separate from matter, it is precisely in terms of this sort of differing that the referent is not distinct from the nature (which is what Aquinas says here, on the ground that such forms are individuated of themselves), with the result (in other words) that one and the same thing constitutes the nature and the individual, so that the individual includes no defining factor that the nature does not also include in that way, and *vice-versa*. Finally, in the text of the article, Aquinas issues the same judgment about

• identity of referent and nature in separate substances and

• identity of God and divineness [in the case of God].

This judgment is not straightforwardly true unless [the identity it asserts is] taken to deny difference₃. For as I said, in the *Quodlibetals* he issues contrasting judgments about these two cases, talking about difference₄.

So, then: the sense of the antecedent is that the basis for a defining-factor difference between a referent and its nature, taken as things (or in their formal makeup), is that its nature \neq its individual matter. Likewise, in construing all the points implicit here about referent and nature in material things and in forms separate from matter, the same sense [differing₃ or not differing₃] is to be understood.

would only allude to it as what your makeup is related to or is "ready for." Cajetan picked this example to prepare the ground for stating the case of an arbitrary angel, ψ iel. ψ iel = ψ -ness subsisting of itself; the *ratio* of ψ iel has just the same components as the *ratio* of ψ -ness. But the act of subsisting/existing that is in ψ iel is extrinsic to him, it is the act for which he is ready of himself (without help from matter); it is not present at all in the *ratio* of ψ -ness. No created nature contains *intrinsecē* being a value of an individual variable (much less, an existing value).

A conspectus

viii. If you look into the above points diligently, you will grasp how all beings stand with respect to sameness and difference between referent and nature.

- In the first place, you have how a referent stands to a nature not substantially constituting it (whether that nature be an accident's nature, as Socrates stands to his skin color, or whether it be an adventitious substantial nature, as God's Word stands to His humanness): they differ four ways: as thing from thing, and by defining-factor inclusion, and by non-defining factor inclusion, and conceptually.

- In the second place, you have how a referent stands to its nature in composed things: they differ [in three ways:] by defining-factor inclusion, by non-defining factor inclusion, and conceptually.

- In the third place, you have how a referent stands to its nature in the immaterial substances: they differ [two ways:] by non-defining factor inclusion (but not defining-factor inclusion), and conceptually.

- In the fourth place, you have the fact that, in God's case, God and divineness do not differ thing-wise in any way but only conceptually, in that how [the concrete noun] 'God' means is not how [the abstract one] 'divineness' means.⁶

And thus you have both a harmony of St. Thomas' sayings and a grasp of the things he wrote in different

⁶ To differ "only conceptually," in how these two nouns mean, is to differ not only in linguistic expression but also in logical status. An abstract noun serving as the "name" of a nature is "naming" a value of a second-order variable, whereas the concrete noun serving to convey a thing having that nature is "naming" a value of a first-order variable. If 'X' is a second-order variable and 'x' is a first-order one, the values they have in a given model will be V(X) and V(x) respectively. Among all possible models for created things, there is none in which V(X) would be identified with V(x). The two would not even exist in the same sense of 'exist'. V(x) would be a straightforward case of what-there-is, while V(X) would just be a

places on this topic.

Why the first inference is obvious

ix. As to the first inference made in the article [from the antecedent just discussed to therefore in forms that are not composed with matter but are individuated of themselves, the referent does not differ from the nature], pay attention to why it was left as obvious. It is based on a rule of cause-effect inference too well known to need mentioning, namely:

A causes B just in case not-A causes not-B.*

And since this very general principle holds good only for unique or distinctive causes, it follows that the word 'basis' in the antecedent (where it says, "the basis for a difference . . .") stands for a unique [cause or] reason. So the sense is this: "the unique and precise reason for a defining-factor difference between a nature and a referent . . ." And thus the soundness of the first inference becomes obvious: from the removal of such a reason, one infers the removal of the effect it explains.

"how" something is. Even in a model whose domain of individuals consisted entirely of angels, V(x) would be an angel itself and would include in its defining makeup the "act" of subsisting, while V(X) would be an angel's nature and would not include this act as a further specification. Since subsisting is a logical prerequisite for straightforward existing, it would again be the case that V(x) and V(X) did not exist in the same sense of 'exist'. Only in a model for God would the situation be different. There V(X) would be the nature, divineness, and V(x) would be the absolute (non-relational) Thing that approximates to a referent of 'God'. Every defining ingredient of V(x) would also be a defining ingredient of V(X), and conversely, so that a unique sort of identity held between them. In terms of defining factors in the real, 'V(X) = V(x)' would be true. Only the fact that one is the value of a second-order variable, the other the value of a first-order variable, would keep them "conceptually" distinct.

Ah, but would this distinctness still entail that V(x) and V(X) did not "exist" in the same sense of 'exist'? That would depend on whether straightforward existing was a defining factor of V(X), and to that question Aquinas now turns.

* *Posterior Analytics I*, c.13, 78 b 20

In God's case, are essence and existence identical?

In I Sent. d.7, q.4, aa. 1, 2; q.5, a.2; d.34, q.1, a.1, *In II Sent.* d.1, q.1, a.1, l. CG cc 22, 52; *De Potentia Dei* q.7, a.2; *De Spirituibus Creaturis* a.1, *Compendium Theologiae* c.11, *Opusc. de quatuor oppos.* c.4, *De Ente et Essentia* c.5

God's essence and existence do not seem the same.

(1) If they are identical, no further specification is added to God's being [since none is added to His essence]. But the being to which no specification is added is the common "being" predicated of everything. It follows that God is the common being predicable of everything. But this is false according to Wisdom 14: 21, "God's incommunicable name they gave to sticks and stones." Ergo God's existing is not His essence.

(2) Furthermore, what we can know about God is *whether He is*, as was said above. But we cannot know *what He is*. Therefore God's existing cannot be the same as what-He-is, which is His quiddity or nature.

ON THE OTHER HAND, there is what Hilary says in book VII of his *De Trinitate*: "existing is not an accident in God but subsisting reality." That which subsists in God, therefore, is His existing.

I ANSWER: God is not only His essence, as was just argued, but also His existing.¹ This can be shown in several ways.

First, whatever is in a given thing, above and beyond its essence, must have been caused to be there:

- either by sources within its essence, as proper accidents emerge as consequences of a thing's species (as man's capacity to be amused is caused by the essential principles of his species)

- or by some outside cause, as hotness in water is caused to be there by a fire.

So if a thing's very existing is other than its essence, its existing must have been caused in it, either by an outside cause or by sources in the thing's own essence. Well, it is impossible for its existing to have been caused purely by sources in its essence, because nothing with caused existence suffices to be the cause of its own existing. So it must be the case that a thing, *x*, whose existing is other than its essence, has existence caused by another thing, *y* [and so this *y* must be there already as a prior efficient cause on which *x* depends]. But this cannot be the situation with God, because God is the *first* efficient cause, as we have said. Therefore it is not possible in God's case that His existing should be one thing, and His essence another.

W: in q.2, a.3

¹ For Aquinas, existence was a real factor in things. It was a metaphysical affair, not a metalinguistic one. In other words, existing was an "act" of things *in themselves*, not an act of theirs in relation to signs (such as giving a word a referent), nor a relation of signs to things (such as being true). Existing was rather a real actualness whereby a thing was extra-propositional and had what it took to verify certain propositions. See the second paragraph of note 2 on p. 79.

A second ground is that existing is the actualness of every form or nature. Take goodness, or humanness: we do not indicate it as actual except insofar as we indicate it as existing. It must be the case, therefore, that existing stands to an essence other than itself as actuality stands to potency. In that case, since there is nothing potential in God, as was shown above, it follows that His essence is not other than His existing. So His essence *is* His existing.

q.3, a.1

A third ground emerges from the following comparison. Just as a thing which is on fire but is not itself fire is on fire by participation, so also a thing which is in existence but is not itself existence is a being by participation. Well, God is identically His essence, as was shown already. So if He is not His existence, He will be a being by participation and not by essence. But in that case, He will not be a *first* being — which is an absurd thing to say [because it is contrary to the meaning of 'God']. Therefore, God *is* His existence and not just His essence.

q.3, a.3

TO MEET THE OBJECTIONS — *ad* (1): 'something to which a specification is not added' can be understood in two ways. In one way, it means that what it takes to be that thing* *excludes* the specification; for example, what it takes to be an irrational animal requires it to be without reason. In the other way, 'something to which a specification is not added' means that what it takes to be the thing *does not include* the specification: in this way, the common genus animal is without reason, because what it takes to be it neither includes reason nor excludes it. Existing without further specification in the first way is divine existing; existing without further specification in the second way is common being.²

* *ratio entis*

ad (2): saying that a thing "is" can be taken two ways: (1) to mean the thing's act of existing; (2) to mean the composition of a proposition, which the mind discovers by attaching predicate to subject. When 'is' is taken the first way, then, we cannot know God's existing, just as we cannot know His essence either. Rather, [we know God's being] only when 'is' is taken the second way. For we know that the proposition which we form about God when we say, "There is a God," is true. We know this from His effects, as I said above.

q.2, a.2

² This crucial distinction was overlooked (or denied) by the inventors of "ontologism" in the mid-19th century. They thought the existence of God was precisely what one grasped (or grasped at) whenever one understood the common 'is' used in putting together a proposition. Though espoused by many Catholic thinkers, especially the Jesuits at Louvain, this pseudo-scholastic philosophy was condemned by the Church in 1861. See the texts in Denz., # 2841–2847.

Cajetan's Commentary

In the title question, 'essence' means the divineness which a definition of God would capture, if He were defined; the word 'existence' captures the sense of 'is' which appears when we say, "There is a God," "There is a man," etc.; 'identical' carries the sense of thing-wise identity. Thus the sense of the question is whether the thing meant by 'God' is the thing meant by 'is in There is a God.'

Be aware that this question is extremely subtle. The old-time metaphysicians worked on it, but to our puny modern thinkers, it is just alien. They identify a thing's essence with its existence in every case, not just in God. Let us limit ourselves here to the question about God; I proceed against the others and deal with the distinction between essence and existence more generally elsewhere.*

* Commentary on
De Ente et Essentia,
c.5, q.11

Analysis of the article

ii. In the body of the article, there is one conclusion: God *is* His existing. — This is supported on three grounds.

Here is the first. [*Antecedent:*] God is the first efficient cause; [*1st inference:*] so the existence He has is not caused in Him from outside; [*2nd inference:*] ergo He *is* His existence. The antecedent is clear from earlier results. The first inference is obvious from its terms. The second is supported as follows. Everything found in *x* that is distinct from the essence of *x* is either caused to be in *x* [from within] by its essence alone or else caused to be in *x* from without. There-fore, if the existence in *x* is distinct from its essence, it is caused either from within or from without. But it cannot be caused only from within, because nothing is a sufficient cause for itself to be. So, if this existence is not caused from without, it is identical to *x*'s essence. And this is the conditional that had to be derived.

iii. The second ground is as follows. [*Antecedent:*] God is pure act; [*1st inference:*] therefore His essence does not stand to existing as potency stands to act; [*2nd inference:*] therefore God is His existing. The antecedent is clear already. The first inference is obvious from its terms. The second is supported: [*assumption:*] existing is the actualizing of any form or nature. Therefore every nature distinct from existing stands to it as potency stands to act. Therefore, if a nature does not stand as potency to existing, it is [not distinct from but] identical to existing. The assumption is supported on the ground that no item is indicated as actual unless it is indicated that it exists.

Notice here that this argument is based on the point that any quiddity or nature — no matter how much the definition of what-it-is may speak of actuality — still has only what it takes to be potency *vis-à-vis* [the act which is] existing. Wisdom is only indicated as actual by one's saying that it *is*. Ditto for goodness. Ditto for humanness and horseness and the rest.

For this reason, one says both that existing is the actualizing of every form, and that no form is indicated in fully finalized act except insofar as it is indicated to exist in exercised act.

iv. The third ground is this. [*Antecedent:*] God is the first being; [*1st inference:*] so He is a being by essence; [*2nd inference:*] ergo He is His existing. The antecedent and the first inference are evident. The second is supported by showing that its negation leads to a false consequence. This is done in two ways. The first uses the meaning of 'being by essence' as follows. Suppose God is not His existing; then He is *in* existence but is not existence itself; but then He is a being by participation — ergo not a being by essence — just as a thing which is on fire but is not itself fire [is on fire by participation, not by essence]. [But it is already settled that God is not a being by participation; ergo the supposition is false.] The second way is: suppose God is not His existing but *is* His essence; then He is not a being by His essence but through something added. [But God is not added to; ergo]. All points are clear.

Is the answer *ad* (2) coherent?

v. Doubt arises over the answer to the second objection, because it seems to imply contradictory points. If we know that the proposition, "God exists", is true, we know the real state of things to be such that God is; but this is all there is to knowing the existing which is in God; ergo [we know what Aquinas says we don't know.]

Scotus advanced this doubt at the outset of his remarks on *I Sent.* d.3, q.1 (where he criticized the response *ad* 2 here), and we have dealt with the problem at length in our commentary on the *Posterior Analytics II*, c.1. But as a short answer, I should say that Aquinas' response is optimal and uniquely appropriate to the case of God. For where God's existing differs from the existing of all other things is right here: God's existing is what-He-is (as this article establishes), so that "God exists", is true *per se* in the first sense of '*per se*',¹ while the existing of other things is not what-they-are but is distinct from the whatness of each. From this comes the fact that God's existing, taken in itself and independently of creatures, more properly answers the question of *what-He-is*, and that it answers the question of whether-He-is only relatively [to us and our language], in that it grounds the truth of a proposition. In the case of other things, their existing has nothing to do with what-they-are; it is not a predicate in the first sense [of '*per se*'], as is clear case by case ("There is a man", "There is a planet", etc.); and taken in itself it deals wholly with the question of whether the thing is. For this reason, in the case of other things, when we know that the thing is, we say we know both

- the 'is' that means the truth of a proposition and

¹ When a thing *x* verified a description 'S', 'S is P' was true of *x per se* in the first sense of '*per se*', if, and only if, *x* exemplified being-P just by fitting the scientific definition of 'S'.

• the existing [*esse*] of the thing itself, because [in knowing the former] we are knowing the latter in the exact way in which it is knowable. But when, in God's case, we know *that* He is, what we are being said to know is the 'is' that means the truth of a proposition, not the *esse* of God. This is not to say that the ultimate terminus of our cognition is the being-the-case of a proposition, as the objection took it to be (for, in fact, its terminus is the *esse* of God, not in itself but as it corresponds to the truth of a proposition); it is rather to say that, in knowing the truth of the proposition, God's *esse* is not known in the distinctive way in which, in itself, it is knowable; for it is not known as a *what*.²

² This last point implies a further one, about analogy. It is this: if a real factor in things, called *esse*, is what verifies existence claims, and this factor is so different in God from how it is in a horse that, in God, it is what He is but in a horse is not what the horse is, then what verifies 'there is a God' is only analogous, at best, to what verifies 'there is a horse' *etc.* And if God's *esse* is only analogous to other cases of *esse*, nothing prevents it from transcending the difference between what, in

other cases, verifies a first-order existence claim and what verifies a second-order existence claim. The topic of analogy is coming up in q.13.

But can existence be taken seriously as a real factor in things? If it can, Aquinas' arguments still have force; if not, they are just museum pieces. Since the 1780s, this question has been debated under the heading of whether existence is a predicate. Kant's famous conclusion, "Existence is not a predicate," has been pushed further than it reaches. "Exists" is not an ordinary predicate, granted; but recent developments have made it an odd one. Russell's case that existence reduces to quantification, so as to be just a semantic feature of propositional functions (the feature of being true in some cases) has turned out to be no stronger than his argument that 'Jones exists' is logically anomalous, which has collapsed with his account of "logically proper names." Ryle's case that 'Mr. Pickwick does not exist' is "systematically misleading" has collapsed with his theory that a proposition is not "about" anything if its subject lacks a referent in the real. In both cases, the cause of collapse has been the rigor and success of free logics (in which names are allowed to be vacuous) and of quantified modal logics (in which the values of individual variables may or may not exist in a given possible world). These have shown rather conclusively that 'exists' is indeed a predicate (however odd). And if it is a predicate, why should it not "describe" things as Aquinas thought it did, *i.e.* as being actualized?

Is God in any kind or category?

In I Sent. d 8, q 4, a 2, d 19, q 4, a 2; 1 CG c.25; De Potentia Dei q 8, a 3,
Compendium Theologiae c.12; De ente et essentia c.6

It looks as if God is in a kind or category.

(1) After all, substance is the category in which to put any being that subsists on its own.* But this is more true of God than of anything else. Therefore God is in the category of substance.

* per se

(2) Moreover, each thing is measured by something of its own kind: lengths, by a length; numbers, by a number. But God is the measure of all substances, according to the Commentator [Averroes] in his discussion of *Metaphysics X*. Therefore God is in the category of substance.

comment 7

ON THE OTHER HAND, in the order of explanation,¹ a genus or category is prior to what is contained in it. But nothing is prior to God, either in the real or in the order of explanation. Therefore God is not in any genus or category.

† secundum intellectum

ANSWER: there are two ways in which something is in a kind: (1) unqualifiedly and properly, as a species contained under a genus [is in that genus], and (2) reductively, after the fashion of beginnings and privations; thus being one [the start of counting] is reductively in the category of quantity after the fashion of a beginning, while blindness (or any privation) is reduced to the category to which the opposed ability would belong. Well, in neither of these ways is God in a kind.¹

That He is not a species of any genus can be shown on three grounds. First, a species is made up of a genus and a difference. It is always the case that the trait from which the difference is drawn stands to the one from which the genus is drawn as act stands to potency.² 'Animal', for example, is taken from sense-endowed nature by concrete-noun formation, in that what we call an animal is what has a sense-endowed nature. 'Rational' is taken from intellective nature, in that a rational thing is what has an intellect-endowed nature. But the intellective stands to the sense-endowed as act to potency. And this is just as clear in other cases. So since it is not the case in God that a potency is joined to an act, it is impossible that He be in a genus as a species of it.

q.3, a.1

q.3, a.4

Second, it has been shown that God's existing is His essence. So if He were in a genus, it would have to be that of a being [ens]. After all, a thing's genus indicates its essence, since its genus is predicated of it as entering into

¹ God is a member of many sets: the set of things proved to exist, the set of things without matter, etc. Aquinas' issue does not concern sets but natural kinds. A set S is a natural kind under the description 'G' if, and only if, there are non-G things but each actual S-thing is inescapably a G-thing (*de re* necessity) and all possible S-things would be G-things (*de dicto* necessity). If each S-thing is also inescapably S, S is a species of G.

² In our language, the name of the genus is always a determinable, and the species' name is a determination of it. Aquinas held

what-it-is. But Aristotle showed in *Metaphysics III* that "a being" cannot be anything's genus. For every genus admits of differentiations which lie outside its own essence as a genus; but no differentiation can be found that would lie outside of being, since a non-being cannot differentiate. By elimination, then, God is not in a genus.

c.3,
998b22

Third, all the things that are in a single genus share the quiddity or essence of the genus, which is predicated of them as entering into what-they-are. Yet they differ as regards existing [*esse*]; for the existing of a man is not that of a horse, nor is one man's existing the same as another's. It must be the case, therefore, that whatever is in a genus is such that, in its case, existing differs from what-it-is, *i.e.* from its essence. But in God's case these do not differ, as was shown. Quite clearly, then, God is not in a genus as a species of it.

q.3, a.4

From this result it is already obvious that God has no genus nor any specific differences; nor does He have a definition; nor does He admit of proof, except the sort [that establishes a fact] from an effect. For a definition comes from a genus and a difference, and definition is the means of proof [in the other sort of proof, the sort that explains a fact from the cause of it or the reason for it].

cf. q.2, a.2

Next, that God is not in a category reductively after the fashion of a beginning is clear from the fact that the [sort of] beginning that reduces to a category does not extend beyond that category. Thus a point serves to start only a continuous quantity, and being one starts only a discrete quantity.³ But God is the start of all existing, as will come out below. Ergo He is not contained [reductively] in any one category as its start.

1ST q 44, a.1

TO MEET THE OBJECTIONS — *ad* (1): the term 'substance' does not mean just what existing-on-its-own is, because what-existing-is cannot of itself be a category, as was shown above. Rather, 'substance' means an essence suited to existing this way, *i.e.* on its own; but this existing is not itself the essence. And thus it emerges that God is not in the category of substance.

in this article

ad (2): the objection works for a proportionate measure, because one of that sort has to be of the same genus as the thing measured. But God is not a proportionate measure of anything. He is called "the measure of all things" in the sense that each thing has only as much of being as it has of nearness to Him.

that if these were drawn from real factors (and not just subjective ones, as "my favorite" is a species of the "things I prefer"), some determinability had to lie in the thing classified.

³ That a point is only reductively a line, as the start or terminus of one, is still good geometry, but the view that "one" is only reductively a number is no longer good arithmetic. Like the Greeks, Aquinas saw each number as a kind of "multitude" emerging from the break-up of an original "one."

Cajetan's Commentary

In the title question, 'kind' is taken in its proper sense, meaning "logical kind," into which the ten categories of things are sorted.

Analysis of the article, I

In the body of the article two jobs are done: (1) a distinction is drawn; (2) the question is answered with two conclusions (corresponding to the two sides of the distinction drawn), and to the first conclusion a corollary is attached.

As to job (1), the distinction is that there are two ways to be in a kind: *directly*, and *reductively*. No problem there. — As to job (2), the first conclusion answers the question negatively: God is not *directly* in a kind. This is supported on three grounds.

The first ground: God is pure act; therefore He is not directly in a kind. — That this follows is proved thus. [*Antecedent:*] The genus is drawn from a potency to that [act] from which the specific difference is drawn; [*1st inference:*] therefore everything that comes under a genus has act mixed with potency; [*2nd inference:*] ergo, if God is pure act [He does not come under a genus and so is not in a kind directly]. The antecedent is illustrated with the case of 'animal' and 'rational'. All points are clear.

ii. The second ground is as follows. [*Antecedent:*] If God is in a kind [directly], [*1st consequent:*] a genus is predicated of existing as entering into what-existing-is; [*2nd consequent:*] therefore a being [*ens*] is a genus. But this last is impossible. Ergo [the antecedent is false]. The first consequence is supported thus. God's essence is His very existing, and a genus is predicated as entering into the essence of what falls under the genus; so, if God were in a genus [a genus would be predicated of existing as entering into what-it-is]. — The second consequence [namely, that if a genus were thus predicated of existing, being would be a genus] is left as obvious, because what 'being' either entirely or mainly means, formally taken, is existing [*esse*]. — The falsity of the last consequent is supported from *Metaphysics III*. [*Major:*] Every genus has differentiations that lie outside itself; [*minor:*] being does not have differentiations outside itself; therefore [being is not a genus]. The minor is proved on the ground that, outside of being, there is nothing left but non-being; and it is impossible, obviously, for non-beings to introduce differentiations within being.

iii. As to the soundness of this second ground, doubt could well be raised (1) about the meaning of 'ens', (2) about how it is *predicated*, i.e. whether 'a being' is predicated as entering into what-the-subject-is (as an adversary who rejected this ground and said God was in a genus, would have to say), and (3) about the appearance of 'a being' in all accounts of real items, i.e. whether it is included in all of them as a defining factor,* as is assumed here from *Metaphysics III*. But we have written on all these topics in our comments on *De ente et essentia*. Also, I don't think the doubts need answering at this point, mainly

because the falsehood of the consequent [that being is a genus] is accepted by all, if not on the ground given here, then on some other ground. [So a quick remark will suffice.] The purport of the ground given here is as follows. [*Major:*] Differentiators have to lie "outside" the genus in the sense that the genus is not put as a *defining factor* into the formal sense* of the differentiator and *vice-versa* [the differentiator is not put as a defining factor into the formal sense of the genus] — even though, in the account of the differentiator, the genus is put in as a *relatum*[†] or as an addition, much as the subject modified [e.g. 'nose'] is mentioned in defining a modifier it alone takes[‡] [e.g. 'snub']. [*Minor:*] But there are no real differentiators of being that do not involve 'a being' as a defining factor in their formal sense. Ergo [being is not a genus].

You should know that Scotus holds the opposite of this minor: see his remarks on *I Sent.* d.3, q.3. He thinks there are certain differentiators, the ultimate ones, which do not include 'being' formally and as a defining factor. At the same time, he holds that the modifiers* of being [like 'good', 'real'] do not include 'being' formally and as a defining factor. — But we shall be talking about these modifiers below in Inquiry 5. And as to the ultimate differentiators, although it would be appropriate to talk about them here, one would have to bring in various new technical terms (because Scotus is talking about differentiators that are not drawn from forms but from ultimate touches of realness); so it would really be better to make a separate and detailed question out of this (beyond what I touched on in my comments on *De ente et essentia* [c.4]).

Analysis of the article, II

iv. The third ground goes as follows. [*Antecedent:*] All things directly in a genus share in essence and differ in existence; [*consequent:*] therefore they have an essence distinct from their existing. [*Application:*] [So if God is directly in a genus, He has an essence distinct from His existing.] [*Falsehood of the applied consequent:*] But God is not that way. Ergo [He is not directly in a genus]. — The antecedent is supported: because they agree in the whatness of the genus but differ as between one existing and another existing, as is clear in the case of a man and a horse. — The consequence is left as obvious. And the falsehood of the consequent as applied to God is obvious from the previous article. Therefore [God is not directly in a genus].

Two Scotist Objections

v. There is doubt about this ground. For one thing, it seems that 'being' is being used equivocally. The antecedent is talking about *being in a species* (which is what a differentiator of the genus conduces to). The consequent is talking about *being in actual existence*, which is inferred to be distinct from essence. — For another thing, from the mere distinction between a reason for saying items agree and a reason for saying they differ (which is all that is posited in Aquinas' antecedent), one can infer no more than a

* in formali significato

† extrinsecè

‡ passio

* passionem

- * *formalis* form-wise* distinction; for the essence of the genus (in which the species agree) and the being-in-this-species (by which one species differs from another) are only form-wise different, not thing-wise different. And yet the article above infers a thing-wise[†] distinction between essence and existing. So its reasoning seems to be in bad shape.¹
- † *realis*

Answering Scotus

vi. This objection has been dealt with at length in [my remarks on] c. 6 of *De ente et essentia*, where St. Thomas makes this same argument. So a short reply will do here. In the antecedent [namely, that all things directly in a genus share in essence and differ in existing], 'existing' is taken for both being-in-a-species and being-in-actual-existence, because it is true of both. Indeed, its being true of the one implies its being true of the other, because the reason a specific difference is said to conduce towards being is because it constitutes a proper receiver of actual existence. This is what Aquinas makes clear in *De ente* and in his comments on Porphyry's *Isagoge*. So there is no equivocation:² — [As to the other problem:] I grant that from the mere fact that two reasons are set off in such a way that one is made the formal basis for agreement, and the other the formal basis for difference, one cannot infer without further ado that there is a thing-wise distinction between them (otherwise every genus would have to be thing-wise distinct from its differences). Nevertheless, thanks to the actual subject matter here, where the two bases are essence and existence, one can perfectly well infer a thing-wise distinction between existence and essence; one is inferring it from the independently given distinction between the genus and the existence in which a species is distinct. And the reason one can do this is because the following two propositions are such that each follows from the other:

- (1) existence is form-wise distinct from quiddity;
- (2) existence is thing-wise distinct from quiddity.

c.5, Inquiry 12 So we made clear in commenting on *De ente*. The in-

¹ Scotus held that the aspects whereby a thing verified different descriptions could be distinct in the real without being thing-wise distinct. Unlike the Thomists, who classified every distinction as conceptual (*rationalis*) or thing-wise (*realis*) — as Cajetan said on q.3, a.3 above — the Scotists had a tripartite classification: conceptual, form-wise, or thing-wise. Since a form-wise case was supposed to be mind-independent, the Thomists replied: it is thing-wise or nonsense.

² Cajetan has been accused of admitting two kinds of existence: an *esse essentiae* (being of a given genus or species) and an *esse existentiae*. In fact, he was talking about two uses of 'is': the 'is a' of classification and the 'there is' of existence. These are not the same because a horse is a quadruped, but nothing follows about whether there is a horse. For the latter is ultimate actuation, and the former is not. The former only contributes ("conduces") towards the latter, as we just read. The "conducing" is nothing more than the trivial fact that, while full specification does not give existence, every time a generic determinable is nailed down to one or another of its specific determinations, the thing classified is given more actuation. This is the sense of 'a specific difference conduces towards being'.

terested reader should look there.³

Analysis of the article, III

- vii. The corollary attached to the first conclusion is this: God has neither a genus, nor a difference, nor a definition, nor a proof save from an effect. This last holds because a definition [is the means of proof in the other sort of proof] etc.
- viii. The second conclusion is also negative: God is not in any kind or category *reductively*. This is supported: [*antecedent*:] God is the beginning not of any one category but of all existing; [*inference*:] so He is not contained reductively in any category. — The antecedent is taken for granted. The inference is supported: every start which is reductively in a kind is the starting-point of that kind alone. This is from *Metaphysics XII*, where it talks about the starting points of the categories.

c.4,
1070a.31 –
1070b.9

Is Aquinas consistent?

ix. Doubt arises over this conclusion, as to whether Aquinas is at odds with himself. In his remarks on *I Sent.* d.8, q.4, a.2 ad 3, and in the Disputed Questions *de Potentia Dei* q.7, a.3 (answer to the last objection), St. Thomas admits that God is in the category of substance reductively. So how does he reach the opposite conclusion here?

This needs only a SHORT ANSWER, as it is obvious from [the text on] *I Sent.* that there is no real contradiction between what he says there and here. For in that text, a distinction is drawn between two ways of being in a kind reductively: (1) as a beginning that is *contained* in that kind (and in this way he denies that God is in any kind reductively), and (2) as a beginning that *contains* the kind (and in this way, he concedes, God is somehow in all the kinds, and by appropriation He is in the substance-kind as the one closest to Him). This is what is conceded in both the aforesaid passages, if you pay attention to the fact that what he omits saying in *De Potentia* he supplies in *In I Sent.* Thus, one can say appropriately that God is in a

³ Cajetan construed the distinction between *x-taken-as-including-a-relatum* and *x-taken-as-without-it* as a "real" or thing-wise distinction (on q.3, a.3). Since a potency and its act were transcendental relata, and essence or quiddity stood to actual existence as potency stood to act, it followed for him that the essence-taken-as-in-existence differed thing-wise from the essence-taken-without-existence. This, for Cajetan, was the "real distinction" between *esse* and *essentia*. As the ultimate actuating of every item, existing included within itself the *quidditas* which was a form's structuring or specifying, but this latter did not include existing. Apart from *esse*, there was nothing. But within *esse*, there was the structuring which (in itself) was potency to existing. To admit as Scotus did a form-wise distinction between that structuring and its *ipsa actualitas* was tantamount, for Cajetan, to admitting a thing-wise distinction between them, because if one item is mind-independently distinct from another, they are distinct *res*. The Scotists balked because, for them, a thing-wise distinction could only be posited where the one *res* was wholly outside the other. Cajetan followed Aquinas in admitting a broader range of thing-wise manners of being distinct.

kind as a beginning in such a way that, far from being reduced to that kind, the kind itself is reduced to Him. That this was indeed St. Thomas' view you can gather from the fact that, in the article above, he concludes by saying that God "is not *contained* in any category as its starting point." By saying, "is not contained," he withheld comment on being in a category as a *containing* starting point, to which by some relation the whole category would be reduced. The same interpretation is suggested by his earlier words as well: "the sort of beginning that reduces to a category does not extend beyond," etc.

Was justice done to Averroes?

x. In the answer to the second objection, a doubt arises as to whether the answer meets the objection adequately. For the answer says three things: (1) that the major premise [of the objection] is true for a measure of the same genus as the measured; (2) that the minor, 'God is a such a measure', is false, and (3) it says, as if to gloss Averroes, that God is the measure of all substances in that each has only as much being as it has nearness to Him. Well, these points do not suffice to answer the statement of Averroes that was brought in as an authority. His statement meant to say that God, as the first substance, is the measure of other substances as the first number is the measure of other numbers, etc. And this comes out in a passage where the whole topic is measures of the same genus as the measured, namely, comment 7 on *Metaphysics X*.

The SHORT ANSWER to this is that St. Thomas, paying attention to the reality, not the words, makes a perfectly adequate answer, even from the standpoint of Averroes. For the talk of a "genus" can be taken in two ways. One can take it *in the proper sense*, as we are doing here; and then it is utterly right to say that God is not a measure of the same "genus" as substance — in fact, Averroes holds that no [separated] intelligence is in the same proper genus as substance — and this is what Aquinas is saying here.

The other way to take it is *in the broad sense*, in which 'genus' stands for any ordered set.* In this sense, God is a measure of the same [broad] genus as the ordered substances, more than He is of accidents, because He is [broadly] a substance and not an accident; and this is what Averroes wanted to say. Well, this is being a measure outside the genus of categorial substance, and it is being the measure of every genus that is properly outside substance, as is obvious. And this is the sense in which Aquinas says in his answer that God is called "the measure of all things."

• *coordinatio*

Order of Explanation

xi. In the "on the other hand" section at the beginning of this article, there is a word to notice and a doubt to raise about it. I refer to the point that nothing is prior to God "either in the real or in the order of explanation" (and that therefore He is not in a genus). This does not seem to be true, since the predicates common to God and other things are prior, in the order of explanation, to God Himself, as is clear from the fact that the implications are not convertible. [E.g. the truth of 'if divine wisdom is an accident, wisdom is an accident' does not convert to make 'if wisdom is an accident, divine wisdom is an accident' true.]

But this difficulty clears up rapidly, if one distinguishes two senses of 'prior in the order of explanation'. They are (1) 'prior in real terms' or in terms of formal bases, and (2) 'prior from our point of view'. No real thing or formal basis, in itself, is prior to God in the order of explanation. And a sign of this is the fact that there is no such thing as a property that, in itself, is more abstract [more removed from matter] than He, more simple than He, or prior to Him. But from our point of view, in the order in which we come to understand things, wisdom is prior to divine wisdom. This is why the implication does not convert from our point of view. Well, in the article here, Aquinas intends 'prior' to be taken in the first way; and so taken, the genus is prior to what is placed in it.

Are there any accidents in God?

In I Sent. d. 8, q. 4, a. 3; I CG c. 28; De Potentia q. 7, a. 4; Compendium Theologiae c. 23

Apparently there are some accidents¹ in God.

c.3:
186b 1-4
(1) What is substance, after all, "is not an accident in anything," as it says in *Physics I*. Therefore, what is an accident in one thing cannot be substance in another. Thus we prove that heat is not the substantial form of fire by the fact that heat in other things is an accident. Well, wisdom, strength, and the like, which are accidents in us, are attributed to God. So [they are accidents in Him, too, and] there are accidents in God.

(2) Furthermore, in any category there is one item which is first, and there are many categories of accidents. Therefore, if the first in each of those categories is not in God, there will be many firsts outside God, which hardly seems fitting.

c.2: PL
64, 1250
ON THE OTHER HAND, every accident inheres in a subject. But God cannot be a subject, because "an uncomposed form cannot be a subject of inherence," as Boethius says in his *De Trinitate*. Therefore, there cannot be an accident in God.

I ANSWER: from points already established, it becomes quite clear that there cannot be an accident in God.

157 q.3, a.1
First of all, an accident's subject is compared to the accident itself as potency is compared to act. In possessing the accident, the subject is put in act in some way. But every way of being in potency is denied of God, as came out above.

Secondly, God is His existing, and (as Boethius

¹ The "accidents" of a thing were traits it had outside its substance. Apart from God, every being x belonged to at least one natural kind S , and descriptions sufficient to imply the scientific definition of S were verified in x as its "substance," i.e., as essential makeup. Every other trait of x was an *accidens*, i.e., non-essential makeup. Some such non-essentials might be in x "by happenstance" (*per accidens*), while others were there thanks to what x itself was (*per se*). These last were called *per se accidens*. See the next note.

says in *De Hebdomadibus*) "while that which exists can have something else joined to it, its very existing cannot have anything else joined to it." A hot thing can have another property besides being hot, such as being white; but heat itself has nothing to it but heat.

Thirdly, in every case, what has a trait thanks to itself* is prior to what has it by happenstance. So since God is an absolutely¹ first being, He cannot have any trait by happenstance. — Nor can there be in God any accidents that are there thanks to what He is,² as the human capacity to be amused is in us thanks to what we are. Such accidents are caused; they arise out of sources within the subject, and in God there cannot be anything caused, since He is a first cause.² By elimination, then, there is no accident in God.

TO MEET THE OBJECTIONS — *ad* (1): strength and wisdom are not attributed univocally in talking of God and of us, as will come out below. Hence it does not follow that they are accidents in God as they are in us.

ad (2): since a substance is prior to its accidents, the starting points of accidents are reduced to the starting points of substance as to prior principles. God, on the other hand, is not the first thing contained in the category of substance but is the First Thing relative to all existing, standing outside every category.

² Any accident ϕ present in x by happenstance was there as a causal consequence of contingent events involving outside entities, at least one of which acted on x or verified a relation to x . Meanwhile, any accident ψ present in x *per se* was there as a causal consequence of the essential make up of x but was a trait which could be impeded from being present in a given (perhaps rare) case. There are a few people who cannot be amused because they have no sense of humor. Such an impedence of "formal causality" could only take place, obviously, in an entity in which the form in question was joined to other factors with which the form could "act" — hence an entity whose form was not identically the whole individual or referent.

PL 64, 1311

* *per se*

† *simpliciter*

‡ *per se accidens*

Cajetan's Commentary

The title question is clearly about form-wise inherence: are there any accidents in God form-wise? And the topic is accidents as real items, not as predicates in the sense in which 'accident' is a [metalinguistic] term of second intention and is listed as the fifth Predicable.

Analysis of the article

ii. In the body of the article, there is one conclusion,

answering the question in the negative: there cannot be an accident in God. This is supported on three grounds.

First: God is pure act; ergo [He has no potency to receive an accident]. *Second*: God is His existing; ergo [there is nothing to Him but that]. *Third*: an accident in God would have to be there either (1) by happenstance or else (2) thanks to what He is; but (1) is excluded because God is a first being, and (2) is excluded because He is a first cause.

iii. As to that second ground, notice that when the abstract and the concrete are compared as items understood,* there is this difference between them: the abstract allows nothing to be co-understood with it, while the concrete allows many things to be mixed in with it. *E.g.*, there is no problem understanding a white thing to be sweet, but whiteness itself excludes from itself everything else; for there is nothing else *whereby* something is white but whiteness; yet what is white is also something else sometimes besides white, like a sweet fruit. Just so, when the abstract and the concrete are compared as things in the real, there is this difference between them: what is abstract in the real [*i.e.* a real thing existing independently of matter] is itself alone, while a composed thing admits within itself what is not itself. Therefore, if the completeness indicated by 'existing' is posited in a case where it is abstracted-in-the-real [really removed] from anything in which existing is receivable — removed, that is, from any generic nature — it is pure existing; it admits of nothing within itself other than itself, and as a consequence it cannot have an accident. By contrast, what is composed of a nature plus existing, and so is called "what exists," can have something within itself other than itself. This is what the above article is saying: existing itself, since it is abstract and is a *whereby*,

has nothing joined to it, but is like heat, whereas *what-is*, since it is concrete and a *what*, can have something extraneous in it, like a hot thing which is also white.

iv. As to the third ground, notice that it reaches both its eliminations from proper [*i.e.* distinctively appropriate] considerations. The root of the first is this: a case where a non-essential trait is present by happenstance naturally presupposes a case where the non-essential trait is present *per se*. For it is universally true in any ordering of things that what is ϕ *per se* comes ahead of what is ϕ by happenstance, as you can read in *Physics II* [c.6] and *VIII* [c.5]. — The root of the second elimination is that, universally, the first inducer of change [in some respect] is utterly unchangeable [in that respect], and the first inducer of local motion is utterly immovable locally. Hence a first cause [of everything] is uncaused in all respects. Well, it would not be uncaused in all respects, if it had in it something caused. That much is obvious.

198 a 7,
257 a 30f

v. In the answer to the first objection, you have an optimal gloss on the famous saying, "What truly *is* is accident to nothing." Said of a property univocally mentioned, it is true. But a property analogously mentioned is substance in one thing [in God] and accident in another [a creature], as comes to light with the case of wisdom.

Is God utterly uncomposed?

In I Sent. d.8, q.4, a.1; 1 *CG*, cc.16, 18; *Quaest. Disp. de Potentia* q.7, a.1;
Comp. Theologiae c.9; *Opusc. de quatuor oppos.* c.4; *In De Causis*, lectio 21

It does not seem that God is entirely simple.

(1) After all, the things that come from God resemble Him. As coming from a First Being, they are all beings, and as coming from a First Good, they are all good. But not one of the things coming from God is entirely simple. Therefore God is not entirely simple.

(2) Furthermore, every superiority should be attributed to God. But in our experience, composed things are superior to simple things: complex bodies are superior to mere elements, and the elements are superior to their parts. One ought not to claim, therefore, that God is entirely simple.

ON THE OTHER HAND, there is what Augustine says in *De Trinitate VI*, to the effect that God is truly and supremely simple.

cc.4-8;
PL 42, 927-9

I ANSWER: there are many ways to show that God is entirely simple. First, one shows it from the points already established [here in Inquiry 3]. For since there is no composition of quantitative parts in God (since He is not a body), nor composition of form and matter — and since the nature in His case is not other than the referent, nor the essence other than the existing — and since there is no composition in Him of genus and difference, nor of subject and accident, it is obvious that God is not composed in any way but is entirely simple.

Secondly, one shows it on the ground that every composed thing is posterior to its components and depends upon them. But God is a first being, as shown above [and hence not posterior to anything].

Thirdly, one shows it on the ground that every composed thing has a cause; for components that are diverse in themselves do not come together as some one thing unless it happens thanks to a cause uniting them. But God does not have a cause, as shown above, since He is the first efficient cause.

Fourthly, one shows it on the ground that, in every composed thing, there has to be potency and act (as in God there is not); for either one component part is act

vis-a-vis another [which is potential to it], or at least all the parts are in potency *vis-a-vis* the whole.

Fifthly, one shows it on the ground that every composed thing has at least one trait that does not belong to one or another of its parts. This is obvious where the whole is composed of parts dissimilar to itself: no part of a man, for example, is a man, and no part of a foot is a foot. But it is also true where the whole is composed of parts similar to itself. For while something said of the whole in such a case will also be said of each part (e.g. a part of the air is air, and a part of the water is water), still there will be something said of the whole that is not true of any part. If the whole body of water occupies two cubic meters, for instance, no part of it will have that volume. In this way, therefore, every composed thing has in it something which is not the whole itself. This description, ‘having in it something which is not itself’, can indeed apply to a thing *having* a form (say, a white thing: it has something that does not belong to its make-up as white); but nothing of the kind applies to *the form itself*. There is nothing in it other than itself. Therefore, since God is His form itself, or rather His existing itself, He cannot be composed in any way. Hilary touches on this argument in book VII of his *De Trinitate*, where he says, “God, who is strength, is not composed of weaknesses, and He who is light is not patched together out of shadows.”

PL 10, 223

TO MEET THE OBJECTIONS — *ad* (1): things that come from God resemble God as caused things resemble their first cause. But being composed in some way is included in what it takes to be a caused thing. At very least, the existence of such a thing is other than what-it-is, as we shall see below.

1 *ST* q.50, a.3
ad 2

ad (2): in our experience, composed things are better than uncomposed, because the whole of a creature’s goodness is not found in one, simple aspect, but in many. By contrast, the whole of divine goodness is found in one, simple reality, as will be shown below.

1 *ST* q.4, a.2 *ad*
1

Cajetan’s Commentary

In the title, the issue is whether God is utterly simple in *Himself*, excluding from Himself all composition, but not combinability. Combinability with other things will be the topic of the next article.

In the body of the article, a single conclusion answers the question with a yes: God is utterly simple.

Analysis of the article

This is supported in five ways: (1) by sufficient enumeration of the ways to be composed; (2) by the fact that He is a first being; (3) by the fact that He is a first cause; (4) by the fact that He is pure act; (5) by the fact that He is His sheer existing.

Is every caused thing a composed one?

ii. In the answer to the first objection, be aware that Scotus takes note of this claim that every caused thing is composed, and criticizes it (at *I Sent.* d.8, in an inquiry about q.1). His reason is as follows. If every caused thing is composed, then take its components: either they are simples, or else they in turn are composed. And so on and so on. Either one proceeds to infinity, or else one will arrive at components which are simple things. And since these components are caused things, obviously, it follows that not every caused thing is composed — contrary to what Aquinas says here.

The short answer is that this objection arises from a bad interpretation of the text. ‘Caused thing’ or ‘creature’ can be taken two ways: in a strict sense [*propriè*] and a broad sense.

- If taken in the strict sense, in which coming-to-be and existing are distinctive of a “caused thing” (and of a “creature”), only subsisting things are called caused things or creatures; other items — such as parts, forms, accidents, *etc.* — are called co-caused or concreated.

- But when used in the broad sense, everything other than God that occurs in the real in any way can be called “caused.”

In the present context, the word ‘caused’ is being used in its strict sense, so that a “caused thing” stands in contrast not only to its cause but also to what is co-caused. Thus the objection, which is all about co-caused things, is beside the point. What is proved above, then, is the composition of a caused thing, from the coming-together of existence and quiddity. These latter give rise to “caused things” in the strict sense of ‘caused thing’, not to components of those things.¹ And by the way, if you look at St. Thomas’ remarks on *I Sent.* d.8, q.4, a.1, you will see that he posed to himself the same argument that Scotus brings up.

iii. *Re* the answer to the second objection, it would be a good idea to look at whether simplicity is unqualifiedly a perfection. I have already written about this in the commentary on *De ente et essentia*.

c. 4

¹ These remarks show that the items composing subsistent things (such as forms and accidents) were not “things” or *res* in the same sense as the subsistent things themselves. An effort to formalize Thomistic metaphysics, then, should make subsistent things the values of bindable first-order variables, and should make their components the values of second-order variables. The underlying logic will need Henkin-style models. See Stewart Shapiro, *Foundations without Foundationalism: A Case for Second Order Logic* (Oxford, 1991).

Does God enter into composition with other things?

In *I Sent.* d.8, q.1, a.2; 1 *CG* cc.17, 26, 27; 3 *CG* c.51; *De Potentia Dei* q.6, a.6; *De Veritate*, q.21, a.4

It seems that God does enter into composition with other things.

PG 3, 177 (1) For Denis says in chapter 4 of *The Heavenly Hierarchy* that “the existing of all things is the deity above existing.” But the existing that pertains to all things enters into composition with each. Therefore God enters into composition with other things.

PL 38, 662 (2) Furthermore, God is a form. Augustine says in his sermon *On the Words of the Lord* that the Word of God (who is God) is “a form not formed.” But a form is part of a composite. Therefore God is part of something composed.

(3) Also, things that exist but do not differ in any way are the same. God and prime matter exist and do not differ in any way. Therefore they are quite the same. But prime matter enters into composition with things. Therefore so does God. — Proof of the second premise: things that differ do so in certain aspects which are their differences [as opposed to their genus], and so they have to be composed [of genus and difference]; but God and prime matter are entirely simple; so they do not differ.

PG 3, 643 ON THE OTHER HAND, there is what Denis says in chapter 2 of *De divinis nominibus*: “there is no touching Him (*i.e.* God) nor other contact by way of intermingling part with part.” <Also, the *Liber de Causis* says, “The first cause rules all things but does not mix with them.”>¹

Prop. 20 I ANSWER: there have been three mistakes on this topic. One party claimed that God was the soul of the world (as one learns from Augustine in *De civitate Dei VIII*), and one can put with this party the people who said He was the soul of the outermost heavenly sphere. A second party said that God was the formal principle of all things; the Almarians are said to have thought this.² The third mistake was that of David of Dinant, who very stupidly held that God was prime matter. All these opinions involve glaring falsehoods; and it is not possible, in fact, for God to come into composition with anything else — not in any manner — not as a formal principle, and not as a material one.

To begin with, God is the first efficient cause, as we said above. But an efficient cause and the *form* of the

thing it is producing are at most the same in species — as when a man begets a man — not numerically identical. And the *matter* [of the thing produced] is neither numerically nor specifically the same as the efficient cause, because the matter is in potency, while the cause is in act.

Secondly, since God is the first efficient cause, it is a distinguishing trait of His to be “firstly and of Himself” an agent. But that which forms a composite with another is not firstly and of itself an agent; rather, the composite becomes the agent. It is not the hand, for example, which “acts,” but the man, through the hand; and the fire “acts” through its heat. Therefore God [since He acts of Himself] cannot be a part of any composite.

Thirdly, no part of a composite can be an overall first among beings — not even the matter and form which are the earliest parts of composites. For the matter is in potency, and potency comes after act in overall terms, as came out above. Meanwhile, any form which is part of a composite is a share of the form itself.* Just as a sharer in the form comes after what has the form as its essence, so also a share of the form [comes after the form itself]. Thus the fire in things on fire comes after that which is fire by essence. But it has been shown that God is an overall first being [so He is not part of a composite].

TO MEET THE OBJECTIONS — *ad* (1): in that passage, deity is being called the existing of all things cause-wise[†] and as their exemplar; it does not mean that deity is essentially the existing of other things.

ad (2) the divine Word is an exemplar-form, not a form which is part of a composite.

ad (3): simple things do not differ in any *further* traits that are their differences, as composed things do. A man and a horse differ in the rational trait of the one and the irrational trait of the other (which are specific differences), but these traits do not in turn differ from one another by further differences. Strictly speaking, then, we do not say they “differ”; we say they are just “diverse.” As Aristotle says in *Metaphysics X*, things are called “diverse” absolutely but are called “different” relative to some aspect or trait in which they differ. Strictly speaking, then, prime matter and God do not “differ.” But it does not follow that they are the same. They are just diverse of themselves.

¹ This portion of the *sed contra*, though likely a later gloss, is quite apt. The *Liber de causis* was given its modern edition in 1882 by the great German patrologist, Fr. Otto Bardenhewer.

² The Almarians were followers of Amaury of Bene (died

1205), who revived certain pantheistic theses of Scotus Erigena. The group was condemned at a provincial council in 1210 and at Lateran IV (1215).

W₂ in q.2, a.3

Cf. q.3, a.2

q.3, a.1

* *forma participata*

q.2, a.3

† *effectivē*

c.3.

1054 b.24

 Cajetan's Commentary

As to the title question: for one item to enter into composition with another, four conditions must be met. (1) They must be thing-wise distinct from each other, because nothing enters into "composition" with itself. (2) Their combining must be in the real, because a mere combining of them in the mind does not make a composition. (3) Their combination must make one being, because even a real combining which is just a matter of juxtaposition or some other extrinsic relation does not make a composite. (4) One of them must be the act of the other, or else both must actuate some third thing (as happens in accident-composition, e.g. when some third thing is both white and sweet). For even if two items combine to make one being, but not on the footing of act and potency to each other, there is no composition. One sees this in the case of the divine Persons [who are one being but not a composition] and in the case of the Word Incarnate [where the divine and human natures are one being, one Christ, without there being composition between the natures]. What is missing in both cases is what it takes for there to be act and potency. — To ask, then, whether God comes into composition with other things is to ask whether He can combine with a thing *r* so as to make one being with *r* and so as to be the act in *r* or the potency in *r*.

Analysis of the article, I

ii. In the body of the article, two jobs are done. (1) Mistakes are recorded. (2) The question is answered. — As to job (1), there are three mistakes. The first may have been that of the Sabacans (see Averroes on *Metaphysics XII*, comment 41). The second mistake was by the Almarians. The third was that of David of Dinant.

iii. As to job (2), the conclusion which both answers the question and clears away the mistakes is negative: God cannot enter into composition with anything.

This is supported on three grounds, the first of which goes as follows. [*Antecedent:*] God is the first efficient cause; [*inference:*] therefore He cannot be the form, nor the matter, of any composed thing. The antecedent is established already, and the inference is supported as follows. First, as to form: an agent cause and the form of its effect are not numerically the same; so if God is the agent cause of other things, He is not identically their form. Then, as to matter: an agent cause and matter are not the same in species, because the former is in act, the latter in potency: so if [God is the agent cause of other things, He is not their matter].

A quick doubt

iv. A doubt arises about this ground. The support given to the inference does not seem pertinent. For let it be granted that an efficient cause is not identically the form or matter of its effect. Nothing follows but that God, as such a cause, is not the form or matter of His effect. It does not follow that, absolutely speaking, He is not the form of any composite.

A short answer

The short answer to this is that being composed implies being an effect (since every composed thing is produced, as came out in the previous article), and being an effect implies being an effect of the first efficient cause (as is obvious); therefore, to be composed is to be an effect of the first efficient cause. Presupposing all this as evident, the argument advanced in the article proceeds optimally in drawing this implication: if God is the first efficient cause, He is not the form or matter of any composed thing. For if He were, He would be the form or matter of an effect of His — which is impossible because an agent cause is not numerically identical [to any such item], etc.

Analysis of the article, II

v. The second ground is this. [*Antecedent:*] God is of Himself firstly an agent; [*inference:*] therefore He is no part of anything. The inference is supported: no component part is of-itself firstly an agent; therefore if [God is such an agent, He is not a part].

Pay attention here to the wording in the text, which needs to be interpreted carefully. It does not say that the composite thing acts "of-itself firstly" (which was in fact denied above, in article 2); it says comparatively that the composite thing comes closer to acting like this than the component. For at least the composite is *what* acts, whereas the component is only *whereby* it acts. So the argument here is quite consistent with the point made earlier to the effect that, absolutely speaking, neither the component nor the composite can be "of itself firstly" an agent.

Analysis of the article, III

vi. The third ground is this. God is a first being; therefore He cannot be a part, not even a primordial part like matter or form. — The inference is supported as to matter, because potency comes after act; it is supported as to form, because participated act comes after act-by-essence.



Inquiry Four: Into God's completeness

After considering God's not-being-composed (but simple), one turns to His status of not-being-lacking (but complete). And since each thing is called good insofar as it is not lacking, one should deal first with God's completeness [*perfectio*] and then with His goodness.¹

Concerning the former, three questions are raised:

- (1) is God in a completed state?
- (2) is He so inclusively complete as to have the completive traits of all things?
- (3) can creatures be said to resemble God?

¹ The temptation to translate '*perfectio*' with 'perfection' should be resisted on most occasions. In English, 'perfection' is an evaluative term, conveying entire goodness, but in Latin '*perfectio*' was not. '*Perfectus*' meant finished or complete (we have a vestige in 'perfect tense'), and so a thing's *perfectio* was its finished condition (if not overall, then in some respect). For Aquinas, this condition was the prerequisite for anything to be evaluated favorably (either overall or in that respect).

article 1

Is God in a completed state?

1 CG c.28; *De Veritate* q.2, a.3 ad 13; *Compendium Theologiae* c.20; *In De Divinis Nominibus* c.13, *lectio* 1

* *perfectum* It seems that being in a completed state* does not apply to God.

(1) A thing is called completed, after all, when it is done being made. Being "made" does not apply to God. So neither does being "completed."

† *principium* (2) Furthermore, God is an ultimate origin¹ of things. But the origins of things seem to be inchoate. Look at seed, the origin of plants and animals. Therefore God is incomplete.

q.3, a.4 (3) Furthermore, it was shown above that God's essence is just His being. But mere being seems to be the most incomplete of all traits, since everything shares it and each adds further specifications to it. Therefore, God is incomplete.

ON THE OTHER HAND, there is Matthew 5:48, "Be ye perfect, as your Father in Heaven is perfect."

c.7; 1072b 30 I ANSWER: as Aristotle tells the story in *Metaphysics XII*, some of the ancient philosophers — the Pythagoreans and Speusippus — did not attribute the best and most finished state to the ultimate origin of things. The reason for this was that the early thinkers were paying attention only to the material origin, primordial matter, and this is highly unfinished. For necessarily, since matter as such is in potency, primordial matter is as thoroughly in potency as anything can be,² and so it is as unfinished as anything can be.

‡ *maximè*

When God is posited as an ultimate origin, however, it is not as the first matter of things but as their first efficient cause, and this has to be the most "complete" of all.

For as matter as such is in potency, so an agent as such is in act. Hence necessarily, a primordial agent is as fully in act as anything can be and thus as thoroughly completed. For the status of being "completed" is attributed to anything just insofar as the thing is in act. In other words, any item we call completed is one to which nothing is lacking that pertains to its own way of being whole.*

TO MEET THE OBJECTIONS — *ad* (1): "We echo back the high things of God," Gregory says, "as best we can, stammering." It is true that what is not made can hardly be called "finished" in the proper sense of the word. But since, among the things that do get made, we say that one is completed at the point when it is brought out of potency into act, we use the word 'complete' [or 'finished'] by transference to mean anything to which being-in-act is not lacking, whether or not it is in this state thanks to a productive process.¹

ad (2): we do find in our experience that a material origin is inchoate, but such an origin cannot be an absolute beginning;² it is preceded by something else, which is finished. The seed, for example, which is the origin of the animal generated from seed, has behind it the animal or plant from which it came. For it is necessarily the case that, behind what is in potency, there is something in act, because an entity in potency is not reduced to act unless by some entity which is in act already.

ad (3): sheer existing is the most complete of all states. It stands to all the rest as act [stands to potency]. For nothing has actuality except insofar as it *is*; and so "mere" being is the actualness of all things. It is the actu-

* *secundum modum suae perfectionis*

Magna moralia I, 36; *PL* 75, 715

† *factio*

‡ *primum simpliciter*

alness of their very forms. So, existing does not stand to other factors [as the objection supposed, *i. e.*] as receiver to received, but the other way about: as received to re-

ceiver. For when I speak of the existing (of a man, a horse, or anything else) that existing is taken as form-like* and received, not as what receives a being-such-and-such.

* *formale*

Cajetan's Commentary

As to the placement and title of Inquiry 4 as a whole, be aware that 'completeness' here [*perfectio*] does not mean a particular completive trait, such as goodness, life, wisdom, *etc.*; nor does it mean all such traits together. Asking whether something is finished or complete is not the same as asking whether it has (in a definite way, or one-way-or-another) all the finishing touches* of things. Rather, 'completeness' means the optimal way or manner of being along any formal line. Granted, there is an extended use of '*perfectio*' in which the word means a real trait or formal makeup actuating something, as when we say, "Wisdom is a completeness," and the like. But in its strict use, 'completeness' came from the finish of being made and has been used by philosophers to mean a way† of being not just any way, but the best not of some one thing, but of anything to which it applies, be it a substance or an accident.

For a thing can be understood and can exist in many ways of being, one of which is better than another. Thus the nature of a plant or animal has one way of being in the seed, another way in the individuals germinated or born, and another way again in the same individuals grown up. Of these states, the first, of course, is called unfinished [or undeveloped] because, in the seed, the specific nature is only there in potency; the second is called somewhat finished, and the third is called finished overall. You can see as much from the *Meteorologica*, book IV, where Aristotle says that each thing is called finished or complete "when it can make another like itself." For at that point it has its nature in the optimal way.

So, just as asking whether something is "complete" in one or another particular trait, ϕ , say knowledge, or nature, is not asking whether it has *another* trait, ψ , but whether it has ϕ in the *best way*, so also asking whether God is "complete" overall and without qualification (as is done here) is not asking whether He has some further trait, nor whether He has all of them (since this does not come up until article 2), but is just asking whether God is what He is in the *best way*. For this is to be "complete."¹

¹ As to the adjective '*perfectus*', Cajetan is combining two topics: complete trait and complete thing. On the first, he is surely right that the question of whether ϕ -ness is complete is not about another predicate but about *how* ϕ -ness is present. This 'how' indicates a manner of being- ϕ , and one can say that 'finished' or 'complete' means the most actualized state of being- ϕ . Hence the identification of completeness with *esse* here in the answer *ad* (3) (and below in article 2); see footnote

ii. Further evidence that this is the sense of the question comes from the body of the article, in the reason Aquinas gives for answering as he does. He says that God is complete and gives this reason: God is not in potency but in

3 in Cajetan's comment thereon). A bit sloppily, Cajetan says "complete" means the optimal or best state, thereby using evaluative terms in the explication of what was, for Aquinas, the basis for explicating evaluation.

As to the other topic, complete thing (taking 'thing' in the first-order sense of what there is), matters are more complicated. Can one really say that the question of whether a ϕ -thing is complete is not about another predicate it might have but about *how* it is a ϕ -thing? Aquinas' answer will acknowledge three different senses of 'complete', corresponding to three tests of completeness advanced below in 1 *ST* q. 6, a. 3. There the reader will be told that a thing meets a first test of completeness when it has the existence that goes along with its substantial form. If ϕ -ness is such a form, then a ϕ -thing is complete by this test as soon as it exists at all as a ϕ -thing. Thus one level of thing-completeness is identically the trait-completeness of the trait serving to classify the thing. Next, however, by a second test, a thing is complete when it has what it takes to operate, especially to reproduce its kind. Now being a complete ϕ -thing is a matter of being maturely ϕ , and this "how" typically involves the acquisition of certain accidental traits of a "completive" kind. The natures of material things, in their coming to be, generally pass through at least one inchoate state on their way to full realization; and the natures of biological things pass through many. If any such formative state of a ϕ -thing is looked at as ϕ -ness's being-in-potency (to some extent), while the mature state of a ϕ -thing is identified with ϕ -ness's being-in-act in a second and broader measure, one reduces the developmental talk of maturity to the more basic modal talk of being in act, and one reduces a second sense of thing-completeness to the talk of trait-completeness (*via* further traits that "com-plement" sheer ϕ -ness). Finally, there is yet a third test (which Cajetan does not discuss here), by which a thing is complete when it reaches or achieves its purpose (*finis ultimus*). At this level, being a complete ϕ -thing is a matter of being fulfilledly ϕ , and this "how" typically involves a relation to one or more other entities, a relation by which the thing possesses or rests in those entities.

As to the noun '*perfectio*', Cajetan is quite helpful in pointing out the difference between the strict sense in which it was used and its extended sense. In its strict sense, *perfectio* was the modal state of being in act, as opposed to the modal state of being in potency. x 's being "in act" could be taken as (1) x 's existing-in-its-species, or (2) as x 's maturity, or (3) as x 's resting in fulfillment. In its extended sense, however, '*perfectio*' meant a positive trait attained or developed. It could be (1) the substantial form attained at the term of generation, or (2) a further trait, accidental but needed for a key operation, or (3) the still further trait pertaining to fulfillment. In this sense, a *perfectio* was not a finished state of x but some trait which counted as a development of x .

* *perfectiones*

† *modus*

c 3
380a 11-15

act. Well, quite clearly, being-in-act or in-potency has to do with manner of being. And this is why the present Inquiry was put immediately after the one about the simplicity of God's nature. For once an essence is established, the question that comes up next is its manner of being — the sort of manner that 'completed' means. For completeness is not about a thing's standing towards its environs, nor towards anything outside it in any other way, but [only with the thing's status] in itself. Hence Aristotle, too, when he was talking about the nature of the universe in *De Caelo I*, set out to determine first whether the cosmos was in a finished state, passing over the methodologically prior questions of whether it exists and whether it is composed or simple, to which the answers were obvious.*

c.1:
268 b5-10

* *per se notae*

Analysis of the article

iii. In the body of the article, two jobs are done: (1) a Pythagorean opinion is noted, and (2) the question is answered.

As to job (1), it has two parts. (a) The opinion is stated: being-finished does not characterize an origin. (b) Its source is exposed: they understood only a material origin. The nexus is supported: because matter as such is in potency; so [the first matter is especially so].

iv. As to job (2), it has again two parts. (a) A conclusion answers the question with yes: God is most thoroughly completed. (b) The source is laid bare, opposite to the one above: God is an active origin.

The nexus is supported thus. Necessarily, what is active is in act; therefore, a first active cause is most

thoroughly in act; therefore He is most thoroughly finished or complete. — All the points are plain, and the final inference is made clear from the meaning of the word 'complete', namely, that to which no required feature is lacking. For to something existing in potency, there is lacking what it would be in act, while to the thing existing in act, there is nothing lacking.

Two ways of being common

v. In the answer to the third objection, pay attention to two points. First, the answer depends on a distinction between two ways of being common or shared:

- after the fashion of a shared act, and
- after the fashion of a shared potency.

Commonness after the first fashion lies in *being received*, while commonness after the second fashion lies in *receiving*. Existing is common to all things after the fashion of a shared act, since it clearly stands to all as the received stands to the things receiving it.

Second, one sees here the glaring weakness of Scotus' argument at *In IV Sent.* d.1, q.1. There he criticized St. Thomas' position — that existing, formally taken, is the most complete of all finished states — by arguing from the commonness of existing. It is amazing that he trotted out this objection, which St. Thomas had invalidated here with so much clarity.²

² Scotus thought that a complete trait had to be a specification or particularization, as though the real composition of things were an emergence out of generality, terminating at the unique. For Aquinas, the real composition of things is an emergence out of potency, terminating at existential act.

Are the completive traits of all things in God?

*In I Sent. d 2, aa.2,3; 1 CG cc.28, 31; 2 CG c 2; De Veritate q 2, a.1;
Compend. Theol. cc.21-22; In De divinis nominibus c 5, lectiones 1-2*

* *perfectiones* It does not seem that the completive traits* of all things are in God.¹

q 3, aa.1-8 (1) After all, God is simple, not composed, as shown already, while the traits that serve to complete things are many and various. Therefore, it is not the case that all the completive traits of things are in God.

(2) Furthermore, opposite traits cannot be present in the same thing. But the traits that complete things are opposites. Each species, for example, is completed by attaining its specific difference; and these differences (by which a genus is divided and its species are constituted) are opposed to each other. So, since opposites cannot co-exist in the same thing, it seems that not all the completive traits of things are in God.

(3) Furthermore, a living thing is more complete than a mere being, and a wise one is more complete than a living one. Thus, life is more complete than being, and wisdom is more complete than life. But God's essence is just His being. Therefore, He does not have in Himself the completive traits of life and wisdom and other such attainments.²

c 5; PG 3, 825 ON THE OTHER HAND, Denis says in *De divinis nominibus*, "God prepossesses all things in one existence."

† *universaliter* I ANSWER: the completive traits of all things are in God. The reason He is called all-inclusively* complete is because He is not lacking any nobility found in any kind or category. Averroes says the same in commenting on *Metaphysics V*. The point can be seen to emerge from two considerations.

Comment 21

First: [it emerges] thanks to the fact that any completive trait present in an effect *e* must be found in *e*'s effective cause, either

- under the same definition, if the cause is a univocal agent, like a man who begets a man, or
- in a higher manner, if the cause is an equivocal agent, like the sun containing a likeness of the things generated through the sun's active power.³

‡ *virtus*

For the produced trait obviously pre-exists in the active power of the agent-cause to produce it. Pre-existing in the active power of such a cause is not pre-existing in a less complete state but in a more complete one (although, granted, pre-existing in the potentiality of a material cause is pre-existing in a less complete state, in that matter as such is unfinished; but an agent as such is complete). So, necessarily, since God is a first effective cause of things, all their completive traits pre-exist in Him in a higher manner. This is the reasoning to which Denis alludes in c. 5 of *De divinis nominibus*, where he denies that God is "this but not that;" rather "He is all things, as the cause of all."⁴

PG 3, 824

Second: [God's inclusiveness emerges] from the already established point that God is existence itself subsisting on its own. Necessarily, then, He contains in Himself the whole completeness of being. For obviously, if a hot thing does not have the whole completeness of heat, the reason is that it is not sharing in heat according to the full definition of heat; but if heat were subsisting on its own, it could lack nothing of the full power of heat. So, since God is subsisting existence itself, nothing of the completeness of being can be lacking to Him. But the traits completing all things belong to the completeness of being; things are only complete insofar as they have being in some way. So, it follows that nothing's completive trait is lacking to God. Denis alludes to this reasoning, too, in

q 3, a.4

latter. By contrast, 'q' was applied equivocally to *x* and *y* in case it required different scientific accounts to capture what it took for *x* to be *q* and what it took for *y* to be *q* — and in case another condition was met, to which I shall return. According to the theory of spontaneous generation, the sun's influence generated maggots. These had what it took to be alive, and the sun had what it took to cause life. If 'living' was applied to the two at all, it was under different definitions.

Was this enough to make the sun an "equivocal cause" of the vermin, in the sense required to illustrate St. Thomas' theological intent? *If it was*, modern science affords many still-viable examples: germs are equivocal causes of sicknesses, as vitamins are of vigor. But it was not. Another condition had to be met. The equivocal cause had to pre-possess its effect in a *higher manner*. No one thinks of pills as agents in a higher way than the people invigorated by them. Once upon a time, the sun was thought to be warming in a higher manner than any other cause, but no longer.

Current Thomism, then, needs a different way to defend or illustrate the doctrine of this article. Cf. fn. 2 on p. 21.

⁴ Let being-*q* be a completive trait realized in any manner. Necessarily, if *x* is an efficient cause of *y*'s becoming *q*, then *x* is already *q* in act (though perhaps in some higher manner), and the first efficient cause of this world — that cause on which everything in this world depends if it is to become complete in any way. So, necessarily, for all such traits *q*, if *x* is the first efficient cause, then *x* is already *q* in act (though certainly in a higher manner). Thus, if *x* is the first efficient cause of this world, there is no complete trait in this world to which *x* is in potency; rather, every completive trait belonging to anything in this world is a trait which *x* has (in a higher manner) in a finished state.

¹ In this article, '*perfectio*' is used mostly in its secondary sense: a trait which, for some species *S*, serves to finish or complete *S*-things. A material being attains such a trait as the terminus of a (substantial or accidental) development.

² This objection raises a new issue: it assumes that completive traits can themselves be compared as more and less "complete," so that it is no longer a question of comparing the states of a given trait but of comparing the "nobility" of distinct traits. As will emerge, Aquinas accepts this assumption.

³ Univocal and equivocal causes were so named after univocal and equivocal uses of a term. A term '*q*' was being applied univocally to *x* and to *y*, just in case the same scientific account captured what it took for *x* to be *q* and what it took for *y* to be *q*. Because 'human' was applied univocally to a father and a son he beget, the former was a "univocal cause" of the

PG 3, 817 c.5 of *De divinis nominibus*, where he says that God “is not existing this way or that, but unqualifiedly and unlimitedly prepossesses the whole of existing in Himself, as one form.” Later he adds: “He is existing to subsistent things.”

PG 3, 824

Loc. cit. TO MEET THE OBJECTIONS — *ad* (1): just as the sun (as Denis says) “has within itself in advance, in its one form, the substances and qualities of the manifold things we sense, while remaining itself one and shining uniformly, so also, and much more, must all things pre-exist in natural union in the Cause of all.” And in this way traits which are diverse and opposed in themselves pre-exist in God as one, without detriment to His simplicity.

This makes it clear how to answer (2) also.

ad (3): as Denis again says in the same chapter, if you look at being *esse*, life, and wisdom as they are distinguished by their definitions, then being is more complete than life, and life is more complete than wisdom. Yet a living thing is more complete than what just is, because the living thing also is. And a wise thing is both a being and a living thing. Let it be granted, then, that “a being” [*ens*] does not imply a living thing and a wise one, because what shares in being need not share in it according to every manner of being; nevertheless “Being Itself” implies life and wisdom, because no complete trait of being can be lacking to Him who is subsistent being itself.

PG 3, 817

Cajetan’s Commentary

In the title question, the word ‘are’ does not indicate any special way of being-in-God but is taken quite broadly, so that the question is not whether all the complete traits are in God *form-wise**, nor whether they are in Him *power-wise*†, but whether they are in Him *one way or another, without specifying which way*. ‘Complete traits’ stands inclusively for all attainments, both those that are unqualifiedly positive and those that are not. This becomes clear as the article proceeds.

* *formaliter*
† *virtualiter*

Analysis of the article, I

ii. In the body of the text there is one conclusion, giving the question a yes-answer: In God are the complete traits of all things.

This is supported on three grounds. First, by authority. [*Antecedent:*] God is called all-inclusively complete, *i.e.* having the noble traits of all genera; [*inference:*] *ergo* [all these traits are in Him in some way]. The antecedent is supported on the authority of Averroes, commenting on *Metaphysics V*.

iii. The second ground is an argument taken from Denis. [*Antecedent:*] God is the first efficient cause of all things; [*inference:*] therefore the traits completing all things pre-exist in God in a higher manner.

The antecedent is presumed as already established. The inference is supported as to both its parts [(1) these traits are in God, and (2) they are there in a higher manner]. *As to the first:* produced traits pre-exist in the active power of their agent cause; so any complete trait present in an effect must be found in its effective cause. So, if God is [a first efficient cause], the complete traits of all things are in Him. *As to the second part,* the support is this. [*Assumption:*] An agent as such is complete; [*1st inference:*] so to pre-exist in the active power of an agent cause is not to pre-exist in a less complete state but in a more complete one. [*2nd inference:*] So any complete trait present in an effect pre-exists in its effective cause either under the same definition, as in a univocal cause, or under a higher one, as in an equivocal cause. [*3rd inference:*] So, necessarily, if God is a first

cause of all things, He has the complete traits of all things in a higher manner. The assumption is clear from the previous article. The first inference is supported by contrast: since matter is unfinished, to pre-exist in the potentiality of a material cause is to be in a less complete state. The remaining inferences are left as obvious.

More complete pre-existence?

iv. Concerning this proposition,

Pre-existing in the active power of an agent cause is not pre-existing in a less complete state but in a more complete one, a doubt arises at once. It seems false in itself and conflicts with another claim in the same article. It seems false because, sometimes, the effected trait pre-exists in its efficient cause in a state [not more but] equally complete, as is obviously the case when a Socrates begets a Plato. It conflicts with another claim because he says (in so many words and quite correctly) that the effect of a univocal cause pre-exists in the cause “under the same definition” (so not in a more complete way).

Beginners may also find occasion to doubt this proposition on the ground that, to all appearances, effects also pre-exist in a less finished state in many causes which are nevertheless efficient ones; obvious examples are the seeds from which animals and plants are efficiently produced.

v. TO ANSWER BRIEFLY, the proposition can be read two ways. First, as the wording itself indicates, it can be read *comparatively*, and in that case it allows but does not require the pre-existence to be more complete. In other words, ‘not less complete’ necessarily holds, while ‘more complete’ may hold. [The sense then is that pre-existing in the power of an agent cause is *at least as* complete.] So taken, the proposition is very true indeed and means that pre-existing in the efficient cause has to be doing so in a state that is not less complete than the effect’s state of being but possibly is pre-existing in a more complete state. — Secondly, the proposition can be read as using comparative language to make a flatly positive claim: [that pre-

existing in the power of an agent cause is doing so] in a complete state, or in a state of completeness. — Of these, the first reading supports the intent of the article, which is trying to prove the point that the complete traits of the effects [of an equivocal cause] are in the equivocal cause — and in God — in a higher manner.

As to the beginners' doubt, the answer comes from Alexander [of Aphrodisias] (see Averroes on *Metaphysics XII*, comment 24), who has taught us that seeds and other such things, to which the forms of the effects do not bear a univocal or imitative likeness, are not efficient causes but *instruments* of such causes, and that this is the only reason Aristotle classed them with the effective causes in *Metaphysics V* and *Physics II*. In our present context, we are talking about active causes in the strict sense, as opposed not only to other kinds of causes but also to instruments of causes (which, strictly speaking, are not causes).¹

c.3 in each

vi. As to the last inference [in the second ground, *i.e.*, that God has the complete traits of all things in a higher manner], observe that it rests upon the fact that the first effective cause of things is an equivocal cause. This was left as obvious. It is admitted by all, and it comes out clearly enough from the terms. For if the first cause is effectively causing things fitting definitions diverse [from its own], it is not being a univocal cause of them; and if it is causing some univocally, it is not efficiently causing the others, and then it is not [a cause] of the ones diverse from itself.²

¹ The doubt which arises today is more serious. What about emergent effects and evolution? Suppose an animal *x* has in act the trait ϕ . When Aquinas says that this animal must have had an efficient cause that was already ϕ in act, in either the same or a higher manner ϕ , what does this mean?

Does it mean that *x* must have had an animal ancestor that was ϕ (or ϕ)? Or does it allow for the possibility that every ancestor of *x* has been less-than- ϕ in act, so long as higher and more universal causal influences, like the sun, are supplying the difference, so that what is required is just that somewhere, in the whole set of co-ordinated conditions jointly sufficient for the birth of *x*, ϕ -ness (or more) pre-exists?

The first answer seems inconsistent with the theory that solar energy can produce low forms of life, which Aquinas accepted. The second answer is therefore more likely to be the correct interpretation of him. Its bearing upon the modern discussion of evolution, however, is difficult to assess.

Consider the hypothesis that life-forms emerged in a high-energy state of some original protein soup. Does this count as an improved version of the spontaneous generation theory? If it does, Aquinas' talk of equivocal causation and pre-existence still has a biochemical interpretation. If it does not, his talk has only a theological interpretation. In that case, the claim that an emergent higher form must have pre-existed at least as completely in the efficient cause of its emergence would just require that God's influence be included in the account of that cause. Since no empirical science handles that part of the account, the question turns to what 'evolution' names. Does it name an empirical theory that just leaves that part out, or does it name a new metaphysics designed to exclude it?

² Aquinas gives an argument below as to why a first cause must be an equivocal one (1 *ST* q.13, a.5 *ad* 1). Cajetan's argument here seems to be a different one, but it is so abbreviated and elliptical that my translation is conjectural.

Analysis of the article, II

vii. The [third ground is a] second argument touched upon by Denis. [*Antecedent:*] God is existence itself subsisting on its own; [*1st inference:*] therefore He contains in Himself the whole completeness of being; [*2nd inference:*] therefore He contains all the complete traits of all things.

The antecedent is taken as already established. The first inference is supported by disproving the negation as applied to the case of heat and the completeness of a hot thing. The argument goes like this. Suppose God does not contain the whole completeness of being; in that case, He does not have being according to the full definition of being; in that case, He is not existence itself subsisting on its own (which contradicts the antecedent) — just as from 'a hot thing *x* does not have the whole completeness of heat' it follows that '*x* does not have heat according to the full definition of heat' and hence that '*x* is not heat itself subsisting on its own'. — The second inference is also supported. Things are called finished or complete insofar as they have being; therefore the traits completing all things pertain to the completeness of being; therefore, if God contains the whole completeness of being, then [He contains the traits completing all things].³

Understanding the answer *ad* (3)

viii. In the answer to the third objection, notice first that the force of the objection — when it says that a mere being is less complete than a living thing, so existence is less complete than life — rests upon a commonplace about conjoined terms. And the truth of its antecedent hangs on the fact that 'a being' does not imply 'a living thing', but conversely ['a living thing' does imply 'a being'].

Notice secondly that, in his answer, St. Thomas suggests the following distinction in the real. Existing can be compared to living in three ways.

- First, both can be taken form-wise and exclusively,* so that existing is taken exclusively for the act of being, and life is taken exclusively for what it adds form-wise besides being, *e.g.* to live as such. And so taken, these things are indicated by abstract nouns ('existence', 'life', 'wisdom', *etc.*), and St. Thomas says they are being compared as they are distinguished by definition. And so taken, existing is more complete than living and the other attainments, because existing is the actuality of them all, as was said above.

* *praeclusio*

- Secondly, existing and life can be compared without excluding,[†] so that life is taken according to all that it includes, and not just for what it adds form-wise besides being. And so taken, these things are indicated by concrete nouns, and in the text they are called "a being," "a living thing."

a.1 *ad* 3† *absque praeclusione*

³ The key to this argument, without which one can make no sense of it, is Aquinas's account of existence (*esse*) as actualizing act. Though there is a real distinction between form and existence in creatures, this distinction was never understood by Aquinas as that of two things lying wholly outside each other. Rather, as noted above (in footnote 3 on the commentary to q.3, a.5), the act of existence includes the specifying/structuring act of form but is not included by it. This is why every trait or form, as it receives its finished state, belongs to the completeness of the *esse* received.

“a wise one”; and St. Thomas says that a living thing is more complete than one which just is, because a living one includes a being and some further completeness as well.

• Thirdly, existence subsisting in its purity can be compared to everything else, taken any way you like. So taken, existence is indicated in the text by ‘Being Itself’, and Aquinas says it includes in itself life, wisdom, and all the completeness of being, as was argued in the body of the article; and hence, so taken, it is the most complete Thing of all.

From this information which we get from the text, we have it *both* that

- (1) existing taken form-wise is form-wise more complete than other traits

and that

- (2) Being Itself is unqualifiedly more complete than anything, pre-possessing all complete traits within itself.

As a result, we know from (1) that the trait of existing, which belongs quidditatively to God alone, is form-wise nobler than other complete traits; and from (2) we know that God, by virtue of being Being Itself, has all the complete traits.⁴

⁴ The third objection introduced a new issue. Let ϕ and ψ stand for non-equivalent traits. The objection assumed that these traits could be compared for completeness not just in cases where one is possessed in a more finished state — as a human adult (“wise thing”) is more complete than a dog puppy (“living thing”) — but even in cases where both are possessed in the finished state, so that an adult man can be called “more complete” [*perfectius*] than an adult dog. Aquinas accepts this sort of comparison in handling the objection but does not explain at this point the basis for it, and neither does Cajetan. A clue may be at hand, however, in the point that *esse* taken form-wise is “form-wise more complete” than other traits. This is so because *esse* so taken is wholly act and in no respect potency. Any other trait is a potency to existential act and so, even when considered as completed, includes that potency (as actualized). In other words, every other complete trait is actualized potency, while *esse*, taken form-wise, is pure

Actualization. (Thus, too, when *esse* subsists on its own, it is Pure Act.) This suggests that one trait ϕ is “more complete” than another trait ψ just in case ϕ -ness is a structuring/specifying act *less restricted by potency* than ψ -ness is.

For example, being biologically alive involves less restriction by matter than being a mineral involves (and so being alive is more “perfect”); being a rational animal involves less restriction by matter than being a brute animal involves (and so being human is more “perfect”); being an angel involves no restriction by matter (and so is more “perfect” than being human) but still involves potency in that the essence of such a creature is potential to its *esse*; so even an angelic essence is form-wise less complete than existence. But being *esse* itself subsisting on its own involves no restriction of any kind by any receiving potency, and so God, who is Being Itself, is “unqualifiedly more complete than anything.”

Thus, in each case, if ϕ -ness is more complete than ψ -ness, then finished ϕ -ness is more like Being Itself than finished ψ -ness is, and conversely. (But can anything be called “like” Being itself? That is the question to be addressed in the next article.)

⁵ In other words, the rule had to do with how the comparison of concrete things lined up with the comparison of abstractions (forms). The rule was that if a ϕ -thing *as such* is more complete than a ψ -thing *as such*, then ϕ -ness is more complete than ψ -ness. But one could not infer this if the antecedent lacked the ‘as such’ qualifier (and said only, ‘if a ϕ -thing is more complete than a ψ -thing’). For then the inference could fail. *E.g.*, it will fail if ψ -ness is a transcendental (as here, where ψ -ness is existing); for then calling x a ϕ -thing is more informative than calling it ψ , and yet ψ -ness may be more of a finishing touch, hence a more “complete” trait than ϕ -ness. This is what the objection overlooked.

Can any creature resemble God?

In I Sent. d.48, q.1, a.1; *In II Sent.* d.16, q.1, a.1 ad 3; 1 *CG* c.29; *De Veritate* q.2, a.11, q.3, a.1 ad 9; q.23, a.7 ad 9ff.; *De Potentia Dei* q.7, a.7; *In Div. Nom.* c.9, *lectio* 3

It seems that no creature can resemble God.

Ps 85 8

(1) It says in a Psalm that "there is none like Thee among the gods, O Lord." Among all creatures, it is the most excellent ones that are called gods in some participative sense. [So, if they are not like God] much less can other creatures be called "like Him."

1.57 q.3, a.5

(2) Also, similarity is a comparison. Since there is no comparing things across diverse categories, there is no similarity between them. We do not say, for example, that sweetness is "similar" to whiteness. Well, no creature is in the same category with God, since He is not in a category at all, as came out above. Therefore, no creature is similar to God.

(3) Furthermore, things are called alike when they agree in form. But nothing agrees in form with God. For apart from God alone, there is no case in which a thing's essence is identically its existing. Therefore, no creature can be similar to God.

(4) Furthermore, in things that are similar the resemblance is mutual. For if *x* is similar to *y*, *y* is similar to *x*. So, if any creature is similar to God, God will resemble it. But the contrary is said in Isaiah 40:18, "to whom have ye likened God?"

THE OTHER HAND, Genesis 1:26 says, "Let us make man in our image and likeness." And 1 John 3:2 says, "when He appears, we shall be like Him."

I ANSWER: likeness comes from agreement or commonness of form, and therefore there are many kinds of likeness, in keeping with the many ways of sharing a form. Thus:

- Some things are called alike because they share the same form under a constant definition and share it in the same measure*; such things are called not only similar but "equal" in their similarity. Thus two things equally white are called alike in whiteness. This is the most perfect resemblance.

* *modus*

- In another way, things are called alike which share the same form under a constant definition but not in the same measure as to more and less. Thus a less white thing is called similar to a whiter thing. This is imperfect resemblance.

- In a third way, some things are called alike which share the same form but under different definitions of that form, as in the case of non-univocal agent causes [and their effects]. For since every agent produces something similar to itself in the respect in which it is acting, and since everything acts according to a form it has, it follows necessarily that there is in the effect pro-

duced a likeness to a form which the agent has. When the agent is in the same species as its effect, there will be a similarity in form between the maker and the made, under a constant definition of the species, as when a man begets a man. But when the agent is not in the same species, there will be a likeness which does not preserve a constant species-definition. Thus things generated by the active power of the sun achieve some resemblance to the sun but not so as to receive the very form of the sun according to sameness of species. The resemblance is limited to a generic likeness.

Hence, if there is an agent cause which is not contained in any genus, its effects will achieve even less of a likeness to the agent's form. Neither under the same specific definition, nor under a constant generic definition, will they share in likeness to the agent's form, but only under an analogy — as in the case of being itself, which is analogically common to all entities. This is how things that come from God are assimilated to Him: in their status as beings, they are assimilated to Him as to the ultimate and universal origin of all existence.

TO MEET THE OBJECTIONS — *ad* (1): as Denis says in c.9 of *De divinis nominibus*, when holy Scripture says something is not like God, "it is not against assimilation to Him. For the same things are both like God and unlike Him. They are like Him in that they imitate Him as well as they can imitate one Who is not completely imitable; and they are unlike Him inasmuch as they fall short of their Cause." They fall short not only in terms of lesser intensity (as a less white thing falls short of a whiter one) but in terms of not matching God in either species or genus.

PG 3, 916

ad (2): creatures do not stand to God as though He and they were in different categories. He is outside every category and is the origin of them all.

ad (3): agreement in form under a constant definition of genus and species is not the reason a likeness of creatures to God is asserted. The reason is only an analogical agreement in form: God is a being by essence, and the creatures are beings by participation.

ad (4): even though we grant that there is a way in which a creature resembles God, one should not grant that there is any way in which God resembles a creature. As Denis says in chapter 9 of *De divinis nominibus*, "In things of the same rank, * likeness is mutual, but not in the case of a cause and a thing caused." For we say that a portrait resembles a man, and not *vice-versa*. So, one can say in some way that a creature is a likeness of God, but not that God is a likeness of the creature.

PG 3, 913

* *unus ordinis*

Cajetan's Commentary

The title brings up a doubt. What is this article doing here? The topic of q.4 is the completeness of God's substance in itself; a question about creatures and what they resemble should not be mixed in here.

My answer is that, although verbally this topic is about creatures, in its meaning it is about the completeness of God's nature. For what is being asked here is whether its completeness is so great that no creature can be like Him. This is what remained to be asked, once it had been determined that He is in a finished state and all-inclusively complete. — But notice that the question is not whether God's completeness is so great that no *thing* can be like Him. The question is only whether any *creature* can be like Him. The former would bring up the issue of a plurality of gods, to be handled below in q.11. The latter is relevant here.

Analysis of the article

ii. In the body of the article two jobs are done. (1) Likeness is distinguished into kinds. (2) The question is answered. — As to (1), likeness comes in three kinds: (a) from form under a constant definition and measure; (b) from form under a constant definition but variable measure; (c) from form under varying definition and measure. — Distinguishing these is supported on the ground that likeness is agreement in form; so how-things-are-alike breaks down into kinds as how-things-agree-in-form breaks down into kinds; hence there are three kinds, *etc.* All points are clear in the text.

iii. As to job (2), the conclusion answering the question is that creatures resemble God not under a constant specific or generic definition, but by an analogy.

This conclusion has four parts. (1) is affirmative: *they resemble God*; (2) is negative: *not in species*; (3) is negative: *nor in genus*; (4) is affirmative: *but by an analogy*. — First Aquinas supports part (1). Every agent acts thanks to a form it has; [*inference:*] *ergo* there has to be in the effect a likeness to a form the agent has. (To this you may then add: *ergo* the creature has to have a likeness to God.) The inference is supported thus: every agent produces something similar to itself in the aspect in which it is acting, *i.e.*, similar along the lines of its basis for acting.* — Then he supports parts (2)–(4) of the conclusion: God is not an agent contained in a species or genus but is the universal origin of all existence. All points are clear in the text.

On the answer *ad* (4)

iv. In the answer to the last objection, a doubt arises about the citation used as an authority. In it, Denis contrasts “things of the same rank” with “a cause and a thing caused.” *Either* the cause and the caused are always of different ranks (which is obviously false: look at univocal causes), *or else* this half of the distinction is ambiguous and badly drawn. Ambiguous, because it is unclear what sort of cause and “thing caused” he is talking about. Badly drawn, because over against “things of

the same rank” he should have put “things of different ranks,” whether they are cause-and-caused or not, because that is incidental.

v. THE ANSWER is that Denis's distinction is artful, solid, and formally precise, if it is understood right. It is not in fact false but quite true and necessary that *among forms* the “cause” and the “caused” are always of different ranks. Here we are using these words, ‘the cause’ and ‘the caused’, not to stand for the related things *x* and *y*, nor for their causalities, but to stand for the real form which is the basis for *x*'s causing and the real form which the effect *y* gets from this cause. These are what the similarity relation is based on.

Now, then, these bases* for similarity between things can stand to each other on two footings, as it says in the text. On one, they would be of the same rank, like *x*'s whiteness and *y*'s whiteness, or *x*'s being an animal and *y*'s being one, *etc.*; on this footing similarity is an equivalence relation and thus is symmetrical.[†] On the other footing, one basis would be defined as formally caused by the other, as a portrait of Socrates is defined to be formally caused by Socrates [*i.e.* defined to be patterned on Socrates]. After all, the dependency of an image-of-N upon N is no accident to that image. On this footing, the relation is being-a-copy-of, which is not an equivalence relation, not symmetrical, but reduces to the third class of relations posited in *Metaphysics V* (where it talks about [relations real in one direction but not in the other, like] *x* knowing *y* and *y* being-a-known to *x*, *etc.*) Now, it is clear that such a “cause” and “caused” are of different ranks. For it is impossible for things of the same rank to be such that one of them has by definition a formal dependency on the other, since [in similarity-bases of the same rank] whatever belongs to the definition of the one belongs to the definition of the other [and nothing is defined to depend causally upon itself].

vi. Thus an answer emerges to the objection about univocal causes. Where there is univocity between *x* and *y*, there is no “cause and thing caused” form-wise and *per se*, but only *via* matter and *per accidens*; the form of the effect *y* does not depend *as a form* upon the form of the cause *x*. The humanness in Socrates, *as a form*, does not depend in being or becoming upon the humanness in his father (say, Plato); rather, Socrates' humanness depends on his father's insofar as it is *this case*. So the humanness that is the basis for similarity between father and son is not in the class of “cause” or “thing caused” except *via* matter and accidentally; rather, it is in the class of similarity-bases of the same rank. By contrast, it is those forms which *as forms* are a cause and a caused which are similarity-bases of different ranks, as the text suggests with great subtlety. On such bases, the relation is one of imitation, not pure similarity; and thus it is not symmetrical.

Pay careful attention to this and apply it proportionately to the topic of non-symmetrical [or not symmetrically real] relations in general.

* *fundamenta*† *mutua*c.15;
1021a30ff.* *ratio agendi*

Inquiry Five: Into the good in general

Next the inquiry turns to the good. We shall deal first with the good in general; thereafter, with the goodness of God. Concerning the former, six questions are raised:

- (1) are "a good" and "a being" the same in the real?
- (2) if they differ only in definition, which has priority, 'good' or 'being'?
- (3) if "a being" has priority, is every being good?
- (4) what sort of cause does a thing get to be by having what it takes to be good?
- (5) does what it takes to be good involve "amount, kind, and order"?
- (6) on what basis is the range of good divided into upright, useful, and enjoyable?

article I

Are "a good" and "a being" the same in the real?

*In I Sent d.8, q.1, a.3; d.19, q.5, a.1 ad 3; 2 CG c.41; 3 CG c.20;
De Veritate q.1, a.1, q.21, aa.1-3; De Potentia Dei q.9, a.7 ad 6*

It seems that "a good" differs from "a being" by a real factor [*secundum rem*].¹

PL 64, 1312

(1) After all, Boethius in his *De Hebdomadibus* says, "I see in things that it is one thing for them to be good and something else for them to be." So, a good and a being differ by a real factor.

Proposition 19

(2) Also, nothing is modified by itself. When we say that a being is good, we are modifying it, according to the Commentary on the *Liber de causis*. So "good" indicates something different from 'being'.

(3) Furthermore, good admits of more and less, but existing does not admit of degrees. So "good" indicates something different from 'being'.

c.32
PL 34, 32

ON THE OTHER HAND, Augustine says in *De doctrina christiana I*: "Insofar as we are, we are good."

* *secundum rationem*

† *appetibile*

c.1;
1094a3

I ANSWER: "a good thing" and "a being" are the same in the real and differ only in why they are so called.* This emerges as follows. A thing meets the definition of good by having what it takes to be sought after.[†] This is why Aristotle says in *Ethics I* that the good is "what all things seek."² Well, all things seek their own finished [or complete or mature] state; so it is clear that each is sought as

complete.³ But each thing is complete just insofar as it is in act; and since the act-state of anything is being, as came out above, it follows that anything is good insofar as it is a being.⁴ Clearly, then, a good and a being are the same in the real. But 'good' has the sense of what it takes to be sought, and 'being' does not have this sense.⁵

q.3, a.4,
q.4, a.1 ad 3

in any way. The *appetibile* was anything that could satisfy any sort of inclination in any sort of being. Aquinas construed Aristotle's remark that *bonum est quod omnia appetunt* to say that, for all things x , the good of $x =$ what x seeks or rests in = what can satisfy an inclination found in x . What can satisfy a thing is a benefit to it. Thus every good is a benefit to some beneficiary. Among benefits, Aquinas counted not only external items like food and shelter, but also internal ones, like stability or maturity.

³ For all x , the finished state of x satisfies tendencies present but not yet satisfied in inchoate states of x . By making '*appetere*' cover any such tendency, Aquinas got each thing to seek itself as complete (to be at least as complete as it is). It seeks completeness as *finis cuius grata* and seeks itself as *finis cui*: $(x)(x$ seeks $x)$; so $(x)\exists y(y$ seeks $x)$. Thus everything is sought, at least by itself, and everything x seeks besides itself is sought as complete enough to benefit x .

⁴ Let '*sq*' mean 'in some respect'; then the argument says: $(x)\exists y(x$ is good $\supset x$ has what it takes to be sought by $y)$
 $(x)\exists y(x$ has what it takes to be sought by $y \supset x$ is complete $sq)$
 $(x)(x$ is complete $sq \supset x$ is actual $sq)$
 $(x)(x$ is actual $sq \supset x$ is a being $sq)$

By transitivity, anything good is a being in some way.

The obvious objection is that non-existent items, such as the bath I haven't had yet but should like to have, are sought as good. The answer is that the imagined bath is not what is being thought of as good, but its realization. The sought object is sought to be realized. It will be good, when it exists or happens. See *infra* a.4.

⁵ The sense of 'good' differs from the sense of 'being' in such a way that 'good' belongs to evaluative language, and 'being' does not. For Aquinas, using evaluative language presupposes that one

¹ A factor was called real when it was thing-like, i.e. independent of perceivers, seekers, etc. At issue here is whether good things are good thanks to the same real trait that makes beings be. Article 1 establishes that goodness is not a real trait distinct from being, on the ground that nothing is "good" independently of seekers, and what they seek as good is (in some way) a being. It follows that every good thing is a being in some respect. Article 3 will establish the quasi-converse, that every being is good in some respect.

² 'Seek' translates '*appetunt*'. The verb and its object, the *appetibile*, were broad terms. To seek was to tend or incline in

TO MEET THE OBJECTIONS — *ad* (1): even though ‘good’ and ‘being’ indicate the same real trait, they still differ in definition, and as a result there is a difference in how something is unqualifiedly* called “a being” and how it is unqualifiedly called “good.” For since ‘being’ indicates distinctively† that something exists in act, and what is distinctive about act is its relation to potency, something is called a being *unqualifiedly* as soon as it emerges from sheer potency. This initial being is the substantial being of each thing, and so each is unqualifiedly “a being” thanks to its substantial being. Then, as further traits supervene, a thing is said to be *some way*,‡ as ‘to be white’ means to be a certain way. Being-white comes to a thing which is already there in act, and so being-white is not the being that removes the thing from overall potency.

By contrast, ‘good’ carries the sense of meeting a condition for being complete, which is having what it takes to be sought, and hence it carries the sense of meeting the condition of “final.” So what is complete down to the finishing touches is called “good” *unqualifiedly*. And what does not have the final completeness

understands appetite, because calling *x* good is describing it in relation to appetite. But once one understands such language, one need not use it in relation to one’s own appetite. One can study the tendencies of flies and learn what to call good from the insect point of view. It is one thing, therefore, to be using evaluative language and quite another to be thinking in the practical mode, in which one decides what to seek for oneself and those for whom one is acting. Practical thinking (and the ethics which guide it) do not come up in this work until the *Secunda Pars*.

Cajetan’s Commentary

The title of the inquiry brings up an immediate doubt as to its placement. Why is the topic of good being taken up now? A being’s status as good is not one that applies to it prior to its status as one, real,* *etc.*; and of course goodness does not attach to the divine nature ahead of Its oneness or realness. Nor are we dealing with God here in His role as a cause, and so the reason why the topic of good is coming up first can hardly be the fact that ‘good’ names the basis on which He is [first of causes, *i.e.* the] Goal of all things. There is no apparent reason, then, why an inquiry into the good should be inserted at this point.

ii. My ANSWER would be that an inquiry into the good can get its placement on two bases.

* *verus*
 † *secundum se*
 • One basis would be *in its own right*;† and on that basis it would not belong here, as the objection just showed; the inquiry into completeness [q. 4] would be followed immediately by the one about unlimitedness [q. 7], which goes into the extent of God’s completeness [*i.e.* whether His finished being is something limited or something unlimited].

• The other basis is *as part of the discussion of com-*

pleteness; and on this basis it belongs in the section on completeness, and this is how it is being placed in the text. Aquinas suggested as much in two places. One is at the head of q. 4, where the talk of completeness begins, where he says, “Since each thing is called good insofar as it is not-lacking, one should deal first with God’s completeness and then with His goodness” (as if to say: on account of His completeness, we shall also be dealing with His goodness). The other place is at the head of q. 7, where it becomes apparent that the topic of good has been dealt with incidentally, thanks to its involvement in completeness. He says, “After considering God’s completeness, the inquiry turns to His unlimitedness,” making no mention at all of the goodness topic. — But as to why goodness should be asked about in a discussion of completeness, the text gives its reason right away: because any thing’s being-complete is the reason the thing is called good.

Analysis of the article

iii. In the body of the article there is one conclusion answering the question with yes: ‘a good thing’ and ‘a being’ indicate the same in the real and differ only in definition.

as it is actual, is neither called “completed” nor “good” unqualifiedly, but only *in some way*.⁶ Thus anything at all, by its first existing as a substance is said to “be” unqualifiedly but to be “good” in a way (*i.e.*, insofar as it is a being at all). But by its finishing touches of act, anything is said to “be” in some way but to be “good” unqualifiedly. Boethius’ statement, then (that it is one thing for items to be good and something else for them to be), should be applied to the *unqualified* talk of “good” and the *unqualified* talk of “being.” For a thing is unqualifiedly called a being thanks to its first act and is unqualifiedly called good thanks to its final touches of act. Yet thanks to its first act it is good to some extent, and thanks to its final touches it is exercising being in some way.⁷

ad (2): ‘good’ is used as a modifier [of being] insofar as it is meant unqualifiedly, in keeping with the final touches of act.

The third objection is met along the same lines: a thing is called better or worse thanks to a supervening act it gains or loses, *e.g.* a bit of knowledge or a virtue.

⁶ Note how ‘good’ implies ‘ought’: if *x* is *unqualifiedly good* (from its own point of view or another’s), it is complete in all the ways it *ought* to be (from its own point of view or another’s). If *x* is good in some respect, it is complete in one way it ought to be.

⁷ It is too crude, then, to say that ‘good’ and ‘being’ are coextensive. For not every being is good in the unqualified sense — the sense in which things are called good when they are “all they should be.” In fact, Aquinas’ position is consistent with the view that most things are not much good.

Two ways to differ in definition

iv. Before looking at how this conclusion is supported, the beginner should pay attention to the terms in it. 'Differ in definition' covers a broad range. Words differing only in how they signify, like 'human' [concrete] and 'humanness' [abstract], differ only in definition. Other words differing in what needs to be mentioned in defining them, like 'split logs' and 'firewood', also differ in definition only. One should distinguish, then, and realize that terms can differ in definition two ways:

- (1) because of the content meant or conceived in each, vs.
- (2) because of how the same content is meant or conceived in each.

What is at stake here is a definitional difference because of the content conceived in each term. The force of the conclusion is that 'good' and 'being' differ in the intelligible content that each conveys.

Analysis resumed

v. The conclusion is proved, then, as follows. *First, as to its first part* [that "a good" and "a being" are the same in the real]. [*Antecedent:*] A good thing is so called because of being sought; [*1st inference:*] therefore because of being complete; [*2nd inference:*] therefore because of being-in-act; [*3rd inference:*] therefore because of being a being. [*4th inference:*] Therefore "a good" is the same in the real as "a being." The antecedent is supported by *Ethics I*. The first inference is supported on the ground that all things seek their own completion. The second inference is left as already known. The third is supported on the ground that being is the actuality of everything. The last is obvious.

Then, as to its second part [that they differ in definition]. Calling something "a good" expresses that it has what it takes to be sought. Calling it "a being" does not express this. So, they differ in definition.

Is a thing good because it is sought, or sought because it is good?

vi. As to the antecedent [that a good thing is so called because it is sought], a doubt arises. [*Major:*] If B is predicated of A *per se* in the second sense of '*per se*', B is not in the definition of A but *vice-versa* [A is in the definition of B], as you can see from *Posterior Analytics I*. [*Minor:*] But 'what is sought' is predicated of the good *per se* in the second sense of '*per se*'. So [*conclusion:*] it is not the case that a good thing is good because it is sought, but the other way about [a sought thing is sought because it is good]. The minor is sound because

- (1) something is sought because it is good, not *vice-versa*; and
- (2) because good is the formal object of a power-to-*seek*,* while 'what is sought' is just an extrinsic denomination derived from a power-to-*seek*; so "a good" stands to "what is sought" as "a color" stands to "what is seen"; but it is clear from *De Anima II* that color is *per se* seen or visible in the second sense of '*per se*'.

[Therefore good is *per se* sought but only in the second sense of '*per se*'; and so it is not the case that a good thing is good because it is sought.]

vii. One can ANSWER this in two ways, using the two senses in which one can take 'x is ϕ because it is sought', i.e., the form-wise sense* and the basis-wise sense¹:

(1) If 'sought' is taken form-wise [i.e. as describing a relation of an actual relation: x is sought by y], then as when a good thing is said to be good "because it is sought," the sense is not that being sought is something intrinsic to the good but a state it is in.

(2) But if 'sought' is taken basis-wise [i.e. as describing what would dispose something to be a relation of such a relation], then a good thing is said to be good "because it is sought" intrinsically. For the distinctive reason why something is good is the basis and cause of its being an object for seeking, just as [what it takes to have] color is the basis and cause of visibility.

While either interpretation is true in itself (and the first comes from the beginning of St. Thomas' commentary on the *Ethics*), the second is what he mainly has in mind in this context, where the issue is the intrinsic make up of a good thing as such.

viii. But now pay attention to the fact that, although any of the terms used in the deduction above ('good', 'complete', 'being-in-act', and 'being') implies the basis and cause of being an object for seeking with the result that a thing-wise identity between them is concluded still, it is 'good' alone which carries the sense of what grounds seekability as so doing. As a result, the closer anything comes to having what it takes to be good, the more fully it expresses the basis for being sought, as you can see by running through the terms listed above. Between 'being' and 'good' there stand 'being-in-act' and 'complete'; and the basis for being sought is expressed more fully by 'being-in-act' than it is by 'being' (because each thing is sought in view of some being-in-act, present or future), and it is expressed even better by 'complete', which implies the final touch (because even being-in-act is sought for the final touch), and it is expressed best of all by 'good' (because even the final touch is only sought because it is good or appears so to the seeker). 'Good', then, implies what it takes to be sought, the basis and proximate reason why anything is an object for seeking. Since this basis is the same as completeness and being, a good thing is the same as a being. But because this basis is not described as worth seeking by 'being' (but only in itself, apart from the relation) 'good' differs from 'being' in its formal sense.¹

¹ Cajetan's reply amounts, in sum, to this: the deeper basis on which a thing is good is not that it is sought but that it is complete. Completeness can be described in terms of being, but it is described as worth seeking only when it is described as good. The utterly general sense of 'good' established in this article will be broken down in several ways later:

- into what fulfills (*bonum honestum*), what is enjoyed (*bonum delectabile*), and what serves (*bonum utile*);
- into zones of good attractive to particular species, such as *bonum humanum* (what is sought by humans);
- into particular good and common good, according as the beneficiary is an individual or a larger system. 'It is good that the spider eat the fly' asserts a larger beneficiary (the ecosystem).
- into physical good and other kinds, such as moral good.

* *formaliter*
† *fundamentaliter*

lectio 1

c.1;
1094a.3

c.4;
73a.35-40

* *appetitus*

c.7;
418a.27ff

Does "good" have explanatory priority over "being"?

In *I Sent.* d.8, q.1, a.3; 3 *CG* c.20: *De Veritate* q.21, a.2 ad 5; a.3

* *secundum rationem* It would seem that "a good" has explanatory* priority over "a being."¹

(1) The ranking of terms goes according to the ranking of the things they mean. Well, among the terms for God, Denis puts 'good' ahead of 'being', as you can see in c. 3 of *De divinis nominibus*. [So what 'good' means comes ahead of what 'being' means.] Therefore, good has explanatory priority over being.

(2) Besides, what has broader extension has explanatory priority [over what is wholly contained within it]. But 'good' has broader extension than 'being' because, as Denis says in c. 5 of *De divinis nominibus*, "good extends to things existing and not existing, while being extends only to things existing." Therefore, good has explanatory priority over being.

(3) Moreover, what is more universal has explanatory priority [over the more particular falling under it]. But good seems to be more universal than being, because the good has what it takes to be sought, and for some people, at least, non-being is worth seeking. Look at what it says about Judas in Mt. 26:24, "it were better for him if that man had not been born," etc. So good has explanatory priority over being.

(4) Also, it is not only being that is worth seeking but also life and wisdom and many such things. It seems, then, that being is a particular object for seeking, whereas good is the universal object. Good is unqualifiedly prior, then, to being, in explanatory order.

ON THE OTHER HAND, it says in the *Liber de causis* that "the first of created things is being."

ANSWER: "being" has explanatory priority over "good." The explanatory force which a term carries is what scientific understanding grasps about a thing and indicates through the term. To be prior in explanation, then, is to be prior in falling under the intellect's conceiving. Well, what falls first under the mind's con-

¹ The issue is priority as to *ratio*. The reason a thing is ϕ = what science grasps of a ϕ -thing and means by calling it ϕ = the explanatory makeup of a ϕ -thing as ϕ = what we can understand of what it takes to be ϕ = the explanatory force of the term ' ϕ '. ϕ was counted prior in *ratio* to ψ in case ' ϕ ' had to be used in defining ψ scientifically, but not *vice-versa*. Such was always the case when ϕ -things were the genus containing a ψ -species, because the genus-term was used in defining the species but not *vice-versa*. Thus, if the beings are a "species" of the goods, as objections (2) – (4) allege, the rule will require that good be prior in *ratio* to being. On the other hand, if good things are just one kind of being (and bad things are another), being will be prior in *ratio* to good. Aquinas rejected both answers by holding that 'good in a way' and 'being' are co-extensive. How, then, would the rule of explanatory priority apply? That was the issue here.

ceiving is being; for each thing is knowable just as far as it is in act, as *Metaphysics IX* says. So being is the distinctive object of understanding; it is the first item attained by intellect, as sound is the first attained by hearing. In explaining things, then, being is prior to good.

c 9;
1051a 31

TO MEET THE OBJECTIONS — *ad* (1): Denis ranks the terms for God insofar as they involve Him in a causal relation. As he says [in *De div. nom.* c. 1], we name God from creatures as we describe a cause from its effects. Well, since the good has what it takes to be sought, it has the status of a purpose,* and a purpose is the cause that causes first. For an agent only acts to achieve a purpose,[†] and matter is moved to form by an agent, and so purpose is called the "cause of causes." In terms of causing, then, good is prior to being as purpose is prior to form; this is why, among terms conveying divine causality, 'good' is put before 'being'.

PG 3, 596

* *finis*
† *causa finalis*

Another reason is that the Platonists did not distinguish matter from privation; so they called matter a not-being; as a result, they said that participation in the good was more extensive than participation in being. Their ground was that prime matter participates in the good, since it seeks itself (and a thing only seeks what is like itself), but does not participate in being, since it is posited to be a not-being. And this is why Denis says that good "extends to things . . . not existing."

Hence an answer emerges *ad* (2).

Alternatively, one may say that good "extends to things existing and not existing" as a cause, not as a predicate — provided we let 'things not existing' mean things in potency rather than act (as opposed to letting it mean items that utterly are not). For the good has what it takes to be an end, and an end is such that not only do things in act rest in it but also things in potency are moved towards it. Being, however, involves no causal relation except that of a formal cause, inhering or exemplary; and a formal cause is such that its causality does not extend beyond things which *are* in act.

ad (3): non-being is not worth seeking for itself but on an accidental basis, namely, in case the removal of an evil is sought, and the evil is removed by one's not-being. But look: the removal of an evil is not worth seeking unless the evil is depriving one of some [positive] being. What is sought for itself, therefore, is being, while non-being is sought only incidentally, in case some [form of] being is sought that one cannot bear to be deprived of. Thus it is only by accident that non-being is also called good.

ad (4): life, knowledge, and other traits are sought in the status of being-in-act; in all of them, what is sought is a being. Thus nothing has what it takes to be sought but a being; so nothing is good but a being.

Cajetan's Commentary

In the title, 'explanatory priority' means priority in the order obtaining between the scientific definitions of terms. Since 'being' and 'good' are distinct in their definitions, they must be ordered in some way by their definitions, and that must surely be by the ordering that is naturally suited to arise between scientific accounts. This ordering is called explanatory order [or: the order of reasons-why], providing a prior-and-posterior *in explaining*. * This order arises from the fact that a posterior definition *D*₂ presupposes a prior definition *D*₁ in itself, but not *vice-versa*. So the force of the question is: does the reason why a thing is good, thanks to what it is, come prior to the reason why it is a being?

* *secundum rationem*

Analysis of the article

ii. In the body of the article there is one conclusion answering the question: being has explanatory priority over good. — This is supported as follows. [*Antecedent*:] Each thing is knowable so far as it is in act. [*1st inference*:] So being is the distinctive object of intellect. † intelligibile [*2nd inference*:] So being is the first such object¹. [*3rd inference*:] So being is what falls first within the intellect's conceiving. [*4th inference*:] Hence being has explanatory priority over good.

1051a 31

The antecedent is supported by *Metaphysics IX*. The first, second, and third inferences are left as obvious. The fourth is supported: the explanatory force that a term carries is what is conceived about a thing by the intellect. — All points are clear. For the argument concludes that, in the scientific account of things, being is prior not only to good but to all other traits as well.

Which is first, being or God?

iii. A doubt arises about this argument. Does it mean that being is first in the intrinsic² order of explanation, or first for us?

‡ *secundum se*

• If it means first in the intrinsic order, it conflicts with what Aquinas said in q.3, a.5. There he claimed [in the *sed contra*] that nothing is prior to God, either in the real or in the order of explanation. But from what he says now, it follows that being is prior to God in the order of explanation. For if being is the first intelligible as sound is the first audible, other things have to be posterior intelligibles, as one sees from *Posterior Analytics I*, where it says that if ϕ belongs *first* to a thing, then other traits belong to it because of ϕ .¹

c.5, 74a 35ff?

• If, however, the argument just means that being is first in the order of intelligibles for us, it is not giving a satisfactory answer to the question. What was in doubt was whether the intelligible makeup of a being is intrinsically prior to the intelligible makeup of a good, not whether it is prior for us.

¹ So if being belongs-as-object, *first* to the intellect, then other items belong-as-objects to intellect because of being.

iv. This difficulty can be disposed of in two ways:

(1) First, one may observe that [what it takes to be a] being can be compared to other items of its own order, that is, to *other formal accounts*, and it can also be compared to *things themselves as they subsist*.

• If what it takes to be a being is compared to other accounts (taking 'accounts of things' as contrasting with 'things themselves'), then indeed [what it takes to be a] being is intrinsically the first thing attained by intellect, and all others are posterior in being so attained. But these others do not include the what-He-is of God. For what-God-is [in exercised act] cannot be an account without being a thing; it cannot abstract from existence, because it is *esse* itself.

• But if what it takes to be a being is compared to both accounts *and* things, then it is not unqualifiedly the first thing attainable by an intellect; rather divineness is the first thing attainable. Intelligibility is in God first, before it is in being; indeed, intelligibility is in being because it is in God. For God is not intelligible by participation.

And thus both texts [q.3, a.5 and this article] come out right. In the former he was saying that God is *absolutely* first according to the order of explanation. Here he is saying that [what it takes to be a] being is first *among formal accounts*.

(2) Secondly, one can say that there is an ambiguity here as to what 'for us' is supposed to modify. It can modify either 'order' or 'intelligibles'.

• If it modifies 'order', then the ordering of intelligibles as we acquire them is being contrasted with their own intrinsic ordering; and this is how the objection proceeds. My response is that the argument in this article intends to speak of the intrinsic order. As is clear from the title, the question here is not about what comes after what in our learning process, but about explanatory order, that is, which term's scientific definition is prior.

• If 'for us' modifies 'intelligibles', then it contrasts what we can understand with what we can't. To the objection so construed, my response is that the issue here is things intelligible to us, or by us. The topic is the intrinsic order among the intelligibles we attain. Being is the intrinsically first intelligible among those we attain, while God is the first without qualification.

This last interpretation squares with the text on its surface, since it speaks about the object of our intellect, bringing in the issue of the sense carried by a word. But this does not prevent the inferences in the text from being read as holding good for any being's intellect as such, no matter whose, since being is the proper object of intellect generally. But if each intellect is taken according to its distinctive nature, each gets its own distinctive object: the divine intellect gets divineness; an angelic one gets the angel's own substance; the human intellect gets the what-it-is of a material thing, etc. These points will come out below, in the proper places.

Is every being good?

In 1 Sent. d.8, q.1, a.3; 2 *CG* c.41; 3 *CG* c.20;
De Veritate q.21, a.2; *In Boethii De Hebdomadibus*, lectio 2

Apparently not.

a.1 (1) After all, [in ‘good being’] ‘good’ is adding [its own definition] to ‘being’, as came out above. But terms that add something to ‘being’ extend more narrowly. Look at ‘substance’, ‘quantity’, ‘quality’, and the like. So ‘good’ extends more narrowly than ‘being’. Not every being, then, is good.

(2) Besides, no evil is good. Isaiah 5:20 says, “Woe to them that call evil good, and good evil!” But some beings are called evil. So not every being is [to be called] good.

(3) Also, a good has what it takes to be sought. Prime matter does not have this; it only seeks. Ergo prime matter does not have what it takes to be good. Therefore, not every being is good.

c.2; 996a 29 (4) Furthermore, Aristotle says in *Metaphysics III* that [the talk of] good has no application in mathematics. But mathematical items are beings of some sort, or else there would be no scientific knowledge of them. Ergo, not every being is good.

ON THE OTHER HAND, every being which is not God is a creature of God. But “every creature of God is good,” as it says in I Timothy 4:4, and God Himself is supremely good. Therefore, every being is good.

a.1 I ANSWER: every being, insofar as it is a being, is good. For every being, insofar as it is a being, is in act and in some way complete, since every act-state is a completion. But what is complete has what it takes to be sought and to be good, as came out above. So it follows that every being, insofar as it is such, is good.

¹ The chain of implications in this short corpus runs quasi-conversely to the chain in article 1. It goes thus:

(x)(x is a being \supset x is in act in some way)
 (x)(x is in act in some way \supset x is complete in some way)
 (x) \exists (x is complete in some way \supset x has what it takes to be sought by y in some way)
 (x) \exists (x has what it takes to be sought by y in some way \supset x is good in some way).

By transitivity, any being is good in some way. Notice that there are no modalities here; see footnote 3.

TO MEET THE OBJECTIONS — *ad* (1): ‘substance’, ‘quantity’ and ‘quality’ (and the kinds contained under these categories) are narrower than ‘being’ because they apply it to some quiddity or nature. ‘Good’ does not work like that. What it adds to ‘being’ is not the sense of a nature but just the sense of being worth seeking and complete, and these belong to a being* itself in whatever nature it may be found. Thus ‘good’ does not extend more narrowly than ‘being’.

* *ens*

ad (2): no being is called evil insofar as it is a being, but insofar as it lacks being-some-way;¹ thus a man is called evil because he lacks the being that is being-virtuous, and an eye is called bad insofar as it lacks sharpness of vision.

† *quodam esse*

ad (3): as prime matter is not a being except in potency, so it is not good except in potency.

Of course, one could say with the Platonists that prime matter is a not-being, because of the lack involved in it. But even on their showing, it gets something from a good by participation, namely, its relation or aptitude to good, thanks to which, while it is hardly an object sought, it does seek [the good of a form].

ad (4): mathematical items do not subsist as things separate [from matter] in existence.² If they did subsist, there would be good in them, namely, their existing. But mathematical items are separate only in definition, insofar as they are removed by abstraction from change and from matter. And thus they are also abstracted from what it takes to be a purpose, or to have one, since a purpose has what it takes to be an inducer of change.²

‡ *secundum rem*

That good or what it takes to be good is not found in something *defined* as a being [*i.e.* a mind-created item thought up as a being] is not a problem, because, as said above, the definition of ‘being’ is prior to the definition of ‘good’.³

² To abstract from change was to abstract from relations to every factor that causes change; being a purpose was the first of these.

³ Co-extentionality between being-a-being and being-good-in-some-way is not a conceptual necessity. One can *think* of x as a being without thinking of it as good in some way.

Cajetan’s Commentary

In the body of the article, a single conclusion gives the question a yes-answer: every being, insofar as it is a being, is good. The ‘insofar as’ clause is added to show that being-good attaches to every being not acci-

dentally but *per se* [*i.e.* to show that every being is good thanks to its being a being]. — This answer is supported as follows. Every being, as a being, is in act; so [*1st inference:*] it is complete [in that way]; so [*2nd inference:*]

it has what it takes to be sought [in that way] and is good [in that way]. — All the points are clear. The first inference is supported on the ground that every act-state is a completion [*i.e.* a case of being completed in some line].

Mathematical items: an exception?

ii. In the answer *ad* (4), notice that the text says two things. (1) It confirms that mathematical items are not evaluated and assigns a reason why not. (2) It answers the objection.

in a.5

The ground for (1) is a fact which will come out shortly, namely, that things are good either because they *exist*, or because they *are thus-and-such*, or because they are ordered to a good. Mathematical items as such are removed from all of these. They are removed from existence because, as mathematical objects, they do not exist; they are removed from being *thus-and-such* for the same reason, because being *thus-and-such* presupposes existing; and they are removed from ordering to a good because they abstract from purpose. This last is supported: a purpose has what it takes to induce change, while mathematical items abstract from matter and change.

Two doubts already

iii. Concerning this part two doubts arise. The *first* is about the argument that mathematical items lack even the most preliminary goodness because they do not subsist apart [from matter] as entities. If this argument is sound, no item taken as a universal is good, since no item taken as a universal subsists apart, according to us Aristotelians. But the consequence is false [*e.g.*, wisdom is called good]. Ergo [the argument is unsound].

The *second doubt* is about the claim that mathematical items are removed from [having or being] a purpose because they abstract from matter and change, and because a purpose has what it takes to induce change. This argument seems faulty on two counts:

(a) because it would follow that metaphysical entities are removed from [having or being] a purpose, too, since they stand apart from matter and change even more than mathematical items; [but this consequence is false: the angels are metaphysical entities and have God, another such entity, as their purpose];

(b) because it equivocates on 'change'. A change or motion which a purpose induces is not change/motion in the proper sense (which is what a mathematician abstracts from) but in a metaphorical sense.

So, while Aquinas' conclusion may be true, his argument for it is worthless.

iv. To ANSWER THE FIRST DOUBT, I should say that mathematical items can be looked at in two ways:

(1) First, one can look at them just as abstract universals, independently of their mathematical nature. As so regarded, one talks of their being and goodness the same as one talks of natural-science universals. Triangle abstracts from existence the same way as whiteness does, no more, no less. Considered this way, abstract items can be called good in the same sense in which they may be said to exist, namely, as individual cases

of them exist in the real. But this is not the regard in which they are presently under discussion.¹

(2) Second, one can look at them in their nature as *mathematical items*, subject to *this kind* of abstraction. When they are regarded in this way, one does not talk of them the same as other universals.

To see why not, consider this: all universals are alike in not subsisting as universals, but there is still a huge difference between natural-science universals, mathematical ones, and metaphysical ones as to how subsisting is involved in their contents as removed from matter. [The contents of] metaphysical universals, considered according to the removed-from-matter status unique to them, do subsist: they have individual cases in the real which are independent of all matter, empirical or intelligible. The separate intelligences are clear examples. [The contents of] mathematical universals, however, considered according to the removed-from-matter status unique to them, do not exist: they have no individual case existing in the real independently of empirical matter. One does not find "this line" except as this edge of this empirical body. [The contents of] natural-science universals, meanwhile, have no removed-from-matter status unique to them; they have only the one that is common to all objects-of-knowledge and to all objects-of-whatever-else universals are (*i.e.*, the status in which the universal abstracts from the particular); but they obviously subsist in the real so long as they have individual cases with empirical matter.

So, when Aquinas says that mathematical items do not subsist, he should not be interpreted as saying that mathematical universals taken just as universals do not subsist (since this would be a ridiculous point to bring forward as the reason they are not evaluated); rather, he should be interpreted as saying that mathematical items as such, taken as particulars, do not subsist. To put the point a little differently, a mathematical item as *such* does not have an individual existing in the real. Hence mathematical items do not exist *either* in the universal or in the particular — and this is why they cannot be evaluated as good. This cannot be said about other items universally taken. Thus it becomes clear why the consequence drawn in the first doubt is worthless, and why it is said of mathematical items in a unique sense that they "do not exist."²

¹ The term 'universal' did not describe any *thing*, though it described certain objects-of-thought, objects-of-knowledge, etc. A universal arose as the product of an intellect's "act" of abstracting. Outside the intellect, there might be real things structured in the very way captured by a universal, but no structure in those things was itself a universal. Rather, an understood content was "universal" in its status as *understood* (as which it could be predicated of many), not in its extramental status as a structure-of-a-thing (as which it was neither predicabile nor in many). Replace 'universal' with 'model', and the idea translates nicely into contemporary terms. An act of understanding *x* produces a model \mathcal{M} of *x*; as a thing in the real, *x* is a suitable interpretation of \mathcal{M} ; the sameness of content/structure (isomorphism) between *x* and \mathcal{M} is the reason why *x* is an interpretation of the model; but no real component of *x*, structural or otherwise, is itself a model.

² If one speaks of "a particular horse," one means the sort of

v. To ANSWER THE SECOND DOUBT, I should say that words are always to be interpreted in keeping with the subject matter under discussion. Thus it is true that the general inference

x abstracts from matter and change; therefore
x abstracts from being or having a purpose

is not sound, as one can see from *Metaphysics XII*, text 37, where purpose is posited among unchangeable things; nevertheless this more specific inference

mathematical items abstract from matter and change;
therefore they abstract from being or having a purpose

is sound. Mathematical items are not suited to be or have a purpose other than a terminus of matter and change, because apart from the mind* they are nothing but physical bodies. If they abstract from matter and change, they have to abstract from a terminus of matter and change; and if they abstract from being or having a purpose of that kind, they abstract from being or having a purpose at all, because they are not naturally suited to be or have any other kind.

* *secundum rem*

From here one can also see how to answer the other contention [that Aquinas equivocated on 'change']. When he says, "a purpose has what it takes to induce change," the talk of inducing change can be taken to mean just pure final causality, and then (I concede) a purpose is a "change inducer" in a different sense of 'change' from the literal sense. But that is not how the talk is being taken here. — Rather, the talk of inducing change can also be taken to mean both final causality and its effect, and then it is equivalent to saying "cause of change." This is how it is being taken in this context, and there is no equivocation. Both occurrences of 'change' are being used in the literal sense, and what kind of purpose the [bodies underlying] mathematical items have is being specified. It is as if he said: a purpose of mathematical items would have what it takes to induce change, *i.e.* to cause change in the proper sense,

thing that exists in the least controversial sense of 'exists': a physical thing. But if one speaks of "a particular triangle," and one means by this a mathematical entity, then one cannot mean a physical thing; one has to mean something like the Euclidean equilateral triangle of height *h*, an item in the Euclidean model of space, which may (or may not) have physical things in physical space as an interpretation. Likewise, if one speaks of "a particular number," one has to mean something like 3, which (whatever it is) is not identical with any physical trio. Again, "a particular set" may have a physical individual as its only member, such as the set of my dogs; but precisely as a set, *this* set cannot be this dog. Thus mathematical particulars, if they are "things" at all, are not the sort of things which exist in the uncontroversial sense exemplified by physical bodies and their productive causes. One can be a mathematical Platonist, of course, and assign to these particulars a higher kind of existence in a mind-independently real but non-physical realm. But if one thinks as Aristotle did, that mathematical items are *conceived*, reached by abstraction from physical things, then one will have to accept something along the lines of Cajetan's idea, namely, that there is a kind of abstraction from material things which yields universals whose particulars are not mind-independent existents.

just like a purpose of natural bodies; therefore, if mathematical items abstract from matter and change, they abstract from purpose. — And thus both objections are solved from the same root principle.

On the second part of the answer *ad* (4)

vi. The other thing said in the answer *ad* (4) takes care of the original objection, which took the syllogistic form of Felapton and went like this: no mathematical items are "good"; all mathematical items are beings; therefore some beings are not good.

St. Thomas' answer comes from denying the validity of the argument, on the ground that it commits a fallacy of figure-of-speech; it goes from beings *in a sense* [in the minor] to beings *in the full sense* [in the conclusion]. For 'mathematical items' seems to mean entities but in fact means entities-thus-abstracted. Thus, in the text Aquinas both rejects the conclusion drawn (that some beings are not good) and grants the conclusion that should have been drawn, namely, that certain beings as they stand under this sort of abstraction are not good. As the text also says, this conclusion is not a problem, because what it takes to be a being abstracts from what it takes to be good. In much the same way, what it takes to be human is [intelligible] prior to [understanding] risibility; so, man can be taken in some prior abstraction (prior because it keeps points true of man *per se* in the first sense of '*per se*') in which man would be rational animal but would not have his sense of humor [cf. the average taxpayer]. It does not follow that

therefore some man has no sense of humor
but that

therefore some [talk of] man abstracts from his sense of humor in some prior consideration in which it does not abstract from what it takes to be human.

A doubt about this part

vii. As for this part of the answer, doubt arises as to how the following two propositions can both be true:

(1) formally speaking, mathematical items do not exist either in act or in potency

(as I suggested above) and

(2) these items have what it takes to be beings.

After all, one does not describe anything as a being but what exists in act or in potency.

The SHORT ANSWER is that these two propositions are consistent when rightly understood. For (1) does not deny existence from every angle but denies it from *this angle*, namely, in this sort of abstraction. A triangle abstracted from empirical matter neither exists nor can exist in this way in the real. This is what Aquinas is saying in the first part of the answer. — What (2) affirms vaguely is some existence. But of course a general claim that ϕ -things are beings is consistent with a denial that they are beings in this one way, because it can come out true for them in another way of existing. Mathematical items,

therefore, are not beings in this way [*i.e.* in the way in which they are mathematical] but are beings in some way.³

viii. Suppose one pushes the objection further. — In the same vein, one should say that mathematical items are not good in this particular way but are good in some way; hence Aquinas spoke badly in saying they are flatly not good. — This rejoinder is to be rejected. In order for an item to have *form-wise* what it takes to be a being, it suffices that, in itself, it be such as not to conflict with existing in the real (however that might come about, whether in keeping with its own mode of abstraction or not). But in order for an item to have

³ Cajetan's answer gives "being"-status to mathematical items indirectly, *via* the physical things from which they are abstracted and which they model. This answer will work for the parts mathematics with a physical interpretation — the only parts studied up to Cajetan's age — but not for the vast array of abstract groups, abstract spaces, infinite sets, transfinite numbers, *etc.*, studied in mathematics today. To account for these, not as objects of fantasy but as objects of scientific knowledge, one will have to choose one's path carefully.

One choice would be to liberalize Aristotle's *dictum* that "science" is of what is (beings). One will say that there is science both of beings and of the conceptions which arise in modelling beings and in generalizing the models. Since mathematical items inhabit these models or their generalizations, one will no longer need to reckon them as beings in order to make them targets of scientific knowing (and thus one will have no further difficulty in explaining why they are not evaluated as good, if every being is good).

Nevertheless, one may still want to say (as Cajetan is about to say in the next paragraph) that mathematical items retain a connexion with being, in that they are models of logi-

form-wise what it takes to be good, more is required: the item has to be taken as *ordered* to existing or to a purpose, *etc.* Now, the triangle and other mathematical items, according to their quiddities, have this trait that they do not conflict with existing, and hence they retain *form-wise* what it takes to be beings. But because they are not considered as ordered to existing or to a purpose in the real, they abstract *form-wise* (though not *basis-wise*) from what it takes to be good. Thus what it takes to be "good" is said not to be in them.

A clear indicator of this is the fact that, in mathematics, no item is shown to have a property so as to be good, or to be better. No mathematical demonstration is made by way of a final cause or an efficient cause (both of which look to being in the real). All are made by way of a formal cause only. This is a clear indicator, because [having or being a] final cause is the hallmark of good, while [having or being a] formal cause is the hallmark of being.

cally possible beings.

Ah, but beware. A Platonist will say that a logically possible being is a logically possible good, and he will say so rightly on the assumption that the premises used in aa. 1 and 3 are necessary truths; for then the co-extensionality between being-a-being and being-good-in-some-way will be a necessary co-extensionality. To escape this move without liberalizing Aristotle's *dictum*, a Thomist need only point out that the premises are *not* necessary truths. They are universal truths about the actual world, wherein everything is God or a creature of His. In such a world, everything does have what it takes to be sought by another. But consider the possible world in which everything is a number. The inhabitants are infinitely many, but none seeks any "completeness" found in another. After all, 2 could hardly seek something in 3 without seeking its own non-being.

By being good, does a thing have what it takes to be a cause of the purpose type?

In I Sent. d.34, q.2, a.1 ad 4; 1 CG c.40, De Veritate q.21, a.1; In De divinis nominibus c.1, lectio 3, In II Physicorum, lectio 5

By being good, a thing does not seem to have what it takes to be a purpose,* but another kind of cause.¹

* *causa finalis*

PG 3, 701

(1) As Denis says in chapter 4 of *De divinis nominibus*, “The good is praised as beautiful.” But [beauty has to do with form; so] the beautiful involves the where-withal to be a formal cause. Therefore, by being good a thing has what it takes to be a formal cause.

PG 3, 700

(2) Also, good is diffusive of its own being, as Denis suggests by saying, “The good is that whence all things subsist and are.” But diffusing a trait involves the where-withal to be an efficient cause. So, by being good, a thing has what it takes to be an efficient cause.

PL 34, 32

(3) Furthermore, in book I of *De doctrina Christiana* Augustine says, “Because God is good, we exist.” But we come from God as from an efficient cause. So a thing’s being “a good” implies that it has the where-withal to be an efficient cause.

ON THE OTHER HAND, there is Aristotle’s point in *Physics II*: “that for whose sake other things are is their purpose, as it were, and their good.” Thus, by being a good, a thing has what it takes to be a cause of the purpose type.

c.3,
195a.23

ANSWER: since the good of all things is what they seek, and what anything seeks has what it takes to be a purpose[†] it pursues, it is obvious that a thing’s good involves what it takes to be its purpose[†].

† *finis*

It is also true, however, that having what it takes to be a thing’s good presupposes having what it takes to be an efficient cause and what it takes to be a formal cause. For we see that what comes first in the process of causing is the last thing to emerge in the product caused. A fire, for example, in its causal action, first heats something and then induces in it the very form of fire; yet the fire induced, in its own make up, first has its substantial form and as a consequence has heat. So, in a process of causing, the first item we find is a good and a purpose, and this moves the agent. The second item we find is the agent’s action as an efficient cause, moving something towards a form; the third item to appear is the form itself. So in the product caused, the order of emergence must be the reverse: first comes the form itself, thanks to which the product is a being; second, there emerges in it a power to act upon other things,[‡] in having which the product is complete in existing (since a thing exists in a finished way when it can produce a thing similar to itself, as Aristotle says in *Meteorology*

‡ *virtus effectiva*

¹ A *causa finalis* was a purpose ρ “acting” as such, that is, attracting an agent x to pursue it. Depending on the nature of ρ , this attraction served to explain such facts as that x tends to acquire the property ρ , moves towards the place ρ , takes steps to complete the project ρ , etc. The content of ρ itself was

IV); thirdly, and as a result of its acts, the product reaches what it takes for it to be good, at which point a completeness is established in an entity.

380a 12ff

TO MEET THE OBJECTIONS — *ad* (1): ‘beautiful’ and ‘good’ indicate the same in the thing to which both are ascribed, because they [bespeak relations that] are based on the same reality, namely, the thing’s form. This is why a good thing is praised as beautiful. But the two terms differ in their defining makeup [*i.e.* in the relation it takes to verify them]. In being good, a thing relates to a power to seek,* since the good of all things is what they seek. As a result, since seeking is like motion towards a thing, “a good thing” has what it takes to be a goal. In being beautiful, however, a thing relates to a power to apprehend cognitively,[†] since those things are called beautiful whose apprehension pleases. As a result, since a sense is pleased with things duly balanced as with things similar to itself (since a sense, too, is a sort of balance,[‡] as are all our cognitive powers), “a beautiful thing” depends on due balance or proportion.[‡] And since cognition comes about by assimilation [of the knower to the known], and similarity has to do with form, a thing’s being beautiful is properly explained by its formal cause.

* *appetitus*

† *vis cognoscitiva*

‡ *ratio*

ad (2): good is called “diffusive” of its own being in the same way as a purpose is said to “move” things.

ad (3): any being with a will is called good insofar as it has a good will. For it is through the will that we use everything in us. Thus we do not call a person with a good brain “a good man,” but one with a good will. [God has a will and is called good on the same basis.] Well, willing relates to a purpose as to its proper object; so this quotation, “Because God is good, we exist,” alludes to a cause of the purpose type.

called a *finis* (end, goal); and because it had explanatory power, being something’s *finis* was reckoned as being a type of cause — a *causa finalis*. Because ‘purpose’ means both *finis* and *causa finalis*, it will be used here freely to translate either. Using ‘purpose’ also supports the link between being a *causa finalis* and being intended; hence this translator prefers it to ‘end’. See § *ii* in the commentary below.

² The Latin word ‘ratio’ not only meant reason (the faculty) and the reason for something (its explanation/definition) but also meant a proportion. The claim here that a sense power is a sort of *ratio* should probably be taken as an allusion to *De Anima III*, c. 2, where Aristotle said that a sense power is a sort of balance or proportion, since it is disturbed by excess. One is deafened by too loud a noise, blinded by too strong a light, etc. It follows that an object “pleasing” to a sense’s apprehension will be moderate in intensity. This sets a sort of minimal condition for “beauty.” I suppose, but can hardly have been intended as a full account without making an egregious equivocation.

426b 4

Cajetan's Commentary

In the title, 'have what it takes to be a cause of the purpose type' has two senses: in signified act, and in exercised act.

• If 'have what it takes' is understood in signified act, 'what-it-takes' is understood basis-wise: a good thing has the proximate basis for being a cause of the purpose type. The question is not whether "good thing" defines "cause of the purpose type" but whether it is the distinctive basis for being one. As to what does define it, the answer is in *Physics II* [c.3] and *Metaphysics I* [c.2], namely, "that for whose sake something comes to be or is the case." Thus the sense of the title is this: Is it upon being good that a thing acquires the further distinction of being that for whose sake?

194b 32ff;
1013a 32

• If 'have what it takes' is understood in exercised act, 'what-it-takes' is understood form-wise, and the sense of the title is this: Is a good thing's being good exactly why it is a purpose-cause in exercised act, that is, exercises attraction? For example, suppose one said that *A* is brought about (wholly or in some respect) because it is good. Would one thereby be stating the very trait that is rendering *A* a cause of the purpose type? In my opinion, this is the sense Aquinas intended. It is highly formal, worthy of his genius, and the point to which his answer gravitates.

On purposes as causes

ii. Re: the determination just made, take a moment to look at the light it sheds on the famous issue of whether a thing is a purpose-cause by being intended or by being achieved. If you are learning from this article (and from *Physics II*) that being good introduces what it takes to be a purpose in exercised act (which is also proved by experience, since every reason to act for the good or the better brings up a purpose), it must be the case that you call *A* your purpose for the same reason as you call *A* good. Well, as we already learned above, each thing is good and is called good form-wise because of being *esse*. So a thing has what it takes to be a purpose because it is to be. [Compare this with efficient causality.] A thing's form ϕ is the *reason* why it causes [this effect] efficiently, while existing is the *condition* under which ϕ belongs to an efficient cause. Now take an item *A* to exist is the *reason* why *A* causes [this effect] as a purpose, while being-intended is the *condition* under which the to-exist belongs to a purpose-cause: being-achieved, however, is not the purpose but the terminus and joint effect of *A* as a purpose-cause and of the one-intending-*A* as an efficient cause. One just needs experience of particular cases to see this, not an argument. When health is sought, it is sought *to exist* in one's body, not in intention, but with its natural being: when knowledge is sought, it is *to exist* in one's head in the same way: when a bath is sought, it is sought *to be had*, not as it "is" in intention but as it exists with its natural being. Thus *to exist* is the reason that an item is sought, and this being sought is identically its acting-as-a-purpose.* Of course no such *A* would ever act-as-a-purpose, at-

*finalizare

tracting to itself a seeker, unless it were being intended.¹ This is why achieving what moves us as an end is experienced by us as following [upon our intending it]. This, too, is the point that Averroes wanted to make in his comment 36 on *Metaphysics XII*. When this has been well penetrated, it solves all the difficulties that cluster around the intellect's abstracting the item *A*

- from the being it has outside the soul
- from the being it has as achieved or realized, and
- from the being it has in being intended,

in the manner just discussed.

Analysis of the article

iii. In the body of the article, two jobs are done: (1) the question is answered, and (2) a tacit objection is headed off. As to job (1), a conclusion answers the question with a yes: by being good, a thing has what it takes to be a cause of the purpose type. — This is supported as follows. An object sought has what it takes to be a purpose; a good is an object sought; so a good has what it takes to be a purpose.

iv. As to job (2), the tacit objection is this. It came out above that being good is more a matter of being a "last" [a final touch] than of being a "first." But now we are told that being good provides what it takes to be a purpose-cause, which very much involves being a "first," since the purpose is the cause that starts the other causes. So how can these two points be reconciled: that in being good, a thing should have at once what it takes to be a last and what it takes to be a first?

a.1 ad 1

To head off this objection, Aquinas puts down an answer and then supports it. The *answer* says: good is last in being and first in causing (though only the first half of this is put forward textually). The *supporting argument* goes thus. [Major:] What comes first in causing emerges last in being; [minor:] the purpose is first in causing; ergo it is last in coming to be. But the good has what it takes to be a purpose. Ergo [the good is first in causing and last in coming to be]. The major is supported by empirical evidence: the factor coming first in the causal process is the last to emerge in the thing caused. The case of fire and heat shows this. So, generally, what is first in causing is last in being.

v. In the major premise above, pay attention to the terms. Here 'first' and 'last' ascribe placement in an order of generation, and they refer to forms or form-like

¹ Aquinas inherited a figurative sense of 'intend', in which sub-rational things like fire "intend" the states or effects to which they have a natural tendency (*De principis naturae*, c.2; 1 ST q.49, a.1). But any such tendency was put into them, he said, by their intelligent designer (1 ST q.2, a.3). So only intelligent beings literally had intentions. When this point is put with Cajetan's claim that being-intended is the *conditio* of a *causa finalis*, it follows that only an intelligent being literally "has" a purpose-cause. A sub-rational thing can "have" a purpose only in the roundabout sense that an intelligent being aims it at one, by putting certain natural tendencies into it.

reasons which are sources of causing and of being. The phrase 'in causing' is taken in the sense in which it contrasts with 'in being'. What is being supposed here, then, is that there are two orders of generation among things, one in causing and one in being. In the former, A causes first, and then B causes. In the latter, X emerges in being first, and then Y emerges. The item that is prior in causing is the one whose causal action does not depend on the causal action of the other (but rather that of the other depends on its). Similarly, the item that is prior in being is the one whose existing does not presuppose the existence of the other (but *vice-versa*). What the major means to claim, then, is that an item prior in order of generation as to causing is posterior in order of generation as to being.

vi. As to the support for this major, observe that the order of things in being can be considered *generally* (and so it is taken in the major) and can be considered *specifically in one area*, say, among caused things (and so it is taken in the support for the major). From the order-in-being found between the sources of a prior cause and a posterior cause (say: heat and the form of fire in the thing produced), the argument sought to lead us to order-in-being more generally. It was not trying to infer the major from the supporting argument but just trying to show us that the order between items in being does not have to be the same as the order between them in causing (nor the other way about). And this is achieved adequately from the support given. To put the point another way, the argument sought to rise to these intelligible points from the testimony of things open to the senses, and this is well accomplished.

A difficulty

vii. As regards this major premise and the drift of the whole argument, a difficulty arises. What is under discussion here — order in causing and in being — is either in discussion across the board, or else in this regard and in this case.

- If the talk is meant across the board, the major is false. Here are two counterexamples:

- the ultimate purpose of all things (say, God) is first in causing; but He is not last in being; He is first in that order, too;

- in the very illustration used in the text of the article, the form of fire is not only first in being but also first in causing; for first the form of fire form-wise causes fire (be it the parent fire or the produced fire), and then heat acts as an efficient cause. The same holds in all cases: the form always comes first, both in being and in form-wise causing.

- If the talk is only meant in this regard, however, or in this case, then the argument does not get to where it was trying to go. It was trying to say how "good" relates to other things and causes across the board, not in this or that case.

viii. I should say in ANSWER that the talk here is of order (both in causing and in being) across the board. But the alleged difficulty is wrong.

- For one thing, it puts a wrong interpretation on the

major. We have no intention of saying that *numerically the same* item which is first in causing is last in being, coming after the very things it preceded in the order of causing (such a proposition is impossible; we never dreamed of it). We mean that the same *kind* of item (having the same form-like definition, whether specifically, generically, or analogously) is last in being, coming after the kinds of things it preceded in causing. In this way, the reason for goodness in God [*i.e.* His completeness] is first in causing [creatures] purpose-wise, and analogously the same reason for goodness [our completeness] is, in each thing created, the last to emerge in being, as becomes clear from article 1, in the answer to the first objection.

- For another thing, the objection perverts the empirical evidence brought forward in the body of the article. As I said a moment ago, empirical things were adduced here so that we might perceive (from the order in causing this, and the order-of-being in this thing caused) that the order in causing and the order in being are not the same. So, while the substantial form of fire is prior to heat in being and in causing something or other, it is not prior to heat in causing *this*, namely, this fire about to be kindled. For in the order of generation, heating* comes before the generation of the form of fire, because change¹ comes before generation. And yet the first item that this generated fire gets is the form of fire, and *its* heat follows upon *its* form, just as, in all cases, distinctive accidents follow upon a form.

ix. If you want to look more generally into order in empirical cases, pay attention to the fact that formal causality necessarily depends upon efficient causality, and the whole issue clears up. For even though the first item in this empirical thing is what-it-is (which pertains to a formal cause), no form or whateness truly exercises formal causality in the real unless it be from some efficient cause, which in turn has to be acting for a purpose. For since no form is a formal cause of itself but of something else (say, the composite), and every composite is from another (as said above in q.3, and as Averroes confirms in his comment 25 on *Metaphysics XII*), there has to be, ahead of every formal causality, an efficient causality; and ahead of that, a purpose-wise causality. But what is found to emerge in being is (1) a form in the cause and a likeness of that form in the effect, (2) an active power² in the cause and a share of it in the effect, (3) a goodness in the cause and a complement of it, a sharing in goodness, in the effect. And thus generally, the orders in being and in causing are converse.

x. To understand the last point in the body of the article, the beginner should know that it is alluding to two levels of completeness, *i.e.*, completeness *in being* and completeness *overall*. Completeness in being is a thing's being in a finished state as to what substance it is; completeness overall, which he says is reached in *x* through what makes *x* good, is the thing's unqualified or total finished state. This last goes with the thing's having what it takes to be unqualifiedly good, as was said above. For then nothing at all is lacking.

* *calcfactus*
† *alterius*

a.7

‡ *vis activa*

a.1 ad 1

Does what it takes to be good involve "amount, kind, and order"?

2/1 ST q 85, a.4, De Veritate q 21, a 6

* *modus* Having what it takes to be good does not seem to involve amount,* kind, and order.¹

(1) After all, goodness has a different explanation from being, as came out above. Amount, kind, and order seem to belong in an explanation of being. It says in Wisdom 11:21, "Thou hast disposed all things in number, weight, and measure," and to these one can reduce amount, kind, and order, according to the formula that Augustine gave in book IV of *Super Genesis ad litteram*: "measure fixes an amount for each thing, and number provides to each its species, and weight draws each to rest and steadiness." Therefore the explanation that involves "amount, kind, and order" is that of being, not that of goodness.

c.3,
PL 34, 299

(2) Amount, kind, and order are themselves goods. So if what it takes to be a good involves amount, kind, and order, the good which is "amount" will have to have its own amount/kind/order, and so will the goods of "kind" and "order." And so on *ad infinitum*.

(3) Further, evil is a privation of amount, kind, or order. But no evil takes away good completely. So what it takes to be good does not depend on amount, kind and order.

(4) Also, the factors involved in having goodness will be items that cannot be called bad. But one can speak of wrong amount, wrong kind, wrong order [all of which are bad]. So what it takes to be good does not involve amount, kind, and order.

(5) Furthermore, amount/kind/order are caused by weight/number/measure, as the above quotation from Augustine establishes. But not all goods have weight, number, and measure. Ambrose says in his *Hexaemeron I* that the nature of light "was so created as not to be in number, not in weight, not in measure." Ergo, what it takes to be good does not involve amount/kind/order.

c.6;
PL 14, 143

c.3;
PL 42, 553

ON THE OTHER HAND, there is what Augustine says in his book *De natura boni*: "These three — amount, kind, and order — are like general goods present in the things made by God; and they are present in such a way that, where these three are abundant, the goods are abundant; where they are slight, the goods are scant; and where they are absent, no good is present."

¹ Having used Aristotle's account of 'good' in aa.1-4, Aquinas now turns to confront Augustine's account (given in the *sed contra*). Could the two be harmonized?

**Modus* was a very broad word for anything's manner, level, or amount.

ANSWER: each thing is called "good" insofar as it is complete (since that is the basis on which it is sought, as said above). But a thing is called "complete" when nothing is lacking to it according to its own way of being complete. [A given kind of thing is complete in its own way when it is fulfilled in its kind, having all that its kind needs or implies. So the question is: when is this test met?] Well, each thing is what kind it is thanks to its form, and this form at once needs certain pre-requisites and necessitates certain consequences. Therefore, in order for a thing to be complete and good, it has to have *both* its form *and* the prerequisites thereof *and* the consequences. Well:

- prerequisite to the form is a fixing* or sufficient dispensing¹ of the causal conditions, material or productive, for such a form to arise. This is indicated by the word 'amount', and this is why Augustine says that "measure fixes an amount" for each thing.

- The form itself is indicated by the word 'kind', because each thing is put into its kind by its form. The reason it is said that "number provides to each its species" is that the definitions marking off kinds work like numbers: as the addition or subtraction of a unit changes the species to which a number belongs, so the addition or removal of a difference from a definition changes the kind [being defined], as Aristotle says in *Metaphysics VIII*.

- What comes in consequence of a thing's form is the thing's inclination to a [given type of] fulfillment,² or to a [type of] action, or the like. After all, each thing, insofar as it is in act, does something that suits it according to its form and tends toward what suits it. This is where "weight" and "order" come in.

Thus, as what it takes to be good involves completeness, it also involves amount, kind, and order.

TO MEET THE OBJECTIONS — *ad* (1): these three factors only attach to a being insofar as it is complete; and as complete, it is also good.

ad (2): amount, kind, and order are called "goods" only in the same sense as they are called "beings," *i.e.*, not in the sense that they themselves subsist, but in the sense that *by them* other things exist and are beings and are good. Hence they themselves do not need to have other factors whereby they are good. For they are not called goods in the sense of being form-wise good thanks to other factors but in the sense that they *are* the factors by which things are good. To take a similar case: whiteness is not called a being in the sense that, thanks to something else, it exists, but rather in the sense that *it is* the factor by which anything "is" a certain way, namely, white.²

² Aquinas is affirming the ontological difference be-

a.1

* *determinatio*
† *commensuratio*

c.3,
1043b.34

‡ *finis*

ad (3): any case of being is a case of being-according-to-some-form. So a [triple consisting of] amount, kind, and order attaches to any being that a thing has. Thus a man has amount/kind/order insofar as he *is* human, and has them again insofar as he *is* white, and has them again insofar as he *is* virtuous, and again insofar as he *is* knowledgeable, and so on for every trait truly affirmed of him. Now, an evil removes this or that case of being. Blindness removes being-sighted, for example. Thus it does not take away every [triple of] amount/ kind/order but only the one connected with being-sighted. [And the same goes for any other evil.]

tween the *things which* subsist and the factors/components *whereby* they are such and such. In medieval discussions, the former alone were “things” and “caused things” in the proper sense, as mentioned above in § ii of Cajetan’s commentary on q. 3, a. 7. Today, “things” are the values of first order variables; “wherebys,” the values of second-order variables.

ad (4): as Augustine says elsewhere in *De natura boni*, “every amount, insofar as it is an amount, is good” — the same can be said for kind and order — “but wrong amount, wrong kind, wrong order are so called either because they are less than they ought to be, or because they are mismatched to the things they are supposed to suit; they are called bad, then, in case they are out of place and incongruous.”

cc 22-23;
PL 42, 558

ad (5): the nature of light is said to be without number and weight and measure not absolutely but in comparison to corporeal things. For the power of light extends to all corporeal things insofar as it is an active quality belonging to the first change-inducing body (*i.e.* the first heaven).³

³ The first (outermost) heaven was thought to be causally prior to all other bodies. It was the body on which all other bodies depended in order to induce change. Hence its influence (light) extended to all other bodies. Better than the obsolete world-picture here is the recognition that light is primary and subject to measure.

Cajetan’s Commentary

In the title question, pay attention to the terms.

• ‘What it takes to be good’ — not a good *anything*, but a good *caused thing*, as will come out later: for these three factors have no place in God. Again: ‘what it takes to be good’ — not in any fashion but in the fashion of a *thing which* is good.¹

q. 6, a.1 *ad* 1

• ‘Amount, kind, and order’: one will find that St. Thomas has put these terms to three uses. Here in this article, he takes a thing’s “amount” [*modus*] to be enough of the causal sources for it (efficient or material); “kind” he takes as form, and “order” as inclination to something. But in 2/1 *ST* q.85, a.4, he takes ‘kind’ to mean form in the abstract, ‘amount’ to mean enough form (since species are “measured” like numbers), and ‘order’ to mean relation to something.² And in q.21 of *De Veritate*, he takes ‘kind’ to mean form, ‘amount’ to mean the measuring-up of a thing’s being* to its essence, and ‘order’ to mean the thing’s relation to what perfects it as its fulfillment (a relation included in what it takes to be good). These three uses seem to take ‘amount’ quite differently. But if one looks at them more closely, they converge to a point of agreement. For enough of a form’s causal requirements, the “enough” of form itself, and the measuring-up of being to essence imply each other. In order of generation, from

¹ The alternative is the fashion of a factor *whereby* a thing is good. See the answer *ad* (2) in this article.

² Here, “form in the abstract” meant ‘being-φ’, and its “measure” gave φ a definite value, which was a how-much of completeness. On how one form was more complete than another, see q.4, a.2.

such-and-such harmony among causal requirements comes a form of so-much completeness, and from that sort of form comes so-much being. At the same time, in order of completion or purpose: if an existence of so-much completeness is to be produced, then a form of so-much completeness and essence must be supposed. And if [one is to produce] this, then such-and-such disposition of the prior causal conditions [must be presupposed].

• The entire claim, ‘what it takes to be good *involves* amount, kind, and order’, can be taken two ways:
(1) as a claim about *essential parts*, as what it takes to be human involves animal and rational;
(2) as a claim about *integral parts*, not of the definition but of the matter it properly defines, as what it takes to be human involves flesh, bones, nerves. Sense (2) is how I understand the claim here that what it takes to be good “involves” amount, etc.

So the sense of the title is this: does what it takes to be a caused thing which is good involve a form, its antecedents, and its consequences, as the parts of the very “matter” defined as good?

Analysis of the article

ii. In the body of the article there is one conclusion, answering the question with a yes: what it takes to be good involves amount, kind, and order. — This is supported as follows. [*Antecedent:*] Each thing is what it is through its form, which needs some antecedents and brings consequences. [*1st inference:*] So what lacks nothing in the way natural to it has kind, amount, and order. [*2nd inference:*] So what is complete has these. [*3rd inference:*] So what is good needs these. — The

antecedent is obvious in both its parts. The first inference is clear from what 'kind', 'amount', and 'order' mean. The second inference is valid by the rule that allows one to replace a definiens [here: 'not lacking' *etc.*] with the term it defines [here: 'complete']. The third inference is supported by a reason: because completeness is the basis for being-an-object-sought.

iii. Concerning this conclusion a DIFFICULTY comes to mind. What about the good which is the very substance of an angel? How can there be an "amount" in the sense alleged (enough of the productive or material causal sources for it) in this case, when there are no material causes at all in angels, and when their only efficient cause is God, whose action is identically His substance?

The SHORT ANSWER is that there is "amount" of the angelic substantial good, in the sense expounded here, as to its productive causal principle, as follows.

"God acting" can be taken in two ways:

(1) as independent of anything else* — and so taken both He and His action are above all amount: * *absolutē*

(2) as being according to an *idea*, *ℳ* — and so taken God's action is so congruent to *ℳ* as to be incongruent with any other, just as *ℳ* itself is so distinctively the *idea* of *this* creature as not to be the *idea* of any other.³

In this latter way, the action producing Gabriel receives and provides the right "amount" for the existence and substantial good of Gabriel. Which suffices [to meet the difficulty]. One can also salvage "amount" of a material-causal source in the angels in this way: an angel's essence is like matter to its existence and "measures up" to it. But this discussion is more pertinent to one of the other uses of 'amount', since in this article (as is obvious from the text) amount is something that precedes form.

³ The divine *ideae* are discussed below, q. 15.

Is good suitably divided into upright, useful, and enjoyable?

2/2 ST q 145, a.3; In II Sent. d.21, q.1, a.3; In I Ethic., lectio 5

A division of the good into upright, useful, and enjoyable does not seem acceptable.

c.6, 1096a.23 (1) Aristotle says in book I of the *Nicomachean Ethics* that the good is divided into the ten categories. But the upright, the useful, and the enjoyable can be found in a single category. Thus, the good is not suitably divided into them.

II, c.3 (2) Besides, every sound division is into opposed sorts, but these three do not seem to be opposed. Upright things are enjoyable, and (as even Cicero says in *De Officiis*) no non-upright or base thing is useful — as they would have to be, if the division were into opposites, so that upright and useful would be opposed sorts. So, the above division is not acceptable.

(3) Furthermore, when one thing is for the sake of another, the two belong together as one. But the useful is only good for the sake of the enjoyable or the upright. Therefore, the useful should not be divided off against the enjoyable and the upright.

I, c.9; PL 16, 31 ON THE OTHER HAND, there is the fact that Ambrose used this division of the good in his own book *De Officiis*.

* *proprĕ* I ANSWER: taken literally,* this division seems to apply only to the human good. Yet, if one looks at what it takes to be good more deeply and more universally, one finds that this division does apply to the good as such, even literally speaking. For anything is “good” insofar as it is an object of appetite and serves as a terminus to a process of seeking. Well, such a process can be envisioned on the model of a material body’s movement and the termini of that movement.

The movement of a natural body terminates fully at the point where the motion stops; but taken in parts, it also terminates at any middle point through which it passes *en route* to the last point; and any such intermediate point is called a terminus of the

motion insofar as it marks the end of some part of it. At the same time, the ultimate terminus of a motion can be taken two ways:

- either as the very *thing* towards which the motion or change tends, such as a place or a form,
- or as the *resting* in that thing.

On this model, then, in a process of appetite, a sought object which terminates the movement of desire partially, as an intermediate point *via* which it tends to a further one, is called “useful.” An object sought as the last item, terminating desire’s movement fully, as a thing towards which appetite tends *per se*, is called “upright” (for so we call a good which is desired for its own sake*). What terminates the process of seeking as “rest” in the thing desired is “enjoyment.”

* *per se*

TO MEET THE OBJECTIONS — *ad* (1): insofar as ‘good’ is co-referential with ‘being’, division into the ten categories applies to it; but in terms of its own distinctive definition [*ratio*], this division applies.

ad (2): this division is not into opposed things but into opposed *reasons*. The things that are called merely “enjoyable” are those which have no other reason to be sought besides enjoyment, since they are sometimes both harmful and base. The things that are called “useful” are those which have no reason to be desired in themselves — like taking bitter medicine — but are desired solely as leading to something else. The things that are called “upright” are those that have in themselves a reason to be desired.

ad (3): good is not [a genus] divided into these three [species], as if ‘good’ were a univocal term equally predicable of each; rather, ‘good’ is an analogous term predicated according to a primary[†] [application] and secondary[‡] [applications]. Primarily, ‘good’ is predicated of the upright; secondarily, of the enjoyable; tertiarily, of the useful.

† *per prius*
‡ *per posterius*

Cajetan’s Commentary

The sense of the title question is clear. The body of the article yields two conclusions, one answering the question with the common opinion; the other, with St. Thomas’. The first is: this division applies literally to human good. The other is: this division applies literally to good as such. Both are supported as follows. [*Antecedent:*] Terminal points of bodily motion are suitably divided into points corresponding to the upright, the useful, and the enjoyable. So [*1st inference:*] the termini of appetitive “motion” are well divi-

ded into upright, useful, and enjoyable. So [*2nd inference:*] the good, too [is well divided into them]. — The antecedent is made clear by (1) a division of ‘the end-points of motion’ into complete and partial, and (2) a division of ‘complete end-point’ into (a) the very thing which ends motion, and (b) rest in it. The first inference is supported by the fact that a terminus of appetitive motion is informatively modeled by the stopping point of a bodily motion. The second inference rests on the fact that a good is that which is sought. All the points are clear.

Inquiry Six: Into the goodness of God

Now the inquiry turns to God's goodness. Concerning it, four questions are raised:

- (1) does being good apply to God? (3) is God alone good by essence?
(2) is He the supreme good? (4) are all things good with His goodness?

article 1

Does being good apply to God?

1 CG c 37. In XII Metaphys., lectio 7

Being good does not seem to apply to God.

^{1 ST q 5, a.5} (1) What it takes to be good involves amount, kind, and order. These seem not to apply to God, since God is [limitless and thus] without amount, and He is not ordered to anything. Therefore, being good does not apply to God.

(2) Furthermore, the good is what all things seek. But not all seek God; not all know Him, and nothing is sought unless it is known. Therefore, being good does not apply to God.

ON THE OTHER HAND, there is Lamentations 3:25, "Good is the Lord to them that hope in Him, to the soul that seeketh Him."

I ANSWER: being good applies most especially to God. For a thing is good insofar as it is sought. Each thing seeks its own complete state. But an effect's complete state along with its form is a likeness of the agent-cause that is producing it, since every agent produces something similar to itself.* So the agent cause itself is sought (what is sought about it is that its likeness be shared in) and so has what it takes to be good.¹ Since God, then, is

* For this claim, see fn. 1 in the commentary on the next article

¹ Given the *ratio* of 'good' (1 ST q.5, a.1), God is good just in case He is sought. To secure this, Aquinas lets 'x seeks y' be

the first efficient cause of all things, the wherewithal to be good and to be an object-sought belongs to Him. This is why Denis, in *De divinis nominibus*, attributes goodness to God as the first efficient cause, saying that God is called good "as one from whom all things subsist." c 4,
PG 3, 700

TO MEET THE OBJECTIONS — *ad* (1): amount, kind, and order pertain to what it takes to be a *caused* good. But in God the good is present as in its cause: His role is to impose amount, kind, and order on the rest. So these three are in God as in the cause of them.

ad (2): all things, by seeking their own completions, seek God Himself, in that all their completive traits are likenesses of the divine existence, as came out above. And thus, of the things that seek God 1 ST q 4, a.3

- some know Him as a distinct object* (this is unique to rational creatures); * *secundum se*
- some know certain participations of His goodness (this extends down to sense awareness);
- and some have natural tendency[†] without cognition, having been inclined to their completions[‡] by another who is a higher knower. † *appetitus naturalis*
‡ *fines*

true in case *x* seeks a state *C*, and *C* is a copy of *y*'s state, which *y* produces. If the copy is good, so is the original.

Cajetan's Commentary

The title question is clear. — In the body of the article there is a single conclusion, answering the question with a yes: God is good.

This is supported by an argument following the authority of Denis. It goes thus: [*antecedent:*] God is the first efficient cause of all things; [*1st inference:*] so He is an object sought; [*2nd inference:*] so He is good. The antecedent is assumed, but the first inference is supported by the following argument. [*Sub-antecedent:*] Each thing seeks its own distinctive completeness; [*1st conse-*

quence:] so it seeks a likeness of its efficient cause; [*2nd:*] so a *fortiori* the efficient cause is itself worth seeking; [*3rd:*] so if there is a first efficient cause, etc. — The [sub-] antecedent is obvious, and so are its consequences. The first [is obvious] because the distinctive completeness of a thing is a likeness of its agent cause. The second [is obvious] because every agent cause produces something similar to itself: so, if its likeness is worth seeking, the agent itself will be even more worth seeking. — The other points are clear.

article 2

Is God a supreme good?

In *II Sent.* d.1, q.2, a.2 ad 4; 1 *CG* c.41

It seems that God is not a supreme good.¹

(1) After all, 'supreme good' adds something to plain 'good' (otherwise it would apply to every good). But everything that turns out to be one-thing-added-to-another is composed. Thus a supreme good is composed. But God is utterly simple, as was shown above. Thus, God is not a supreme good.

1 *ST* q. 3, a.7

(2) Furthermore, "the good is what all things seek," as Aristotle said [in *Ethics I*, c.1]. But there is nothing that all things seek except God alone, who is the end of all.

1094a 3 Therefore, nothing else is good except God. The same point can be seen from Matthew 19: "no one is good but God alone." Well, in any set, a "supreme" member is so called by comparison to other members in the set, as a hot thing is called supremely so by comparison with other things that are hot. Therefore [since there are no other members in the set of goods], God cannot be called a supreme good.

Luke 18: 19;
Cf. Mt. 19: 17

(3) Again, "supreme" implies comparison. But things not sharing a common category cannot be compared. For example, one cannot rightly call sweetness "better than" a line, or "worse." So, since God is not in a common category with other good things (as one can see from points made above), it seems He cannot be called a supreme good compared to them.

q.3, a.5

ON THE OTHER HAND, Augustine says in Book I of *De Trinitate* that the Trinity of divine Persons "is the supreme God, seen by the most purified minds."

c.2;
PL 42, 822

* *simpliciter* I ANSWER: God is a supreme good overall* and not just in a given kind or a particular ordering. For 'good' is affirmed of God on the basis just discussed [in a. 1], namely, that all the completenesses which things desire flow out from Him as from their first cause. But they do not flow out from Him as from a univocal cause but (as is clear from points already made) as from an agent-cause which does not coincide with its effects in either specific or generic makeup. In the case of a univocal cause, what makes cause and effect alike is found in both in the same form,[†] but in an equivocal cause it is found in a more excellent form, as heat is in the sun in a higher manner than it is found in a fire here below. It must be the case, then, that since good is in God as in a first and non-univocal cause of all things, good is in Him in a more excellent manner. On this account, He is called a supreme good.

1 *ST* q. 4, a.3

† *uniformiter*

¹ The question being asked is not whether God is sought most (that will come up later) but whether He has the most of what it takes to be sought.

TO MEET THE OBJECTIONS — *ad* (1): what "supreme good" adds to plain good is not an absolute trait but just a relation. When a relation is applied to God in such a way as to say that He has a trait relative to creatures [like greater goodness relative to them], that relation is not a reality in God but in the creature; it applies to God only in thought.* To take a parallel case, when a thing *x* is called "a known object," it is so called relative to someone's knowing; but the nature of the relation is such that *x* does not really depend on the knowing; the knowing really depends on *x*. And thus there does not have to be any composition in a supreme good; others just have to fall short of it.²

* *secundum rationem*

ad (2): the statement that the good "is what all things seek" does not mean that each good thing is sought by everything; it means that whatever is sought meets the definition of 'good'.³ — As for the Gospel statement, "No one is good but God alone," it means good by essence. That issue is coming up next.

ad (3): things which are not in the same category are not comparable in any way, *provided* that each is in a different category. But when we say that God is "not in the same category" with other goods, it is not because He fits in a different category, but because He is beyond categorization and is the starting point for every category. And thus He is compared to the other goods as greater-than-they,[†] and this sort of comparison is what "supreme good" introduces.

† *per excessum*

² If *x* bore a relation to *y*, *x* was called the "subject" of the relation, and *y* was called its "terminus." Aquinas treated some relations as real (*relatio realis* or *secundum rem*) and others as thought-produced (*relatio rationis* or *secundum rationem*). Aquinas recognized that a relation could be real without positing anything in its terminus, but he thought that a real relation would typically posit something in its subject. The objector was taking advantage of this: if (he said) God were not just good but also *greater than creatures* in goodness, God would be the subject of a real relation and hence (as this relation would be distinct from His essence) composed. Aquinas denied that the greater-than relation is real in God but conceded that its converse (the creature's inferiority) is real in the creature. Aristotle had already provided 'x is known by y' as an example of a case where a relation is only in thought, but its converse ('y knows x') is real (since knowledge-of-x posits something real in the knower but not in x). The theory of relations will be discussed in q.13, a.7, and in q.28.

³ Aristotle did not say: if something is good, everything seeks it, which would have been: $\exists x (y) (\text{good } x \supset y \text{ seeks } x)$. He said: if anything seeks something, it is [that thing's] good: $(y) \exists x (y \text{ seeks } x \supset \text{good } x)$.

Cajetan's Commentary

In the title there is nothing problematic. 'Supreme ϕ ' adds [to ' ϕ -thing'] the highest one's greater-than relation [to other ϕ -things]. Thus talking about a supreme good is the same as talking about a good that is greater than all other goods, both in act and in potency.

Analysis of the article

ii. In the body of the article there is one conclusion, answering the question in the affirmative: God is a supreme good overall.

This conclusion is first clarified, then supported. It is clarified by distinguishing (without full discussion) between a supreme good overall and a supreme good of a given kind. We call a good supreme "of a kind" when it is greater than the others in that particular ordered set of things, as when we say that the supreme human good is happiness, which is greater than the other human goods. Ditto for other cases. But we call a good supreme "overall" when it holds the highest place across the whole spectrum of beings. This is why the adverb 'overall' is put into the conclusion.

The support is as follows. [*Antecedent:*] Being-good applies to God as to a first efficient and non-univocal cause of all things; [*1st inference:*] so it applies to Him in a most excellent manner; [*2nd inference:*] therefore He is a supreme good overall. — The antecedent emerges clearly in both its parts from the things already said. The first inference is supported by the difference-in-manner between how the effect pre-exists in a univocal cause and how it pre-exists in an equivocal or analogous cause: namely, that it pre-exists

- in the same manner in a univocal cause but
- in a higher manner in an equivocal cause.

Two ways to pre-exist in a cause in a higher manner

iii. One should observe, however. at this point, that there are two ways in which an effect can pre-exist in an equivocal cause "in a higher manner":

- (1) The one way is *both form-wise and power-wise*.*
- (2) The other way is *just power-wise*.

An example of the first is how light and transparency exist in heavenly bodies as compared to how they exist in lower bodies. An example of the second is how heat exists in the sun as compared to how it exists in lower bodies.¹ In the present context, we are speaking of how

an effect pre-exists in its cause not only virtually but also formally — so that God is "good" formally as well as virtually. The success of the reasoning rests on the fact that, either way, the trait pre-exists in the equivocal cause "in a higher manner" than in the effect. Thus the text speaks of the effect's being "in an equivocal cause" without distinguishing these ways. This was enough to prove the point intended, namely, that goodness applies to God in a most exalted manner. For it had already been established in the previous article that 'good' applies to God form-wise.

iv. In the answer to the second objection, notice that the answer depends on converting the proposition. "The good is what all things seek," to "What all things seek is a good of theirs."²

v. In the answer to the third objection, bear in mind that things belonging to diverse categories are being called non-comparable provided they are taken as such, that is, as being in diverse categories. After all, if they are taken according to some predicate in which they agree, they can be compared.³

wise or virtually hot) but is not hot in itself (*i.e.* not form-wise hot). But here the obsolete science is less important than another point.

By allowing being-virtually- ϕ to count as a way of being- ϕ , Thomism reduced the maxim that every agent "produces a thing similar to itself" to a truism. For suppose y is ϕ thanks entirely to the causal influence of x upon y . Then the maxim requires x to be ϕ *somehow*. And since this requirement can be met by x 's being just virtually- ϕ , the maxim reduces to this: every agent cause, x , produces something that x has what it takes to produce.

Once this point is appreciated, the two ways to be ϕ "in a higher manner" become clearer. The form-wise-and-power-wise way is

being-so- ϕ -as-to-have-what-it-takes-to-produce-some-level-of- ϕ -ness-in-other-things,

and this is what is under discussion here in the case of God and goodness; and this way of being- ϕ is quite plausibly called superior to being just plain ϕ . The virtually-only way is just having-what-it-takes-to-produce- ϕ -ness-in-other-things.

Calling this a "higher manner of being ϕ " is harder to accept, but it is what allowed Aquinas to say that the completive traits of all things are in God (q. 4, a. 2).

² In fact, the answer depends both on conversion and on switching the order of the quantifiers. See above, footnote 3 on the text of the article.

³ Such a predicate will have to be one that does not classify scientifically. Perhaps a geometrician likes tangent lines and chocolates, but the former more. He might say, "Lines are more interesting than sweetness."

¹ The medieval theory of heavenly bodies did not allow them to be hot in themselves. Hence the claim made here by Cajetan that the sun has what it takes to cause heat (*i.e.* is power-

* *formaliter et virtualiter*

Is it distinctive of God to be good by essence?

1 CG c 38; 3 CG c 20; *De Veritate* q.21, a.1 ad 1, a.5; *Compend. Theol.* c.109,
In Dionysii de divinis nom. c.4, lectio 1, c 13, lectio 1; *In Boethii de hebdomadibus*, lectiones 3-4

* *proprium* It seems that being good by essence is not a distinctive* trait of God.

(1) [Anything "is by essence" whatever is equivalent to its just being at all.] Well, being good is equivalent to just being, as we saw above, and being one is no less equivalent to just being. But everything there is' is one by its essence, as Aristotle showed in *Metaphysics IV*. So, everything there is' is good by its essence.

(2) Also, if "the good is what all things seek," and they all seek to exist, the very existing¹ of each thing is its good. But each thing [res] is a thing-there-is [ens] by its essence.² So each thing is good by its essence.

(3) In any case, everything is good by its goodness. Necessarily, then, if there is a thing which is not good by its essence, the goodness of that thing will not be its essence. Yet that goodness will be a being of some sort and will be good; if it is good by some other goodness, the question turns to that further goodness [and so on]. Either one must proceed to infinity, or else one must arrive at a goodness which is not good by another goodness [but by its own essence]. Hence, one would have done better to posit such a goodness in the first place. If so, each thing is good by its essence.

ON THE OTHER HAND, Boethius says in his *De Hebdomadibus* that all things other than God are good by participation. Hence, they are not good by essence.

ANSWER: only God is good by His essence. After all, each thing is called good insofar as it is complete. But the complete or finished state of anything meets three tests:

- (1) whether it is established in existence;
- (2) whether it acquires the accidents necessary to its full operation;
- (3) whether it reaches something else which is its goal or purpose.

Thus, to take the case of a fire, its first completeness is supplied by the existence it has thanks to its substantial form [*i.e.* its being fire]; its second complete-

¹ The word '*essentia*' was used to mean what-a-thing-is-by-its-scientific-definition. But in the first two objections, the objector was not appealing to usage but to the etymological fact that '*essentia*' had the same root as '*esse*'. To get the point in English, think of '*essentia*' as 'beingness'. Then the objector is thinking that a thing is ϕ "by its beingness" whenever its being- ϕ is equivalent to its just being at all.

² Again the assumption is that 'essence' means what its etymology would say. The argument is: "the very being of each thing is its good; but each thing is a being by its being-

ness is supplied by its hotness, lightness, dryness, and other such properties [through which it acts]; and its third completeness comes according to whether it rests in its [natural] place.³ Well, no creature passes this triple test of completeness by its essence. Only God does. He alone has an essence which is His very existing, and He acquires no accidental traits (since traits which are accidental accomplishments in others, like being powerful, wise, *etc.*, attach to God essentially, as became clear above); and He is not for the sake of anything else as a goal or purpose but is Himself the ultimate purpose of all things. Clearly, then, God alone has every measure of completeness by His essence. And as a result, He alone is good by essence.

TO MEET THE OBJECTIONS — *ad* (1): being-one does not involve what it takes to be complete, just undivided. Mere lack of division *does* belong to each thing by its essence: the essences of simple things are undivided both in act and in potency; the essences of composites are undivided only in act.⁴ It follows that everything is one by its essence. But being good is another story, as just shown. [So the bracketed premise fails.]

ad (2): each thing is indeed good insofar as it has existence, but the essence of a created thing is not its existence; hence it does not follow that a created thing is good by its essence.

ad (3): the goodness of a created thing, *x*, is not its very essence but something added to *x*. This is either the existence of *x*, or some further complete trait, or *x*'s order to its purpose. However, this goodness-of-*x* is in turn called "good" on the same basis as it is called a "being," and that basis is that, by it, *x* is [a being in some way], not that the goodness itself is [good or a being] by something else. So the goodness-of-*x* is called good because *by it* something, namely *x*, is good, and not because the goodness-of-*x* has another goodness whereby it is good.

ness; ergo . . ."

³ Prior to Newton, the tendency of heavy things to fall and of light things (like flames) to rise was explained by Aristotle's theory of "natural place." Things were thought to be naturally "at rest" and to find their rest in their natural place, as at their goal. Heavy things were thought to seek the center of the earth. Fire was thought to be the lightest element and to seek its natural place above the air. The theory is long obsolete, of course; but nothing in this article depends on it.

⁴ A form is impossible to divide; but according to Aquinas, it is only in pure spirits that the essence is just a form. In material things, the essence includes the matter which the substantial form is structuring. Insofar as this matter is divisible, the essence of a material thing, though undivided in act, is potentially divisible. Cf. Aquinas, *De ente et essentia*, c.2.

1 ST q.3, a.6

Cajetan's Commentary

In the title question, 'distinctive of God' contrasts with 'common to God and other things'.¹

• The phrase 'by essence' can be used in a sentence to mark the subject *S* or the predicate *P*.

– If it is used to mark the subject, then 'by essence' rules out all that which is outside the essence of *S*-things. Here the meaning will be: Is God the only one who by His essence — and not by anything outside His essence — is unqualifiedly good form-wise?

– But if 'by essence' is used to mark the predicate *P*, it rules out having *P* by participation. The meaning will be: Is only God good-by-essence rather than by participation? Now a thing is called "φ by participation" when it has some formal makeup for being φ but not the whole fullness of completeness that a formal makeup for being φ can have. What is participatively φ has to have only a part of being-φ, and that is why it is called such "participatively." By contrast, a thing is called "φ by essence" when, by its own mode of being, it includes the whole fullness that is naturally possible in the makeup for being φ. In this way, heat, if it subsisted on its own [would have, by this mode of being, the fullest possible makeup for being hot].

ii. In the present context, thanks to the subject matter, these two interpretations coincide, according to St. Thomas. If the first meaning holds and God-by-essence is good, then the second meaning holds, too, and God is good-by-essence (and conversely). Nevertheless, formally speaking, and taking other subject matters into account, the two senses do not coincide. Socrates-by-his-essence is a man, and yet he is not man-by-essence but participatively; only the Platonic Form of Man, if there were such a thing, would be man-by-essence.²

Now, since the issue being raised here in the affirmative part of the title question [asking, 'Is God good by essence?'] is about good-by-essence and not directly about God's essence itself (since it was already established in Inquiry 3 that He is simple and that no trait attaches to Him by anything added to His essence), the phrase 'by essence' is being used here to mark the predicate, and it rules out good-by-participation, and the meaning is as indicated above. But as to the negative part of it [asking, 'Is anything else good by essence?'], the phrase 'by essence' is being used to mark the subject, and the meaning is as indicated already. All the

arguments in the text favor this latter meaning, as does the reason assigned in the body of the article. So the negative side is what is principally in dispute here, as if the affirmative had been settled by q.3 above.³

Analysis of the article

iii. In the body of the article there is just one conclusion, answering the question with yes: only God is good by essence. — The only-proposition is supported in both its parts at once as follows. [*Antecedent:*] Meeting the three measures of completeness (whether the thing is established in its existence, etc.) applies to God alone by essence; [*1st inference:*] so being complete [applies to Him]; [*2nd inference:*] so being good [applies to Him]; [*3rd inference:*] therefore God alone is good by essence.

The antecedent is clarified by laying out the three tests of a thing's completeness (i.e. in the first that its existence is included; in the second, accidents; in the third, a thing's ultimate end) and by showing that each applies to God quidditatively. — The first inference is taken as obvious from the foregoing adequate analysis [of what it is to be complete]. The second is supported on the ground that each thing is good to the same extent as it is complete. The third is left as obvious.

iv. As to this antecedent, a first area of doubt would be whether it is true that, outside of God, a thing's existence is other than its essence in every case. But this is meant to be taken up elsewhere. A second area of doubt would be how [it can be true that] no essence is itself the source* of an operation; but this is going to come up below.⁴ For present purposes, it is enough to say that existence and the sources of operations are outside the essences of all substances form-wise, while in God's essence all are included form-wise.⁴ But what is at issue here in the text is real inclusion and exclusion, not just form-wise.

Does *esse* belong in first completeness?

v. A doubt comes to mind, too, about the first inference [in § iii above], since it does not seem cogent. For starters, any item at all is complete as to what-it-is⁵ "by its essence." Obviously. And no contradictory to this follows from the antecedent given. Also, the inference just assumes that existence belongs to the integrity of a thing's first completeness [its completeness just as a substance], and this hardly sounds true. After all, apart from the case of God, existence is extraneous to any-

¹ So the question will be answered by an only-claim ("Only God is thus"). Such a claim was called a *propositio exclusiva* and was taken to have two logical parts: an affirmative part saying *S* is *P*, and a negative part, saying no other is *P*.

² What Cajetan calls the subject-marking sense of 'by essence' is thus the more Aristotelian sense. The predicate-marking sense is Platonic in origin and came down to Aquinas through the Church Fathers. The two senses coincide for Aquinas in the unique case of God, because He alone is the sort of being Plato imagined a Form to be: a pure act subsisting on its own uncomposed (1 ST q.3, aa.2-7) and thus having the total perfection of that act without restriction (1 ST q.4, a.2).

³ So Cajetan thinks Aquinas is using 'by essence' both ways at once. The title raises, then, two issues: (1) Is God maximally good, such that any other instance of goodness will be only partial compared to His? (2) Is there anything else which, thanks to its essence alone, is good unqualifiedly? The arguments in the article do address issue (2); only the quote from Boethius addresses (1).

⁴ The meaning is this: for any created substance *S*, there is no operation *A* such that *S* just as *S* is in fact doing *A*. But both in the theological concept and in real terms, God just as *God* is in fact doing whatever He does.

1 ST q.44, a.1

* principium
† 1 ST q.54, a.1

‡ quidditative

thing's integrity as a substance. One sees this by the fact that [a definition spells out the whole of what it is to be a certain kind of substance, and yet] no definition speaks of existence. Aristotle makes this very point in *Posterior Analytics I*.

c.2;
72a 20-24

vi. The SHORT ANSWER to this is that an item can be called complete in two ways — “forthrightly” and “in a sense” — and that so long as the item is not existing in the real, any “being” that it has (whether as an object of thought, or as a quiddity, or as pre-existing in its cause) is not called forthrightly its being-complete but only in a sense (*i.e.* its being complete just in this sort of being [*i.e.* being completely thought of, being fully defined, being completely pre-determined by existing causes]). But as soon as the item exists as a thing in the real, it is forthrightly “complete” as far as its completeness as a substance is concerned. Hence existence does belong to the integrity of each thing's first completeness — not as a part of its quiddity but as the actualization of its quiddity. — From there it should be clear enough how to answer the objections.

vii. But suppose the DOUBT is pushed further, on the following ground. When things are compared as to their essences, they are forthrightly *graded* on the basis of essential perfections [completenesses]. Thus water [we say] is essence-wise more perfect than earth, and air is more perfect than water, and fire than air. *Etc.* Therefore being forthrightly perfect [complete] applies to a thing on the basis of its essence.

The RESPONSE should go like this. When we say, “God is the only thing that is, by essence, unqualifiedly complete,” the word ‘by’ points to a formal cause, but not of just any sort; it means the sort to be *sufficient*, setting aside any other factor. Thus, while the essence of fire is that by which a fire has its substantial completeness *form-wise*, it is not sufficient to *posit* the fire in its substantial completeness; it still has to be actuated by existence. To meet the further objection [from essence-comparison and grading], I say that when a thing is forthrightly graded in perfection on the basis of its essence, it is not being graded as a finished thing*

* *completivè*

but in its root source.* — Alternatively (and it comes to much the same thing), one can say that when things are forthrightly graded in perfection on the basis of their essences, this is not done by prescinding from their existence but by taking into account their relatedness to existing. As I have shown at length in my commentary on *De ente et essentia*, substantial difference is drawn from relatedness to existing. And as I noted there, Porphyry insinuates the same point in his ultimate and deepest definition of “difference,” where he says that it “conduces to existing.”

* *radicaliter*

viii. As to the last inference [in § *iii* above], notice that (as I remarked on the title), the two propositions, *S*-by-its-essence is good

c 6

Isagogè, c 2

and

S is good-by-essence are equivalent thanks to the subject matter under discussion. So, Aquinas did not distinguish them here. Once he had concluded that only God by His essence is good, he wanted it to be concluded that God alone is good-by-essence [the maximal good in which all others share].

On the answer *ad* (1)

ix. In the answer to the first objection, make yourself a note, dear Thomist, that here you have it in so many words that calling something “one” does not say it has what it takes to be complete. Neither oneness in general nor its kinds bespeak completeness, taking the latter formally and without qualification; rather, they abstract from completeness and incompleteness.¹

¹ If they abstract even from first completeness, I can call a phenomenon “one” independently of any answer to the question, “One what?” In that case, I can count arbitrary and unclassified assemblages, given only that I have chosen to take them as units (that is, as undivided). This does not conflict in any way with the point which Aquinas conceded in his answer to this same objection, namely, that everything is by its essence one. For this concession can be put like this. Any phenomenon providing what it takes to answer the question, “What is it?” thereby also provides what it takes for the phenomenon to be taken as undivided, to be counted as one, and to answer the question, “One what?”

Are all things good with the divine goodness?

In I Sent. d 19, q 5, a.2 ad 3; 1 CG c.40, De Veritate q.21, a 4

It looks as though all things are rendered good by God's own goodness.

(1) After all, Augustine says in Book VIII of his *De Trinitate*: "This is good, and that is good; take away this and that, and behold, if you can, good itself. So you will see God, who is not good by another good but is the good of every good." <But each thing is rendered good by its own goodness>. Therefore, each thing is good with the very goodness which is God.

(2) Furthermore, as Boethius says in his booklet *De Hebdomadibus*, all things are called "good" insofar as they are ordered to God, and the reason for this is God's own goodness. Therefore, all things are "good" thanks to God's goodness.

ON THE OTHER HAND, all things are good insofar as they exist. We do not say that they all exist with God's existence — but each with its own existence. So it is not the case that they are all good with God's goodness, but each with its own goodness.

ANSWER: when a thing is named by a relational term, nothing prevents its being named after outside factors. In this way, a thing is called "located" after a place [where it happens to be] and "measured" after some yardstick [that happens to be applied to it]. But when a thing is named by a non-relational term, the Philosophers have disagreed [over whether it can be so named after an outside factor].

Plato held all the species of things to be separately existing forms, after which individuals are named, as if by having a share in these separated species. *E.g.*, he thought Socrates was called "human" after an outside form of Man. Just as he posited a separately existing form of Man and of Horse (and called the one "the of-itself human" and the other "of-itself horse"), so also he posited a form of Being and of One, separately subsis-

ting, which he called "of-itself being" and "of-itself one"; and by sharing in this each thing is called "a being" or called "one." This form which is of-itself being and of-itself one — Plato further said it was the highest good. Since 'good' is equivalent to 'being' and to 'one', he said this Form was of-itself good — was God, in fact — after whom all things are called "good" thanks to their having a share in Him.

Although Plato's position is seen to be unreasonable in its claim that the species of natural things subsist separately on their own, Aristotle shows many times over, it is still quite true that there is some *first thing* which by its essence is existent and good, and which we call God. This becomes clear from points made above, and Aristotle concurs as well.

Given a First Being and Good, essentially such, each thing can be called "a good" and "a being" after It, in that each partakes of It by an (albeit remote and defective) resemblance to It, as came out above. In this sense, each thing is called "good by the divine goodness" as by an ultimate origin which is an exemplary, effective, and final cause of all goodness. But it is still the case that each thing is called good by virtue of a likeness inhering in itself, a likeness of God's goodness which is form-wise the thing's own goodness and lends it the adjective.¹ Thus, there is one goodness of all things, and yet there are also many goodnesses.

From this it is clear how to meet the objections.

¹ This paragraph is a model of how Aquinas kept Plato's rhetoric without his metaphysics. For Plato, a red ball's visible redness was a share in Redness Itself, an invisible form. Aquinas turned the share into an Aristotelian form inherent in the ball, turned the sharing or participation itself into a relation of resemblance or exemplarity, and abandoned the separately subsisting Form, unless (as here) there was an independent reason to posit it as an efficient cause.

Cf. Metaphysics I c 1: 993b 24

in Metaphysics II c.2?

1.57 q.4, a.3

Cajetan's Commentary

In the title question, the beginner should notice that the issue is not whether all things are good *from* the divine goodness, but whether all are good *with or by* it. Thus the sense of the question is not whether all things derive the fact that they are good from God's bounty, but whether divine goodness is the factor whereby "good things" are so called, much as their whiteness is the factor whereby white things are called "white ones," or as a place is the factor whereby things [in it] are called "located there."

Analysis of the article

ii. In this article, Aquinas does four jobs: (1) he draws two distinctions and notes where the philosophers agree and where they disagree; (2) he gives Plato's opinion; (3) he gives Aristotle's opinion; (4) he answers the question.

iii. [As to job (1)] the first distinction is that some terms involve an absolute trait, others a relation. The second is that denominations are of two kinds: some are intrinsic; some are extrinsic. A denomination is called

intrinsic when the name-contributing form is *in* the thing named, as in the cases of a white thing, a thing so-big, *etc.* A denomination is called extrinsic, by contrast, when the name-contributing form is not in the thing named, as in the cases of a located thing, a measured thing, and the like. — All philosophers agree that extrinsic denomination can occur in cases where the terms used involve a relation in their sense. This is clear from “located” and “measured.” But there is a disagreement between Plato and Aristotle as to whether there can be extrinsic denomination in cases where terms involve in their sense a non-relational trait. Such is the case at hand: ‘good’ is an absolute [*i.e.* non-relational] term [in its sense], and the divine goodness is outside all things other than God.

iv. As to job (2): starting in the text at the word ‘Plato’, the author puts down four propositions espoused by Plato. They are: (1) the species of things are separately subsistent; (2) particular things are named after them; (3) there is a Form of Being, of One and of Good, such that this Form is God; and (4) all things are named “good” after It. So for Plato, the question at hand should be answered affirmatively.

v. As to job (3): beginning at the word ‘Although’, the author notes that Aristotle’s position disagrees with propositions (1) and (2) but agrees with (3). About (4) nothing is said.

A doubt about job (3)

vi. As to this job a doubt arises. On what basis can it be said that Aristotle agrees with Plato about a Form of the Good, when in book I of the *Ethics* he attacks it in so many words?

Lectio 7 I ANSWER briefly, along with Eustratius and St. Thomas (in his commentary on *Ethics I*), that the difference between Aristotle and Plato is merely verbal on this point. Aristotle took exception to the claim that a Good-by-essence had to be posited as a separated species like the Man-by-essence, *etc.* He was not denying that there is a first good, essentially such, which is God, as one can see from the end of *Metaphysics XII*.

Analysis resumed: job (4)

vii. As to job (4): there is one conclusion answering the question, but it has two parts: all things are good with the divine goodness *extrinsically* and *causally*, but they are good with their own goodness *form-wise* and *intrinsically*. The support is as follows. [*Antecedent:*] After a first good essentially such, anything else can be called good by resemblance. [*Inference:*] So anything else is said to be good with the divine goodness in the sense of an efficient, exemplary, and final cause, and [is said to be good] with a likeness thereof in the sense of a formal cause. Ergo. — The antecedent is inferred from

the previous jobs done. The inference is clear of itself, once the terms used in it are understood.

viii. Three expressions in St. Thomas’ answer need comment.

The first is ‘by way of a resemblance’. For there are two ways in which some item *x* can be called ϕ after some other item outside itself:

Way (1) is such that the basis for calling $x \phi$ is just exactly a relation to the outside item; in this way a urine specimen is called healthy solely because of its relation to [the animal’s] health as a sign of it.

(2) is such that the basis for calling $x \phi$ is neither a relation of similarity nor any other relation, but a form which is the foundation for a relation of similarity to the outside item; in this way air is called “lit up” with the light of the sun, on the basis that it partakes of light through the form of light.

Where there is denomination in (1), the item *x* is *only* named after the outside item. Where there is denomination in (2), the item *x* is named after the outside thing but *not only* after it, because it is also named after what is within itself, as is clear enough; and such is the case at hand. The text says that, after a First Good by essence good, all things are called good “by way of a resemblance.” It follows at once from this expression that things can be called good *both* after an outside thing *and* after what is in them.

The second expression is the word ‘as’. It is significant that, in the text, St. Thomas does not say that each thing can be called “good by the divine goodness” (after an outside thing) without further qualification but adds “as by an ultimate origin which is an ... effective ... cause,” *etc.* For as I just mentioned, denomination after an outside item comes about in two ways, one of which is purely such, while the other is causal. The pure case arises when the term is applied solely by a relation to the [outside] name-giving form. The causal case arises when an effect’s share of an outside cause grounds the application of the term. In the present case, each thing is called extrinsically “good by the divine goodness” not in just any fashion but causally, and this is why Aquinas says, “as by an origin” *etc.* — If you ponder this point carefully, by the way, you will find that in the case of absolute [non-relational] terms, it is impossible for there to be extrinsic denomination of the pure type, though there can be of the causal type.

The third expression is ‘exemplary’. An exemplary cause is distinguished from an efficient cause and is grouped with the formal causes, because it is like an outside form for a thing. The text means to say, therefore, that God not only makes the goodness of other things but also patterns theirs after His — which is not the case, of course, when one says that God makes a cow or a lion.

Inquiry Seven: Into God's infinity

After considering God's completeness [His not being lacking], the inquiry turns to His not being limited; it also turns to His existence in other things, because the attribute of being everywhere and in all things is ascribed to God on the ground that He is uncontainable and limitless. Concerning this topic, four questions are raised.

- (1) Is God infinite? (3) Can anything be infinite as to size?
 (2) Is anything else infinite as to essence? (4) Can a real group be infinitely many?

article 1

Is God Infinite?

3 ST q 10, a.3 ad 1; In 1 Sent. d 43, q 1, a. 1, 1 CG e 43, De Veritate q 2, a.2 ad 3, q.29, a.3;
 De Potentia Dei q.1, a.2, Quodlib. III, a.3; Compend. Theol. cc 18, 20

It seems that God is not without a limit of some kind.

(1) After all, everything infinite [lacks limits and so is in potency to a specifying limit and so] is incomplete.¹ So it meets the definition of a material part, as Aristotle says in *Physics III*. But God is utterly complete. Hence, He is not infinite.

c.6;
207a 27

(2) Also, 'finite' and 'infinite' are both about extent [*quantitas*], as Aristotle says in *Physics I*. But in God there is no extent, since He is not a body. This was established above. Therefore, being infinite does not pertain to Him.

c.2;
185b 2
q.3, a.1

(3) Furthermore, what is *here* in such a way as not to be *there* is finite in space; by the same rule, what is *this* in such a way as not to be *that* is finite in substance. Well, God is this without being that, since He is not stone or timber. Therefore, God does not have infinite substance.

ON THE OTHER HAND, there is what John Damascene states [in book I of *De fide orthodoxa*] to the effect that God is "infinite and eternal and uncontainable."

c.4;
PG 94, 800

ANSWER: all the older philosophers attributed to the ultimate origin of things a certain limitless character, as Aristotle tells us in *Physics III*, and reasonably so, since they were paying heed to the fact that things flow out limitlessly from that origin. But since they were mistaken as to the nature of the ultimate origin, they made a related mistake as to how it is unlimited. They posited an ultimate origin that was material and thus gave it the character of unrestricted matter. They said that the ul-

c.4;
203b 4

timite origin of things was a limitless body.

What one needs to consider, then, is the fact that a factor is called infinite from the mere fact that it is not restricted [and that what it means to be "restricted" varies]. In one sense, matter is "restricted" by form; in quite another, form is "restricted" by matter. In the one sense, matter is restricted by form in that, before matter receives structure, it is in potency to many structures; but once it receives a given structure, its bounds are set by that. A form, by contrast, is restricted by matter in the sense that, when a form is thought of in itself, it is common to many; but when received in matter, it becomes in a delimited way* the form of this thing. However, [the two cases differ further:]

* *determinat*

• matter [as such] is put into a more finished state by the form that restricts it, and so 'matter not restricted' carries the sense of unfinished — as if to say, "matter left formless."

• By contrast, form [as such] is not put into a more finished state by matter; rather, its scope[†] is narrowed by it. So 'form not restricted', said of a form not delimited by matter, carries the sense of being complete.

† *amplitudo*

Now, of all factors, the one which is most "formative" [*formale*] is existence itself, as came out above. Therefore, since existence for God is not existence received in something, but God is His existence subsisting (as shown above), it is clear that God is at once infinite [*i.e.* "not restricted" by a receiving potency] and complete.²

q.4, a.1 ad 3

q.3, a.4

¹ 'Infinite' often meant 'indefinite' or 'indeterminate', and to this the objector is appealing. In Aristotle's remarks on quantity, any finite amount or number was called definite; but the *infinitum*, indefinite. Since the indefinite had unfulfilled potential to be made more definite, the Stagirate's authority could be invoked for the view that any *infinitum* (quantitative or otherwise) would be unfinished or incomplete, like matter.

² To call God *infinisus*, Aquinas had to escape the privative sense of 'indefinite'; he needed a sense in which the prefix '*in-*' was not denying a finishing touch but removing a hindrance. He found this by conceiving of act-infinity, which could be form without the construction of matter *or* (as has now emerged) could be *esse* without the construction of a definable essence. In this use, '*infinisus*' kept its negative sense ('not bounded') but presupposed the completeness of an act (form or *esse*) subsisting.

How to answer the first objection is thus clear.

TO MEET THE OTHERS — *ad* (2): the limit or bound of an extent functions as its form. A sign of this is the fact that geometric shape emerges from setting bounds to an extent and is a sort of form for it. Thus 'infinite' as applied to extent has the same sense as 'not restricted' applied to matter [*i.e.* 'in potency to be specified'], and that sense is not applied to God, as I said already.

ad (3): by the very fact that God's existence is subsisting on its own, not received in anything (and on this basis is called unrestricted), it is set off from all other things, and they are distanced from it. In the same way, if there were a case of whiteness, *W*, subsisting on its own, *W* would differ from every case of whiteness existing in a subject by the very fact that *W* was not in anything else.

Cajetan's Commentary

In the title, the word 'God' is taken properly as a name drawn from His nature; so the question is about God's essence, not about His power or knowledge.

• The word 'infinite', made up of 'in-' and 'finite', has the prefix in the negative sense, not the privative.

• 'Finite' here means restrictions as to how complete something is. The definitions of 'finite' and 'infinite' have how-much in common (as Aristotle says in *Physics I*); but there are two kinds of how-much: the how-much of amount and the how-much of completeness. It follows that there are two kinds of restrictions and two kinds of finite/infinite. In the context of God, the how-much of amount has already been excluded; so the question has to be about infinite completeness.

Also, pay extra close attention to the fact that being infinite is not a substantial form but an accident to things (as Aristotle says in *Physics III*) and that, as a result, how an item needs or excludes a restriction will depend upon its nature. How a *thing* is infinite is one story; how a potency is infinite is another; how knowledge is, is yet another. [Here the topic is a thing's infinity, which is quidditative.] Quidditative infinity is a matter of excluding limits that enter into an essence, such as specific differences and the like. And since the question is about the infinity of the divine nature, what is under discussion is infinity of substantial completeness. So the sense is this: *Is God, in keeping with His essence, of such great completeness that He excludes all essence-composing restrictions or limits?*

Analysis of the article, I

ii. In the body of the article, St. Thomas does three jobs: (1) he cites an opinion of the ancients; (2) he distinguishes different senses of finitude and infinity; (3) he answers the question.

iii. As to job (1), he says two things. (a) For the ancient philosophers, the ultimate origin was unlimited because, from it, there came to be limitlessly many things. (b) Some of the ancients mistakenly attributed to the ultimate origin an infinity of amount, because they posited an ultimate origin that was material. Thus, they posited a quantitative infinity, because quantity is a consequence of matter. So a mistake in categorizing the origin caused a mistake as to how it is unlimited.

iv. As to job (2): finitude/infinity of completeness is broken down into the sort discussed on the part of matter and the sort discussed on the part of form. They dif-

fer in this:

- matter-finitude indicates completeness; matter-infinity, incompleteness;

but with form it is the opposite:

- form-infinity indicates completeness; form-finitude, incompleteness.

These points are made clearly enough in the text.

Finitude and infinity on the part of form

v. Before going any further, DOUBTS arise over what Aquinas says here about both form-finitude and form-infinity.

As to form-finitude [there seem to be counter-examples to the claim that restriction by matter indicates incompleteness]: the form of a cow and even, for St. Thomas, the intellectual soul *come to completion* as a result of their conjunction with matter. Therefore, form-finitude does not indicate incompleteness but completeness.

As to form-infinity [the claim that non-reception in matter indicates completeness seems groundless]: a mere negation does not posit any completeness, and no factor acquires completion solely as a result of its being separate from some other factor. Therefore form-infinity does not indicate completeness.

vi. TO ANSWER THE FIRST of these doubts, I should say that 'form' can be taken two ways:

(1) either *without further qualifiers*,* so that form is considered just insofar as it is form,

* *absolutē*

(2) or *with a further qualifier*,† so that form is considered insofar as it is of such-and-such a kind, say, the kind that informs matter.

† *secundum quid*

A form of *this kind* comes to completion through union with matter, but not form just *qua* form. In the present context, the discussion is being conducted without further qualifiers, so as to range across the whole spectrum of form. Along that spectrum, the poorer part is the part that can be completed through matter, while the other part remains free and unconfined within any bounds of matter.¹ Thus [there are no counter-examples where

¹ Mere abstraction from further qualifiers would yield 'form' considered *simpliciter*, and the doubt would be correct. Some forms are completed by their reception in matter. But precise abstraction yields 'form' considered *absolutē*, and the doubt fails, because the alleged counter-examples are not forms *qua* forms, but forms *qua* being of a poorer kind.

form *qua* form is completed by matter, hence] the inference advanced against us [that form-finitude as such can be a completeness] is to be denied.

As to the second doubt, I should say that while a [term of] negation or separation does not indicate completeness form-wise, it indicates it basis-wise:* the ground for denying that a form *f* is unitable to matter indicates a great completeness in *f*. And this suffices.

* *fundamentaliter*

Analysis of the article, II

vii. As to job (3), there is one conclusion, answering the question in the affirmative: God is infinite. — This is supported as follows. [*Antecedent:*] God is His own existence subsisting; [*1st inference:*] therefore His existence is not received in anything; [*2nd inference:*] therefore it is unrestricted and complete, that is, of infinite completeness in terms of form-infinity.

The antecedent is clearly true from q.3 above. The first inference is self-evident. The second is supported by the fact that existence is the “most formative” of all factors.

Finitude of form vs. finitude of act

viii. As to this reasoning process, doubt arises from the work of Scotus (on I *Sent.* d.2, in answer to the first question), where he criticizes St. Thomas’ premisses as well as his reasoning. First, he says that our reasoning amounts to this:

[*antecedent:*] a form is finitized by matter; [*inference:*] therefore a form not naturally suited to be in matter is automatically infinite.

Then he argues against the antecedent thus. In terms of natural priority, every form, before it is received in matter, already has of itself its level [of excellence] among beings; so it is already finite or infinite. It is not first-off finitized by a bearing of exclusion towards anything outside the form, be it matter or anything else.

Next, he argues against the reasoning [along two lines] as follows.

(1) It would follow that an angel’s essence is infinite: it is a form not receivable in matter. It would be futile to suggest (he adds) that the angel’s nature might be finitized by its existence; for in Thomism, existence is posterior to essence; and since the nature is infinite in its first logical moment,¹ where it abstracts from existence, it cannot become finite in its second logical moment through existence.²

² Is existence posterior to essence in Thomism? Never mind that for a moment. Stick to the fact that if *x*’s being- ϕ explained *x*’s being- ψ , the former had “natural priority” over the latter. Here Scotus was contending that a form *f* is (or is not) receivable in matter because of what *f*-ness is in itself, and not vice-versa. So in explanatory order, he contended, what *f*-ness is in itself comes before the receivability of *f*-ness. To get from there, however, to the conclusion that *f*-ness is already finite or infinite before it is receivable, Scotus had to take both finitude and infinity as formally positive traits that could enter into what-*f*-ness-is. This move to a formally positive infinity was Scotus’ chief innovation, and Cajetan will reject it below.

(2) He faults the reasoning as committing a fallacy of the consequent, like the fallacy pointed out in *Physics III*, namely: if a body is bounded by another body [it is bounded]; ergo, if a body is not bounded by another body, it is boundless.

ix. Meanwhile, another doubt about the reasoning arises. To beginners, at least, it will seem that even if one grants the whole of Aquinas’ reasoning, one does not get an answer to the question being asked. For the conclusion that had to be reached was that God is of such great completeness that He exceeds all limits to completeness. Well, all that has been proved is that He exceeds the limits set by a recipient, which seems a far cry from the point needed.

c.4;
203b 20r

Answering Scotus

x. To clear up these difficulties, one needs to realize that the text of St. Thomas is implicitly sub-dividing form-infinity into infinity of *form* and infinity of *being or of act*, which is broader than form. For “act” comes in two kinds — existence vs. form: and in the same way, “receptive potency” comes in two kinds — essence vs. matter. And thus reception or non-reception [of an act in a potency] comes in two kinds, and likewise finitude and infinity (speaking of both on the part of act) come in two kinds. And JUST AS existence is “act” for a different reason [or: by another definition] than form is, and essence is potency of another order than matter is (as one sees from the difference between composition of essence with existence and composition of matter with form), SO ALSO the reception of existence in an essence is “reception” for a different reason than the reception of a form in matter is, and likewise the restriction of existence by essence is “finitude” for a different reason than the restriction of form by matter is (and vice-versa, the restriction of essence by existence is finitude for a different reason than the restriction of matter by form is).

Now, to bring out each point distinctly, let us say that *existence* of itself indicates a kind of completeness, but one cannot picture how much completeness it indicates unless one understands it as applied to some nature, such as wisdom’s nature, or Gabriel’s. Thus, existence acquires limits to its completeness by being received in some essence: it becomes bounded by the measure of the nature receiving it.³ Hence, if a case

³ For Cajetan, then, *esse* in itself cannot be a so-much of completeness. *Esse* is pure actuation and can be conceived as so-much only by being considered in light of some essence. Prior to that consideration, there simply is no how-much of *esse*: and so, contrary to what some neo-Thomists have proposed, it is impossible to explain essence as so-much *esse*. The explanation has to go the other way. A so-much of completeness is an essence, a species. Thus *esse* in itself is not specified. Rather, *esse* is specified by the essence receiving it (or by the essence that is *esse* unreceived). The upshot of this article is not that God has no essence (*pace* Rahner) but that He has no limited essence, no essence introducing potency. So, again contrary to what some say, it is impossible to equate being-an-essence with being-a-limit-to-*esse*: only an essence that introduces potency (which it does because it is definable) is a limit.

¹ *in primo signo*

of existence is posited that has no conjunction whatever with a quiddity but subsists naturally in itself, that case of existence will have no essence-composing limit. *Form*, on the other hand, even though of itself it does indicate completeness, can be understood as indicating just so-much completeness, even in the case of a form not admitting of union with matter (as is clear in the case of the separate intelligences).⁴

From these points one can see clearly how big a difference there is between the finitizing of existence by essence (or *vice-versa*) and the termination of form by matter (or *vice-versa*). By way of the former, one gets a thing that is form-finite *as a whole* or form-infinite *as a whole*. By way of the latter, one only gets a thing which is form-finite *in some aspect* or form-infinite *in some respect*. Nonetheless, it is still true that existence and form agree in having what it takes to be “act” and to be “receivable in another,” and that is why one can argue from finitude/infinity *of form* to finitude/infinity *of existence*. For that reason, the text of the article ascends from form to existence, to suggest the proportional sameness between these two cases of form-finitude/infinity. And yet to suggest the different reasons at work in the two cases, the text brings in (not the point that existence is the first form but) the point that existence is the most formative of all.

xi. From here, the easy answer to Scotus’ objections is plain to see. First of all, I say that the antecedent discussed above, namely,

a form is finitized by matter,

is not talking about complete finitization across the board but about one kind of such finitization, namely, the kind that arises from material limits; and hence his objection poses no obstacle.⁵ — On the same basis, his objections against our reasoning process fall down. It is true, after all, that an angel’s nature is unlimited *in a certain respect*. And if a new objection is made — then how from that ground does the article prove that God is unlimited *as a whole*? — the answer is obvious from things already said. The text of the article takes us by the hand and leads us from an unlimitedness of form (which is form-infinity in some aspect) to the unlimitedness of the most formative factor of all, existence, which is the form-infinity of a whole; and from there the text infers that God is infinite as a whole.

xii. Second of all (lest someone come along in Scotus’ footsteps and argue about existence the same way as he argued about form), I say that ‘infinite’, like ‘immaterial’ [‘non-material’ and ‘matter-independent’], is a negative predicate and yet presupposes a positive one. JUST AS the fact that a thing has the positive predicate hidden behind ‘immaterial’ is rightly proved from the evidence that the thing’s nature involves *no matter*

(either in act or in potency), SO ALSO God’s having the positive predicate hidden behind the meaning of ‘infinite as a whole’ is quite properly demonstrated from the fact that He has *no* essence-composing limits — which is what Aquinas does here.

With this as background, I concede that, by priority of nature, existence in itself, before it is receivable or non-receivable in this or that, is already of this-much completeness, say, finite or infinite completeness. But along with this concession, I say that this is a case of mutual implication:

if a case of existence is entirely non-receivable, it is infinite

and

if a case of existence is infinite, it is entirely non-receivable.⁶

So by the same token:

if a case of existence is finite, it is receivable

and

if a case of existence is receivable, it is finite.⁷

Thus our argument has committed no fallacy: from the failure of the antecedent in God’s case [His existence is not receivable], one can validly infer the failure of the consequent [His existence is not finite], as one does regularly in dealing with convertible conditionals. — And thus the answer to Scotus is plain as day.

xiii. The points just made also show how to meet the objection which beginners make [see above, § ix]. I pointed out above [in § x] that where it is *not* the case that an existence is received in any way, this negative is founded upon a *wholly* infinite completeness.

One more thing. Notice how formal the teaching of St. Thomas is and how focused it is on what is proper to the topic. When dealing with the infinity of an essence (as he does here), he sticks exclusively to essence-composing limits and does not wander off (as other, less clear-headed writers do) into the neighboring issues of what the infinity of a potency depends on, or the infinity of an intellect, or of a will.

⁶ Form-infinity of act remains for Cajetan a formally negative predicate, and only *fundamentaliter* positive. When he concedes that, with priority of nature, a case of *esse* can be called “already” finite/infinite “before” it is receivable or non-receivable, he is taking ‘infinite’ *fundamentaliter*, that is, as presupposing a positive predicate which really does characterize this case of *esse* in itself. This predicate, of course, is ‘*deitas*’. Because the divine *esse* is divineness on its own, it is not receivable in anything, and not *vice-versa*. Hence, with priority of nature, the divine *esse* is divineness (and has the ground on which it is infinite) “before” it is non-receivable. But when Cajetan uses ‘infinite’ formally, being-infinite has no priority of nature over being-non-receivable, because the two traits are equivalent when formally taken.

⁷ Mutual implication is called equivalence today and is represented with \equiv . Cajetan is invoking the familiar point that if $(\sim p \equiv \sim q)$ then $(p \equiv q)$, and conversely. Here p is the proposition, ‘a case of existence is finite’ and q is the proposition ‘a case of existence is receivable’.

⁴ Cajetan’s warrant for claiming that form, already in itself, can be understood as so-much completeness is the concession by Aquinas that one form can be called more complete than another. See q.4, a.2 ad 3, with footnote 4 on page 96.

⁵ The fact that some forms are finitized in themselves *qua* rich is no obstacle to the point that others *qua* poor are not.

Can anything other than God be infinite thanks to its essence?

1 *ST* q 50, a 2 *ad* 4; 3 *ST* q.10, a.3 *ad* 2, 3; *In I Sent.* d 43, q.1, a.2; *De Veritate* q 29, a.3;
Quodlibet. IX q.1, a.1; X q.2, a.1 *ad* 2; XII q.2, a.1 *ad* 2; *In XI Metaphys.* lectio 10

It seems that there can be something other than God which is infinite by way of its essence.

* *virtus*

(1) After all, a thing's power* is proportionate to its essence. So, if God's essence is infinite, His power has to be infinite. In that case, He can produce an effect which is infinite in the same way (since the evidence of how great a power is comes from its effect). [So, there can be something infinite in essence other than God.]

(2) Again, whatever has infinite power* has an infinite essence. Well, a created intellect has infinite power: it apprehends a universal that can have extension in infinitely many particular cases. Therefore, every created *intellectual* substance is infinite in essence.

(3) Also, prime matter is other than God, as shown above. Yet [by definition] prime matter is not restricted [by any form]. So something other than God can be infinite.¹

q.3, a.8

ON THE OTHER HAND, as Aristotle says in *Physics III* [c.4], what is infinite cannot come from any beginning [or: causal origin].¹ But everything other than God is from God, as from an ultimate beginning [or: causal origin]. Therefore, nothing but God can be infinite.

† *principium*

‡ *secundum quid*
 § *simpliciter*

I ANSWER: something besides God can be infinite in a given respect or aspect² but not as a whole.³

If we are talking about 'infinite' as it applies to matter, it is obvious that every [material] thing existing in act has a form; so its matter is put within bounds by that form. But since this matter, even as it stands under a substantial form, remains in potency to many accidental forms, a thing which is matter-*finite* as a whole can be matter-limitless in some respect. A log, for example, is matter-finite according to its [substantial] form and yet matter-infinite in a certain aspect: it is in potency to be carved into innumerable shapes.

If we are talking about 'infinite' as it applies to form, then it is obvious that those things whose forms are received in matter are form-finite as wholes and in no way form-infinite. But if there are created forms not received in matter but subsisting on their own (as some

think to be the case with the angels), they will be form-infinite in a certain respect: such forms are not limited or contracted by any matter. But they cannot be form-infinite as wholes, because created forms subsisting in that way *have* existence without being identically their existence; so their existence must be received and contracted to a delimited nature.

See below, q.50, a.2

TO MEET THE OBJECTIONS — *ad* (1): for a thing's essence to be identically its existence goes against the definition of 'made' (because subsisting existence is not created existence); hence it goes against the definition of 'made' for the thing to be form-infinite as a whole. So just as God, for all His infinite power, cannot *make* something that isn't *made* (for it would then have contradictory traits at the same time), so also God cannot *make* something that is form-infinite as a whole.

ad (2): the fact that an intellect's active power extends somehow to infinitely many objects comes from the fact that an intellect is a form which is not in matter. Either it is totally separate (like the substance of the angels), or at least it is an intellectual power* in an intellectual soul conjoined to a body — a faculty whose act is not the act of any organ. [So the active power in question only proves that a created intellect is form-infinite in a certain respect.]

* *potentia*

ad (3): prime matter does not exist as such in the real, since it is not a being in act but only in potency. It is a case of an item co-created rather than created.³ But even by its potentiality, prime matter is not unqualifiedly matter-infinite. It is only matter-infinite in a certain respect, because its potentiality [to receive a form] does not extend beyond natural forms.⁴

³ For Aquinas, pure potentiality was not "there" prior to creation, nor was it created separately. For him, potentiality arose along with actual first-order substances as God created them. Thus prime matter was *de re* potentiality attaching to the material part of an individual substance. This *part* — not the whole individual — was what could be re-structured under a different substantial form. Here as elsewhere, St. Thomas used the term 'co-created' or 'concreated' to express the origin of second-order entities, reserving 'created' to express the origin of first-order entities. See below, q.45, a.4, and q.66, a.1. The reader may need to recall that first-order entities are so called because they are the values of individual variables in a first-order predicate logic.

⁴ Aquinas probably meant that prime matter as such was open only to receiving substantial forms. Only in the wake of such forms, he thought, do distinctive accidents of quantity attach, and these accidents are what gave matter an ostensible amount (so as to be *materia designata*), and it was only this already structured matter, not prime matter, that could receive the further accidental forms.

¹ This objection turns upon the common scholastic doctrine that a thing's definition picks out its essence. Since prime matter was *defined* as matter lacking any form (and such lack of limiting structure was matter-infinity), it seemed to follow that prime matter was by its essence matter-infinite.

² '*Simpliciter*' normally means 'unqualifiedly', not 'as a whole', but here the case is special. Plain talk is about whole things, first-order entities, and Aquinas means to say that God is the only such entity who can be called infinite without further nuance. The same idea was behind Cajetan's talk of the infinite "as a whole" in his commentary on the previous article.

Cajetan's Commentary

In the title, pay attention to the fact that calling a thing "infinite thanks to its essence" does not mean the same as calling it a thing "of infinite completeness," because the word 'infinite' is not being restricted here to the sense of form-infinite (which indicates completeness) but is being used more broadly so as to admit also the sense of matter-infinite. One can see as much from the course of the reasoning in the body of the article and in the third objection and its response. So calling a thing "infinite by essence" means the same here as calling it a thing "of unbounded essence as a whole," *i.e.* a thing not belonging either directly or reductively to any category, genus or species. — Also, the question here is about particular things, the only kind that turn up in the real. I say this to head off talk of things taken in abstraction. For one may happen to abstract things in such a way that, under some description, they are not confined to any category. Yet in the real, even what matches that description in this thing is nailed down to some genus and species. For instance, [one may so abstract as to describe things just as beings, and under that description they are not confined to any category; and yet] the "being" in a human being is in the human species.

So the sense of the question is this: Is there anything else in the real (actually or potentially), besides God, which is of unbounded essence as a whole?

Analysis of the article

ii. In the body of the article, there is one conclusion, giving the question a negative answer: nothing other than God is infinite *as a whole*, though there may be things which are infinite in some respect.

This conclusion has two parts, of course [one saying that nothing else is infinite as a whole, and one saying that some are such in some respect], and both are supported in the article. The infinite comes in two kinds — the kind arising from act, and the kind arising from potency. So, he first supports his two-part conclusion for matter-infinity, then for form-infinity.

- As to the former: matter is always restricted by some form and so is never matter-infinite as a whole; yet because it remains in potency to ever-so-many forms, there is such a thing as the matter-infinite in some respect.

- As to the latter: a created form either *is* in matter (and so is restricted by that) or else subsists without matter but receives existence. As the latter sort of form is without matter, it is form-infinite in some respect (in respect to material bounds); but because it still has received being, it is, in overall terms, form-finite. For necessarily, when existence is so adapted to this given nature as not to be the existence of anything else, it is limited as a whole — otherwise it would have in itself the completeness of every nature.

Now, once the parts of the whole claim [that nothing but God is infinite as a whole, and that some other things are infinite in some respect] have been gone over sufficiently, the whole announced conclusion has been supported. This is clear enough, if one keeps in mind the previous article [where it was proved that God *is* infinite as a whole].

And note, dear beginner, that when Aquinas says "some think" the angels are subsisting forms, he is not saying this to raise doubt, but to proceed in philosophical style, deferring the issue to the treatise he will devote to angels later on.

Can anything be actually infinite in extent?

De Veritate q 2, a 2 ad 5; *Quodlibet IX*, a.1, XII, q 2 ad 2; *In I Phys.*, lectio 9;
In III Phys., lectiones 11f; *In I de Caelo*, lectiones 9f.

It would seem that something can be actually infinite in extent.*

(1) After all, there is no falsehood in mathematics, because "abstracting does not yield a lie," as Aristotle says in *Physics II*. But mathematics uses the infinite in extent. A geometer will say in his proofs, for example, "Let such and such a line extend to infinity." So, it is not impossible for something to extend to infinity.

c.2;
193b 35

(2) Besides, it is not impossible for a trait to apply to something so long as the trait is not against its definition. Well, being-infinite is not against the definition of an extent; quite the contrary, finite and infinite seem to be the distinctive states for quantity. So it is not impossible for some extent to be infinite.

c.1;
200b 20

(3) Also, an extent is infinitely divisible; as one sees from *Physics III*, a continuum is defined as "what is divisible *ad infinitum*." Well, contraries are suited to deal with the same subject. Dividing and expanding, lessening and increasing, are contraries. So, it would seem that an extent is infinitely expandable. It is possible, then, for an extent to be infinite.

c.11;
219a 12

(4) Moreover, motion and time acquire quantity and continuousness from the expanse over which the motion passes, as it says in *Physics II'*. But it is not against the definitions of time and motion for them to be infinite because, in time and in circular motion, each indivisible "point" is both a beginning and an end-point. Therefore, it is not against the definition of an extent or expanse to be infinite either.

ON THE OTHER HAND, each body has a surface. But each body having a surface is finite, because a surface is a bound of a solid. Ergo, each body is finite. Similar reasoning can be applied to surfaces and lines. Ergo, nothing is infinite in extent.

ANSWER: being infinite in essence is quite different from being infinite in size or extent. Suppose there were a body that was infinite in volume, such as a fire, or the air. It would still not be infinite in its essence, because its essence would be restricted to a species by its form and to an individual by its matter. So [since the two ideas are different, and] since the point that no creature is infinite in essence has already been established, what remains to be asked is whether any created thing is infinite in extent.

One needs to know, then, that 'body' (meaning a complete [three-dimensional] extent) is taken two ways: (1) the mathematical way, in which only the quantity in a body is considered, and (2) the physical way, in which the matter and form in it are also considered.

As far as a physical body is concerned, quite clear-

ly, it cannot be actually infinite. For every physical body has a definite substantial form, given which, accidents follow. Necessarily, then, given a determinate form, there follow determinate accidents, and among these is quantity. This is why every physical body has a definite size-range, with a maximum and a minimum. So, it is impossible for a physical body to be infinite.¹

(The same conclusion emerges from motion, since every *physical* body has a natural motion. An infinite body could not have any natural motion. It could not move linearly because, physically speaking, nothing is displaced linearly until it is outside its [former] place, and this could not happen to an infinite body: it would already occupy every place and so would make any place, no matter which, its [former] place. Likewise, such a body could not revolve [at a physically possible speed]. In a revolving motion, one part of the body has to arrive at where another part was. On a sphere taken as infinite, that could not happen. The farther two radii were extended from the center, the farther they would diverge. If the spherical body were infinite in size, the radii would become infinitely distant from one another: so the one could never reach the place once held by the other.)

As for a mathematical body, the same reasoning applies. For if we try to imagine a mathematical body existing *in act*, we have to imagine it as having some form, because nothing is in act except through its form. Well, the *form* of extended quantity as such is figure. So this imagined body will have to have some figure. In that case, it will be finite. For that alone is "figure" which is contained within one or more bounds.²

¹ This paragraph contains the main reasoning in support of the conclusion about physical bodies, so that when Aquinas turns below to mathematical bodies and says "the same reasoning applies," he is referring to the reasoning in this paragraph. In both ways of taking the word 'body', the decisive issue is what it takes for a body to be "in act." In both cases, it takes a *form*, physical or geometrical, with its consequences, physical or logical. A physical form ϕ -ness causes a body to be a material substance of the specific kind ϕ , and it carries the physical consequence (says Aquinas) that the size of the body lies within certain limits. The findings of current science seem to agree. Each particle has a characteristic size and mass. Each chemical element has an atom of characteristic size and mass. Each biological species has individuals of an average size, as determined by the genes defining the species. For the other kind of form, geometrical, on which Aquinas' remarks are far less plausible, see next footnote.

² Mathematical items are not suited to exist (as we read in *ST* q.5, a.3 ad 4), so these mathematical "bodies in act" would have to be geometrical *forms* taken as abstract "entities." Such a form, one supposes, would have to be a "solid" consisting of nothing but void volume, like a ghostly crystal. Aquinas took the point that a body is only in act through its species and

TO MEET THE OBJECTIONS — *ad* (1): a geometer need not assume that any line is actually infinite. He just takes a <finite> line from which he can borrow as much as he needs, and he calls this an infinite line.

applied it analogously to get the premise that a void volume would only be in act through the shape that puts it into a geometrical species: tetrahedron, sphere, etc. This is why he did not address the issue of space itself. He did not know that spaces come in different topological kinds, and he did not anticipate anyone's imagining Euclidian 3-space itself as a ghostly solid, as Newton was to do. To reach the conclusion that any shape would be finite, Aquinas used a premise made explicit below, in the answer *ad* 2: any species of shape is finite. Well, one objects, what about a pyramid of finite base and infinite height? Such species were excluded by another premise: "infinite" pertains to the genus "quantity" only reductively, as a privation of form or number.

q.3, a.5

This last is now open to challenge. Cantor discovered that there are different sizes of infinity, so that a given size of it, say N_0 , counts as a species of quantity, a "transfinite number," rather than a sheer lack-of-number.

ad (2): although being infinite is not against the definition of extent in general, it is nevertheless against the definition of any species of extent: against the definition of "two-meter line," "three-meter line," or "circle," or "triangle," or whatever. But that which is not possible in any species is not possible in the genus. Thus it is not possible for any extent or expanse to be infinite, since no species of it is infinite.

ad (3): the infinity that belongs to quantity, as said above, is matter-infinity. Now by dividing a whole, one approaches the "matter," since the parts play the role of matter. But by adding or extending, one approaches the whole, which plays the role of a form. Therefore no "infinite" is found in adding or extending an expanse, but only in dividing it.

ad (4): motion and time do not occur all at once but bit-by-bit; they have potency mixed into their actualization. But an extent or expanse exists all at once. Since the kind of infinity that pertains to quantity is matter-infinity, and being in potency is characteristic of matter, such infinity conflicts with the whole of an extent but not with a whole of time or the whole of a motion.

Cajetan's Commentary

In the title, 'can' means unqualified, *i.e.* logical possibility.

Analysis of the article, I

In the body of the article, Aquinas does three jobs: (1) he justifies raising the question, showing why it is not pointless but needed; (2) he distinguishes ways of considering a body; (3) he answers the question.

ii. As to job (1), the need for this question emerges from the difference between infinity in size and infinity in essence. They are quite different ideas, and this is supported by physical examples.

There are in fact, please note, two differences between these infinities. One is the sheer distinctness* whereby the one is not the other. This is obvious. Infinity of essence is found in God in the absence of quantity, and one might suppose that among creatures an infinity of quantity is found without that of essence (as one can see from the supposition entertained in the text). The other difference is one of independence: neither implies the other. Infinite essence does not imply infinite quantity, and (as may seem more dubious) infinite quantity does not imply infinite essence. This is shown in the text by supposing an infinitely big fire. It is along the lines of this second difference that the text is to be interpreted, since it is the relevant one here.

Infinite amount and infinite essence

iii. Concerning this part a doubt arises at once that disturbs the minds of beginners. Aristotle says in *Physics VIII* [c.10] that, in an infinite amount of anything, there has to be infinite power.* Therefore, there has to

266b 6-16

† *virtus*

be an infinite essence, because the power of a thing does not exceed its essence. So, if there were an infinite fire, it would have infinite power and hence infinite essence. Aquinas is wrong, then, in saying that if there were an infinite amount, it would not have infinite essence.

The SHORT ANSWER to this is that the objection labors under an equivocation. 'Infinite essence' can be construed two ways:

- * as talking about the infinity proper to essence as essence (which, as came out already, is nothing but non-delimitation, the absence of essential bounds of genus and specific difference);
- * as talking about infinity of any kind, quantitative or whatever. The objection is taking 'infinite essence' the second way, but the text of the article is taking it the first. A sign of this is the fact that throughout this article Aquinas uses 'infinite in essence' and not just 'infinite essence', since the kind of infinity proper to essence is better expressed by the former phrase.

Analysis of the article, II

iv. As to job (2), the distinction is this. A body can be considered in two ways: (1) physically, as a subject having three-dimensional size, and (2) mathematically, as the three-dimensional size and nothing more. The text of the article makes this clear enough.

This is a good place to note that the famous three-fold distinction — mathematical body / physical body / metaphysical body — introduced by Albert the Great in commenting on *Physics I*, does not conflict with the doctrine of St. Thomas (indeed, it fits right in), although it is not appealed to here. For Aquinas, too, a composite of

Tract. 1, c.3

matter and substantial form. taken prior to its aptitude for a quantity and a motion, is a “body” for purposes of metaphysical study. But since such body needs no separate treatment from physical body where the issue of infinity in size is concerned, the thing having a three-dimensional size (the matter-form composite) is treated *here* as one side of the distinction and is called “physical” because, as you find from experience, a body is classified according to the form that gives it its nature.

Analysis of the article, III

v. As to job (3), he answers the question with two conclusions, corresponding to the two sides of the distinction, in the negative. The first conclusion is that no natural/physical body can be infinite in size.

This is supported in two ways:

The first way is *a priori*. [*Antecedent:*] Accidents follow upon substantial forms; [*1st inference:*] so upon a determinate form there follow determinate accidents; [*2nd inference:*] so there follows a determinate quantity-range with a maximum and a minimum. [*3rd inference:*] So every physical body has a determinate size-range with a maximum and a minimum. [*Conclusion:*] Therefore it cannot be actually infinite. — The second inference is supported on the ground that quantity is one of the accidents that follow upon a substantial form. The third inference is supported on the ground that every natural/physical body has in fact a determinate substantial form.

What are “determinate” accidents?

vi. As to the first inference, doubt arises as to what the text means by ‘determinate accidents’. It could be indicating determination down to genus and species, and then the meaning would be that, upon such-and-such a specific form, say, fire, there follow such-and-such accident-kinds (say, heat [rather than cold], light [rather than darkness], this kind of shape [rather than another kind], lightness [rather than heaviness], *etc.*). If this is the meaning, the inference is perfectly sound but does not advance the author’s intent, because, from this interpretation, the second inference (therefore there follows a determinate quantity-range with a maximum and a minimum) does not follow. For the maximum quantity and the minimum are not in diverse kinds. — Alternatively, it could be indicating determination further down to the *degrees* of qualities and the *extent* of quantities. Then the meaning would be that, upon a determinate form, there follow not just these accident-kinds rather than those but also these accident-kinds to *this* degree or extent, rather than that. Beyond doubt, this latter interpretation is the one intended here.

But this interpretation can still be fleshed out in two distinct ways:

(1) Upon a fixed form there follow determinate accidents not only in the whole body but in each and every one of its parts. *E.g.*, upon the form of water there follows a definite quantity not only in the whole

water-mass but also in each and every one of its integral parts. But this interpretation is foreign to the truth and alien to Aquinas’ purpose. There is no minimum part of water or of white, as Aristotle remarks in his book *On Sense and the Sensed*: rather, in any case of a homogeneous mass, in any part a smaller one is latent. c.6

(2) Upon a fixed form there follow determinate accidents in the whole and in the parts of it that can exist separately. This is the meaning directly intended. For in parts merely latent within, there is no “form” properly speaking but (both in act and in potency) a part of a form, whereas in the text of the article, Aquinas says that determinate accidents and a determinate quantity follow upon a determinate *form*.

But with the meaning of the inference thus nailed down, it is still hard to see what makes it sound, or what grounding it has. So, one is thrown into further doubt — first as to the setting of a minimum size, then as to the setting of a maximum size.

Does a homogeneous body have a least separable part or a maximum size?

vii. In his commentary on *II Sent.* d.2, q.9, Scotus tries to prove the opposite and maintains that, in homogeneous substances, there is no minimum part that can exist separately; rather, given any droplet of water, for example, a smaller one can exist. And thus water’s form does not determine for it a fixed quantity-range with a minimum, as Aquinas alleges.

Scotus argues from the definition of quantity (given in *Metaphysics V*) as follows. [*Antecedent:*] The trait whereby quantity can be divided into parts is no more essential to quantity than the trait whereby each such part can be “this something.” [*Inference:*] So the several parts of *any* quantity of water can exist on their own. The antecedent is obvious from *Metaphysics V*, and the inference is obvious of itself, he says. Still, he provides four confirmatory arguments.

(1) As far as matter and form are concerned, the parts satisfy the same definition as the whole. Therefore, since nothing blocks the whole from existing on its own, nothing blocks a part from doing likewise.

(2) Any given part has the nature in question, and so nothing blocks it from being an individual of the same species as the whole. Therefore, it *can* be an individual; hence it can exist on its own.

(3) The parts are causally prior to the whole; therefore they do not preclude being temporally prior, *etc.*

(4) Suppose you have that alleged least amount of water without any corruptive agent or even any container; now suppose it is divided. Either there will be more than one water-in-act (after the division of what *had been* one water-in-act and more than one in potency), and Scotus will have his conclusion; or there won’t be. If there won’t be, then the water will have been annihilated without a corruptive agent [which is contrary to nature]. Proof: because mere division does not corrupt. Proof: because the division would divide the water into homogeneous parts of which the whole consists; ergo it would divide the water into waters. Otherwise [one will have

to say that] water is composed of integral parts which are not waters [which is against Aristotle]. And (says Scotus) the small amount of water present cannot pose an obstacle, because the form of water was already there in that small amount.

viii. Next Scotus attacks the claim that a definite substantial form sets a definite maximum size. He argues from reason and from authority. His argument from reason is that, given any fire, if more combustible material is fed to it, it is sure to burn, and so the fire grows, setting aside outside factors, *ad infinitum*. — He confirms this argument by the authority of Aristotle, who says in *De Anima II*, text 41, “a fire would grow without limit, if fuel were fed to it without limit.” Therefore, there is no “biggest” fire.

c.4:
415a 16

Cajetan’s answer

ix. To clear up this difficulty, note first that I have no intention of covering every kind of maximum and minimum. That would be beside the point here. We are concerned only with whether a maximum and minimum are set by *intrinsic factors*. This is what St. Thomas’ argument needs, as it seeks to show that from an intrinsic factor, *i.e.* from a substantial form, each and every natural substance lays claim to a definite size-range, with a maximum and a minimum. So, I shall bring forward just a few arguments in this dispute. God willing, a separate inquiry into maxima and minima in general will be written someday.

Note secondly that we have from Aristotle two relevant considerations.

c.4:
187b 15

- The one is from *Physics I*, text 36, and says, “the quantity of the whole arises from the quantities of the parts,” *etc.* But of course this statement comes up within a context of prior assumptions. Aristotle presupposes that there is a maximum and concludes that there is a minimum — otherwise the whole would not have a definite quantity.

c.4:
416a 17

- The other is from *De Anima II*, text 41, and says, “everything arising naturally has definite proportion,” *etc.* This statement, as Scotus says, is about animate things, the only ones in which “growth” properly so called occurs, and growth was the topic there.

Well, whatever is the case with that text, St. Thomas has generalized it. What Aristotle was saying there about a soul, Aquinas has applied to every substantial form, namely, that it lays claim to a definite quantity. And he has backed this up according to the teaching given in *Metaphysics V* [c.2] and in *Physics II*, namely, that causes are comparable and proportionate to their effects, and vice-versa. For it follows from this that if, in general, quantity is a natural consequence of substantial form, then a definite quantity is a consequence of a definite substantial form. But the quantity in question only becomes definite through *bounds*. After all, a human body and a body of water do not differ so radically that one could say a different *kind* of quantity follows upon

c.3:
195b 25

the different forms.¹ What follows, rather, is a quantity different in its bounds.

Of course, if the quantities did differ in kind, the basis for Aquinas’ conclusion would still be there. It would lie in the fact that a definite form is of definite strength,² with the result that no natural consequence of it can be limitless. If one got infinite hotness, infinite thinness, infinite quantity, or any other accident to infinity, there would be infinite strength coming from a finite form, which is unintelligible. So, since generic accidents are consequences of physical form, definite accidents are consequences of a definite such form, hence of a factor having a definite strength — and not just these kinds of accidents rather than those kinds, but also these kinds to such-and-such degree or extent, high, low, or medium, but neither more nor less.

* vii

There you have the reason why Aquinas’ reasoning holds not only for quantity but for all accidents.

x. Turning now to Scotus’ argument: I concede the antecedent and deny his inference. My reason is that neither trait of quantity (namely, that it can be divided into parts, and that they can each be “this something”) belongs to quantity as a positive exigence;³ both stand as *per se* compatible⁴ with it. You see this from the size of a heavenly body: its quantity can’t be divided by actual division, nor can any part of it exist separately, and yet it really is a quantity.² So both the traits listed in the definition of quantity can be blocked from appearing by the physical form to which the quantity is joined. Aristotle’s definition applies to the how-much *as such* but can conflict with the how-much *of this*.³

In § vii

† positive
‡ non repugnans

A possible rejoinder to this would use an argument of Scotus’. [*Major:*] Whenever the *per se* consequences of two items are incompatible, the items themselves are incompatible. [*Minor:*] But the conditions laid down by quantity and those laid down by the form of “a minimum thing” are incompatible. Ergo quantity and the form of a minimum thing are incompatible.⁴

¹ He means: it is not as though the one body yielded three dimensions; the other, two, *etc.*

² The heavenly bodies were thought to be immutable in their substance and in their every accident except place.

³ This is how one is forced to speak if one uses the same word, ‘quantity’ or ‘extent’, as the Scholastics did, to mean both a mathematical measure and the physical trait it measures — *e.g.* to mean both a segment of the real number line and a thing’s width. One will have to distinguish them into “quantity as such” (meaning the linearly ordered and everywhere dense real number line, *per se* divisible into parts, each of which is a segment of the line) and “quantity of this” (such as the size of Mars). The embarrassment that the thing measured is physically indivisible is no longer produced by fanciful astronomy, however, but turns up throughout natural science. The width of this bit of H₂O is not divisible into a smaller width of a half bit of H₂O in case the original bit was a water molecule.

⁴ This argument by Scotus is a perfect example of the problem discussed in the previous footnote. It assumes that the matter measured needs the density of the measure.

I may surjoin first by applying the whole argument to [a case that shows there is something wrong with it, namely] the nature of a heavenly body, which is incompatible with division. Secondly (because multiplying difficulties is not solving them), I may say that Scotus' major is true for *per se* consequences which are positive exigencies but not for those that are compatibilities.⁵ Thus accelerability *ad infinitum* belongs to motion as *per se* compatible with it (which is how accelerability is demonstrated of motion); nevertheless, no natural motion can be accelerated to infinity, as you see from *De Caelo II*, text 39. So motion and naturalness [at a set speed] are not incompatible.⁶

c 6;
288b 28

One could also surjoin in another way, however. One could say that those traits of quantity are not to be understood in terms of actual division but in terms of designation [*i.e.* mental or visualized division]. One can say that every quantity is mentally divisible, and that any visualized part can be "this something." This way, too, nothing against our position would follow [from Aristotle's discussion of quantity].⁷

Above, in § vii

* *per se primo*
Cf q 76, a 8

xi. I turn now to Scotus' confirming arguments. As to (1): I deny the consequent. In a case of water that is complete of itself firstly,* the form of water requires conditions which it does not require in a part, and one of these conditions is so-much quantity. The same holds for so-much heat, *etc.*

⁵ Being- ψ followed upon being- ϕ as a positive exigency just in case $\Box(x)(\phi x \supset \psi x)$. For then a ϕ -thing which is not ψ is impossible. As Scotus saw, if not-being- ψ is this kind of consequence of being- ϕ , so that $\Box(x)(\phi x \supset \sim \psi x)$, then it will be impossible for any ϕ -thing to be a ψ -thing. The two kinds will be incompatible. But, says Cajetan, when being- ψ followed upon being- ϕ only as *per se* compatible, the logic was different. Take this compatibility either as $\Box(x)(\phi x \supset \psi x)$, or as $\Box(x)(\phi x \supset \psi x)$, or as $\Box(x)(\phi x \supset \psi x)$; with any of these, there could be a ϕ -thing that was not ψ . One needs to offer the alternatives because it is controversial how to (and whether to) translate '*per se*' into modal terms. So if there is also a χ -kind such that $\Box(x)(\chi x \supset \sim \psi x)$, nothing prevents a particular ϕ -thing from being a χ -thing. The two kinds remain compatible.

⁶ Natural motion is an obsolete theory, but the contrast drawn survives as follows. Conceptually and mathematically, motion is compatible with any rate of speed. One can always think of a faster motion by increasing the numerator or shrinking the denominator of d/t . But no physical body's motion can exceed the speed of light. Thus the motion of this has a limit which does not enter into the concept of motion as *such*.

⁷ In this alternative approach, Cajetan comes closer to the modern distinction between a mathematical model and a physical entity. Divisibility *ad infinitum* is a feature of the model, not of any real body that exists to be modeled. In applying the model to a body — say, to an atom of hydrogen — we think of the atom as a volume of space, within which subvolumes are always conceivable. These subvolumes are thought-produced "designations" but not sizes of physically possible smaller atoms.

Scotus' (2) is answered in much the same way. The part's sharing in the nature [of the whole] is not enough for it to be able to be an individual of the same species [as the whole]; one must add the further conditions needed for it to exist on its own. When it has the nature of water *plus* the conditions for existing on its own, it can be an individual case of water, and not otherwise.

As to (3): I deny the inference where merely latent parts are concerned.

As to the last one, (4), I should say that if one had no more than a minimum fire, and it were divided, it would be both corrupted and annihilated (though both the antecedent and consequent are unrealizable). One does not have to look for any other cause of destruction than the dividing itself. For even though division itself is not corruptive, this particular kind of division — division of a natural minimum — is corruptive in all cases, and annihilative. Also, it is not the case that a least fire is actually one and potentially many (except in the sense in which parts are called "potentially there" in the whole because they do not exist with their own existence but with that of the whole, as the parts of a heavenly body are potentially there in the whole).⁸

xii. As to the points that Scotus makes against a natural maximum, I should say that the claim, 'there is a maximal fire', can be taken two ways:

(1) as talking about an individual fire that is inherently* * *per se* one;

(2) as talking about a fire that is one by aggregation.

I claim that there does exist, on an intrinsic basis, a maximum and a minimum of fire in an individual that is *inherently* one, while, in a case that is one by aggregation, there is no maximum unless from an outside constraint (namely, that nature as a whole does not allow fire to overwhelm the other elements, *etc.*) An individual fire is said to be inherently one when it arises from one (necessarily one in act) form-and-matter in such wise that *no* fires could not come to be there by division alone. Being inherently one does not depend on being indivisible: the whole range from the minimal quantity of fire up to the quantity of two minimal fires, exclusively, constitutes a fire that is inherently one numerically. A quantity of two minima or above makes a fire that is [numerically] one by aggregation. And the same holds for water, the other elements, and other such homogenea.

However, you should not get from this the idea that a plant which is actually one and potentially many [e.g. by planting cuttings] is not *inherently* one. For the parts of a plant are organic, and the complete state natural to an individual plant requires that it have all these parts, *etc.* Such is not the case in homogeneous bodies.⁹

⁸ Conventional histories of science ignore the fact that a Thomist theory of physical minima for each kind of material substance, had at least conceptual room for the discovery of matter's atomic structure, while Scotism did not.

⁹ If a physically divisible plant is still *inherently* one, thanks to its organicity, so is an early embryo despite its liability to twinning, *etc.* Claims that an early embryo is insufficiently one to be a human individual have no basis in historical Thomism.

So, if fuel were fed to any fire [without limit], I grant, it would burn and grow without limit — but it would not be *inherently* one fire numerically. This is how I respond to the quote from Aristotle.

Does quantity come from form or matter?

xiii. Concerning the support given to the second inference [in § v above], a doubt arises. It seems to make a false assumption, *i.e.*, that quantity is among the accidents that are consequences of substantial form, when it is well known that quantity is an accident consequent upon matter. — And it won't help to say that quantity is considered in two ways, generically and as made definite, and that although generically it is a consequence of matter, its determination is a consequence of form. These points, though true, are not relevant. After all, what Aquinas was doing was inferring from the premise that

quantity is a consequence of form
the further point that, therefore
a definite quantity is a consequence of a
definite form.

If he were already assuming that quantity *as to its determination* is a consequence of form, he would be arguing in a circle.

xiv. The ANSWER appears to be that quantity can be taken in two ways:

- (1) according to what there is of *act* in it (and thus it is a consequence of form);
- (2) according to what there is of *potency* in it (and thus it is a consequence of matter).

And since there is much in it that pertains to the topic of potency (as you can see from the definition of quantity in *Metaphysics I*), quantity is listed overall as an accident that comes from a composite by reason of its matter. But since in the context of this article the talk is of quantity in act (the question being about actual infinity), the text is speaking of quantity in its act aspect and attributes that aspect to form. From the fact that quantity, as it is in act, is a consequence of form, Aquinas infers that it is *therefore* rendered definite, like the other consequences of form.

Analysis of the article, IV

xv. The second way of supporting the conclusion is from the scientific account of mobility. [*Major:*] Every natural body has a natural motion (a premise from *De Caelo*, text 5); [*minor:*] no infinite body is capable of natural motion; ergo [no natural body is infinite].

— The minor is supported by using the distinction between natural motions drawn in *De Caelo I* (linear motion and revolution). An infinite body cannot be moved linearly in that everything moving in that way can come to be (at least in part) outside of its [current] place. Nor can such a body revolve, in that lines drawn from the center become more distant from each

other the further they are extended; so in an infinite body they would become infinitely distant, and the one could never come to occupy the place of the other. So a part of an infinite revolving body would never come to be where another part had been; so such a body could not be revolving. The argument is from *De Caelo I*, text 35.

xvi. The second conclusion is that no mathematical body can be infinite in actual size. — This is supported as follows. [*1st inference:*] If a body is in act, it has a form; [*2nd inference:*] so it has a shape; [*3rd inference:*] so it has a bound; therefore it is not infinite. — The first inference is supported on the ground that nothing is in act except through its form. The second is supported on the ground that, in the category of quantity, a body's form is its shape. The third inference follows from the definition of shape. And this argument is taken from *Physics III*, text 40.

On the answer ad (2)

xvii. Concerning the answer to the second objection, notice that, if you look at it carefully, Aquinas is denying that infinity is a state of quantity, although he concedes it is consistent with it. And if you bring up against this a text in *Physics I*, text 15, where it says, “the definitions of finite and infinite agree as to quantity,” the ready answer is that Aristotle's reason for saying this is not because quantity calls for infinity but the other way about: infinity calls for quantity. An “infinite thing” is not intelligible unless it is so-much. In the same vein, we say, “The definition of a vacuum includes a place” [*i.e.* a vacuum is an empty place]. What the philosophers mean by saying this is that, if these items [an infinite thing, a vacuum] are found, they must be found [respectively] in a quantity and in a place, *etc.*

On the answer ad (3)

xviii. In the answer to the third objection, notice this: even though the answer is taken from *Physics III* (as are the other answers — the *ad* (1) from text 71, the *ad* (4) from text 74, and this *ad* (3) from text 66), nevertheless there are statements of St. Thomas that look as though they conflict with it. These statements are in 3 ST q.7, a.12 [*ad* 1], at *In III Sent.* d.13, q.1, a.2, q^a.3 *ad* 1, and even here [in q.7] in the next article in the *ad* (2). In these places he grants the expansion of figures to infinity. In *Physics III*, Aristotle also concedes openly (in texts 59 and 60) that a continuous expanse is increased to infinity, just as it is divided.

xix. The SHORT ANSWER to this (following Aristotle in the same passage) is that an expanse's being increased *ad infinitum* can be thought to come about two ways:

- (1) because additions can be made *in ever smaller** increments; this way (he says) it can go on increasing *ad infinitum* and yet never exceed a pre-set size;
- (2) because any kind of addition can keep being made, so that the result exceeds any pre-set size.

c.5;
271b26 -272a7

c.5;
204b 5ff

c.2;
185a 34

c.13;
1020a 8ff

c.7; 207b 30
c.8; 208a 20
c.6; 207a 26

1, c.2;
268b 27ff

c.2;
185b 34ff

* proportionales

Can real things be infinite in multitude?

*In II Sent. d.1, q.1, a.5 ad 17ff., De Veritate q.2, a.10;
Quodlibet. IX q.1, a.1, XII q.2, a.1 ad 2, In III Phys., lectio 12*

* *multitudo* It seems an actually infinite set* could exist.¹

(1) After all, it is not impossible that what is in potency should be reduced to act. But number is in potency to increase to infinity. Therefore, it is not impossible for an infinite set to exist in act.

(2) Furthermore, it is possible for there to be an individual of any species. But the species of shape are infinitely many. Therefore, there can be infinitely many actual shapes.

(3) Also, things which are not opposed to each other do not impede each other. Well, given ever so many things, ever so many more can be made which are not opposed to them. Therefore, it is not impossible for more and more things to exist simultaneously, up to infinity. Therefore, there can be infinitely many things in act.

ON THE OTHER HAND, Wisdom 11:21 says, "Thou hast arranged all things in weight, number and measure."

ANSWER: there have been two opinions about this. Some writers, like Avicenna¹ and Algazali,² have said that an actually infinite needed set is impossible, but that an infinite incidental set is not.²

An infinite set is called "needed" when the infinitely many things in it are all required for a particular effect to occur. The case cannot arise in the real, because the effect would have to depend upon infinitely many factors; its coming-to-be would never get finished, because there is no getting through an endless series of requirements. An infinite set is called "incidental" when the infinitely many things in it are not all required

for anything. They just happen to be there.

To illustrate, suppose a carpenter is at work. A certain number of things are required for this inherently,* such as the skill in his mind, movement in his hands, and a hammer. If these inherent requirements were multiplied to infinity, no carpentry work would ever get done, because it would depend upon infinitely many causes. But a multitude of hammers whose count keeps rising just because, when one breaks, another is picked up, is an incidental multitude. A carpenter may happen to go through many hammers in doing his job, and it does not matter whether he goes through one hammer, two, quite a few ... or infinitely many, if he kept working forever. In this way, some writers think an infinite incidental set can eventuate.

In fact, this is impossible. For necessarily, every set is in some species of manyness.³ The species of manyness correspond to the species of numbers. But no species of number is infinite, because any given number is a multitude measured by one.³ Hence it is impossible for there to be a set that is actually infinite, be it needed or incidental.

For another thing, a set existing in the real is created, and every created thing is grasped under a definite² intent of the Creator (since an agent does not produce anything for no reason³). Hence it is necessarily the case that all created things are grasped under a definite number. So it is impossible for there to be an actually infinite set even incidentally.

But there can be a *potentially* infinite set. Increase of manyness is a consequence of the division of an expanse. For the more something is divided, the more numerous are the parts resulting. So, just as infinity is found potentially in the dividing of a continuous expanse, because

D, have indefinite or non-finite cardinality? That is the question in dispute here between Aquinas and Avicenna/Algazali.

³ This premise, that *specified* quantity means *finite* quantity, is the peg on which the whole answer hangs. It was used for continuous quantity in the previous article, *ad 2*, and here it is being used for discrete quantity. This use is more limited than it seems, because a discrete quantity was a *numerus*, and a *numerus* could only be a count of material things (as will come out momentarily and in my footnote 4). For *numeri*, Aquinas had the point that every actual set of *bodies* has a specified number. But today his premise faces a new problem. Is every specified number a *natural* one? If the answer is yes, Aquinas wins. The natural numbers are indeed "measured" by one (they begin with 1, and each differs from its successor by 1), so that every natural number is finite; but it is no longer agreed that every species of manyness (*i.e.* every species of "number" in the modern sense) corresponds to a natural number. The transfinite species do not, as we shall see below. This Aquinas did not anticipate, and so he made his premise (too ambitious and) stronger than he needed against the Arabs. After all, hammers break one at a time, and so an ever-rising count of them is forever a natural number.

† *Metaphys.* tr. 6, c.2, tr. 8, c.1
‡ *Philosophiae* I, tr.1, c.11

¹ The Latin '*multitudo*' could be used as an abstract noun, meaning manyness, or as a concrete one, meaning a group. In mathematical English, 'cardinality' is the abstract noun, while 'set' is concrete. The question being asked in this article is whether a set of simultaneously actual things can be *infinite* in cardinality. But there are two ambiguities. First, does 'things' here mean just material things, or does it include items like angels and thoughts? (See notes 1 and 2 on the commentary below.) Second, does '*infinite*' here mean *indefinite* in cardinality, or does it mean *infinite* in cardinality? (See footnote 1 on a. 1 above.)

² Here 'needed' translates '*per se*'. A set of causes was called a *per se* set when its members were so ordered that each one farther along in the order, to operate, depended upon another's being operative farther back in the order; thus no effect could follow unless all members were operative at once. The Mediaevals had arguments from Aristotle against the *infinitas* of such a set, but not against that of a diachronic set, *i.e.*, one including causes whose operation ceased in the past. If the world has an infinite past (as Aristotle thought), diachronic sets of infinite cardinality seem inevitable. Let *D* be such a set, and let *D*_{*t*} be the subset of *D* whose members all exist and operate at the time *t* but are not *per se* ordered. Can

* *per se*

† *multitudo*

‡ *certus*

§ *in vanum*

one is proceeding towards the matter (as shown above), so also and for the same reason, infinity is found potentially in adding to a multitude.⁴

⁴ Aquinas inherited from the Greeks a program for reducing *numerus* to geometry. The idea was to identify “one” with a whole expanse; every larger *numerus*, with the parts into which the whole divided. Thus increase of *numerus* was explained as division into more parts. Then, since parts represented the “matter” of the whole, its potential to be broken down (and “ultimate” parts represented pure potential), further and further division was approach to pure potentiality. So, division *ad infinitum* was approach to pure matter. Well, the *infinitum* towards which division of a continuum proceeded was identified with the *infinitum* towards which addition proceeded, and thus both were identified with pure potentiality. Aquinas’ argument in this paragraph drew its premises from this program.

The analytical geometry of Descartes, of course, launched a counter-program, reducing geometry to *numeri* now freed of material entanglements, and the gains of modern mathematics owe much to this “paradigm shift.” But a reconsideration of infinity was slow in coming. In the 300 years between Descartes and Cantor, nearly every significant mathematician (Leibniz being the famous exception) continued to regard numerical infinity as Aquinas had done: as a potential. Any actual number would be finite. Only after Cantor’s discovery that the *infinitum* towards which addition proceeds (\aleph_0) is specifically different from (and smaller than) the *infinitum* towards which division of a continuum proceeds (τ) did most mathematicians shift to the view that an “actually infinite”

TO MEET THE OBJECTIONS — *ad* (1): each thing in potency is reduced to act after its own manner of being. Thus a day is reduced to act not as a simultaneous whole but [a moment at a time] successively. Likewise the infinity of a set is reduced to act not as a simultaneous whole but [so-many at a time] successively, since, after any given multitude has been reached, a further multitude can be taken *ad infinitum*.

ad (2): the species of shapes get their infinity from the infinity of numbers (for the species of shape are three-sided, four-sided, and so on). So, as a numerically infinite set is not reduced to act in such a way as to be a simultaneous whole, neither is the set of shapes.

ad (3): although it is true that, when certain things are already there, the positing of others is not opposed to them, the positing of infinitely many things is opposed to any species of manyness. Therefore, it is not possible for any set to be actually infinite.

cardinality or set made sense, conceptually.

Their admission of this new topic into mathematical respectability carried no implication, however, about physics. There is still no reason to believe that any set of actually existing things is of infinite cardinality. The finitude of space-time and of everything in it seems increasingly likely. So, an argument against the possibility of an infinite set is now against its physical possibility, not its mathematical possibility unless one sides with the so-called intuitionists (Haitinck and de Brouwer).

Cajetan’s Commentary

In the title, the phrase ‘in multitude’ means in *any* kind of multitude, be it in the category of quantity or not. The question being raised here is thus deeper and more general than the inquiry conducted in *Physics III*,
c.7; 207a 32ff where the whole issue was material multitude, resulting from the division of a continuous expanse. Here the issue is multitude generally, material or immaterial.¹

Analysis of the article, I

- ii. In the body of the article, two jobs are done: (1) Aquinas mentions the opinion of Avicenna and Algazali; (2) rejecting it, he answers the question.
- iii. As to job (1), he mentions two propositions and clarifies their meaning. The one is: ‘An actually infinite *needed* set is impossible’. The other is: ‘An actually infinite incidental set is possible.’ Both are explained by showing what their terms mean. The support for the propositions is that a work would never get done if it depended inherently on infinitely many factors, but contrariwise if the factors are involved incidentally, as one can see from the example in the text.

¹ It is not clear that Cajetan is right about this. Perhaps material multitude is still the sole issue. See notes 2 and 8 below.

- iv. As to job (2), two conclusions are drawn in answer to the question, one for act and one for potency. The *first* conclusion says: it is impossible for an actually infinite set to exist, be it of things needed or incidental. The *second* says: it is possible for a set to be potentially infinite.

The first conclusion is supported with two arguments. [Here is the first.] [*Antecedent:*] Every set actually existing is in some species of manyness; [*1st inference:*] so it corresponds to some species of number; [*2nd inference:*] therefore it is finite. — The antecedent is obvious. The first inference is supported on the ground that the species of manyness correspond to the species of numbers. The second rests on the ground that a number is a multitude measured by one.

Do the species of manyness correspond to the species of numbers?

- v. Regarding that first inference and its support, doubt arises. “Manyness” is more general than “number” and so should have more species than “number”; otherwise, it would not retain a more general definition. It is not true, then, that the species of manyness correspond to the species of number. — A confirming argument is that one can say the species of *finite* manyness correspond to the

species of numbers, but not the species of manyness in general. — Aristotle, too, attests to this, in the chapter on *how much* in *Metaphysics V*, calling a number a finite plurality, as if to make an exception for the infinite.

vi. AS A BRIEF ANSWER, I should say that since we naturally learn unfamiliar things through familiar ones, and since all the species of manyness known in our experience correspond to species of number, it suits the purposes of art to be able to say that every species of manyness corresponds to a species of number. To meet the objection: — it is one thing to say that every species of manyness *is* a species of number (which is false), and another thing to say that every species of manyness *corresponds* to a species of number, *i.e.* is proportional to it (which is assumed in the text, and is true). As a more general thing, “manyness” has many more species than “number,” because it has all the species of number plus all the species of immaterial manyness, which is not “number” properly speaking, *etc.*²

• Hence it becomes clear that the confirming argument is arbitrarily asserted rather than reasonably.³

• The text from Aristotle is neither here nor there. Nothing relevant can be gotten from it, except that an infinite plurality would not be a number. That poses no obstacle to the argumentation of Aquinas but tends rather to confirm his second inference [stated in § *iv*].

Analysis of the article, II

vii. Then the same first conclusion is supported by a second argument as follows. [*Antecedent:*] Every set actually existing in the real is created; [*1st inference:*] so it is grasped under a definite intent of the Creator; [*2nd inference:*] so it is grasped under a definite number. [*3rd inference:*] So it is impossible for such a set to be infinite. — The antecedent is clear. The first inference rests on the ground that an agent does not produce a thing pointlessly; the others are left as obvious.

Problems in the second supporting argument

viii. Doubts arise about this argument — first, that it either makes a false assumption or does not prove its point. The assumption that every created thing is grasped under some definite intent of the Creator uses

² ‘Numerus’ meant a kind of quantity. A quantity was a real size, and since real size came from matter, only material things were said to have *numerus*. Take 12 as a species of *numerus*; a dozen eggs had it, but a dozen angels did not: the angels had an immaterial manyness. Now, it was agreed that every *numerus* was finite, but did every species of manyness correspond to a *numerus*? Aquinas said yes, meaning (I think) that every species of material manyness corresponded to a *numerus*. Cajetan thought he meant that every species of material or immaterial manyness corresponded to a *numerus* — the claim he is now trying to defend. See note 8 below.

³ The confirming argument was arbitrarily asserted, until Georg Cantor’s discoveries provided a reason to assert it.

‘definite’ either to mean that the intent is fixed with definiteness as to the purpose or to mean that it is fixed with definiteness as to the means through which the purpose is to be achieved.

On the one hand, if it means ‘with definiteness as to the purpose’, it can be taken two ways: either (1) to mean that the created thing itself is the definite purpose, or (2) to mean that it *has* a definite purpose. So if the meaning is that every created thing is grasped under an intent of the Creator as being itself a definite purpose, the proposition seems obviously false. Some created thing — say, the lowest — is neither the Creator’s purpose nor any other creature’s purpose. But if the meaning is that every created thing is grasped under some intent of the Creator as being *for* a definite purpose, the proposition is quite true, because God Himself (and participation in His goodness) is the definite purpose of each creature, intended by the Creator. But then the proposition contributes nothing towards proving the point wanted. It doesn’t imply “ergo it is grasped under a definite number.”

On the other hand, if it means that every created thing is grasped under an intent of the Creator as the definite means to the attaining of some purpose, the proposition seems (a) false and (b) unsupported. It seems false because there are other ways a created thing can be grasped under an intent of the Creator. Rather than being itself a means, it can be grasped as connected with, or deriving from, a definite means to an end. One can see as much from Averroes’ comment 38 on *Metaphysics XII*, where he maintains that the separate intelligences are [means:] perpetually moving the heavenly spheres in order that [purpose:] they may be assimilated to God in bringing about events, and that, as consequences deriving from the said means, infinitely many revolutions of the spheres are caused, as are infinitely many effects, and infinitely many souls are created (in Avicenna’s opinion). — At the same time, the proposition so taken seems unsupported because, from this alleged support,

no agent produces something pointlessly,

nothing can be inferred except

therefore an agent acts for a purpose,

conceding which, one may still say that an infinite set is for an outside purpose, namely, God, and preservation of a *perpetual* assimilation-to-God of the agents causing that set, as these philosophers are saying.

ix. Another doubt arises over the same argument. It seems to commit a fallacy of composition, reasoning from any *given* created thing to the whole (even infinite) set of them collectively. For even if any given created thing is the object terminating a definite intent and operation of the Creator, the set of them need not be an object terminating some one such intent and operation. The many created things are the terms of many intentions and creative operations. The infinitely many created things will be the terms of infinitely many intentions and of just as many creative actions.

x. And yet a third doubt arises. Avicenna would agree that the argument’s underlying premise — every created thing is grasped under a definite intent of the

Creator — is true for things created in their own right, but he would deny it for things created incidentally. A set that is incidentally infinite is only incidentally intended (as it says in the article) and hence is only incidentally created. A thing is said to be created incidentally when it just needs to be created by way of preparation for something else. This happens in the case of the intellectual soul (says Avicenna), which is always created when a body suitably disposed for it has been prepared by nature. It so happens that, once created, these souls remain in act forever, since they are incorruptible. Thus the infinite number of them does not count as intended in its own right but as arising in mere consequence of the fact that human generation has been going on forever.

Answering these difficulties

xi. To clear up the reasoning process in this argument, note first that 'created' can be taken *narrowly* (so as to contrast with 'caused') or *broadly* (so as to be synonymous with 'caused'). The highly general argument in this article, using the broad premise that an agent does not produce randomly, suggests that 'created' be taken in the broad way here. Yet the formal sense of the word calls for it to be taken narrowly.

In fact, it makes little or no difference which way it is taken.

- If one takes it narrowly, one should weigh the wording of the argument at the point where it says "produce something," *i.e.*, *attain the proper terminus of an operation*. This excludes all mere consequences of the proper and intended work of the agent, and it is true of every creature that it is a "proper terminus" of creation.

- If one takes 'created' broadly, one should restrict 'caused' to mean what is properly-speaking caused, as opposed to consequences of what is so caused.

Either way, the topic is restricted to actually *existing* things caused or created, so that things that have perished are excluded. This is suggested in the text by the word 'Creator'. For He also preserves what is "created"; it goes on being created in a way, because it is being conserved. Anything "created" is depending on the Creator both in coming to be and in staying in being. By contrast, [the phrase] 'grasped under an intent of the Creator' covers not only what is grasped as actual but also what can be grasped, as non-actual.⁴

xii. From the fact that the proposition used by Aquinas is only about things actually existing, which are the proper termini of the action, one gets a solution to all the doubts and objections. The Creator can *both* order

⁴ To put the point a little differently, Cajetan is conceding that the set of "things intended by the Creator" is composed diachronically, having members that exist at one time or another, but he is denying that the set of "things created" can be composed that way. This set can only be synchronic, *i.e.* composed of things co-existing at a given time, because a "created thing" properly so called is a thing rendered actually existent. To perish is precisely to cease being a "created" thing.

the things actually existing as means to achieve some purpose *and* intend them all as a purpose [or purposes] to be achieved through something else. For if a thing is posited to exist in act, the production of it is thereby posited to be terminated; as a consequence, the thing can be directed as a means to achieve something, and (likewise) it can have been a purpose intended and achieved *via* some means. For neither fitting the definition of a purpose nor fitting the definition of a means conflicts with being a thing that actually exists. Therefore, since properly speaking "intending" is only the intending of a purpose and of the means to achieve a purpose, everything existing in act is graspable under a definite intent of the Creator both as a purpose and as a means:

- *as an end*, because no creature is so lowly that it is not (or could not be) the purpose of some other, and because it is at least the definite purpose of the act that produced it; and because status 'as a purpose' is taken here to mean 'as far as that status goes':* having what it takes to *be* a purpose does not conflict, as far as that goes, with any actually existing creature (though one may happen not to be the purpose of any other);
- *as a means*, because, coming after any given creature, there are still many productive actions and worthwhile pursuits[†] towards which a creature already existing can be ordered as a means.

* *ex se*

† *nobilitates*

The first objection brought against this latter [the means status] poses no obstacle. As I have already made clear about "a created thing" formally so called, a *consequence* cannot be the proper terminus of an act of creation; rather, a created thing has to terminate this act. But such a thing has to be intended as a purpose or as a means to a purpose. — Nor is it true that the proposition is unsupported. From the assumed point that

an agent does not produce something for no reason,

Aquinas deduced quite soundly, from the outward operation's *purpose*, the interior intention's terminus. For from the fact that an agent's operation is not pointless but is towards a definite proper terminus, it follows necessarily that the producer's intent deals with a definite term also, because the agent's intent *establishes* the purpose for his operation.

Thus it is clear how to answer the first doubt.

xiii. To clear away the second doubt, I say that a whole set of things existing in act can be taken as one created entity, since it does not exceed the universe, and the universe meets the defining conditions of being "one created thing" [in fact, the] first intended. Hence not just single creatures but all of them together, now coexisting in act, are graspable under a definite intent of the Creator. So no fallacy is being committed in this context, where Aquinas [is conducting a *reductio* in which he] draws from the adversary's proposition,

an actually infinite set exists,

the inferences that

so, it is grasped under a definite intent, *etc.*

and

therefore it is not infinite, because infinity in manyness conflicts both with meeting the conditions for being a means and with meeting the conditions for being an end.⁵

xiv. To clear away the third doubt, I say that 'incidentally created' can be understood in two ways:

(1) as 'incidentally' [*per accidens*] is opposed to 'in its own right' [*per se*]; in this sense there is nothing created incidentally; every created thing is intended in its own right by the Creator, just as each one is, in its own right, the term of a creative act (otherwise, it would not emerge out of nothing);

(2) as 'incidentally' is opposed to 'thanks to itself firstly' [*per se primo*] and means the same as 'thanks to something else' [*per aliud*]; in this sense there are things created "incidentally," that is, thanks to something else, at least by way of being occasioned by something else.⁶

In this way, both for us Thomists and for our opponent here [Avicenna], the intellectual soul is created incidentally (though more so in our doctrine than in his). But this does not compromise the fact that each soul is intended in its own right individually, as it is created in its own right. While the souls are only related incidentally to each other, they are related in their own right to the One creating them, in that they are intended and produced by Him in their own right; indeed, they are intended more thoroughly "in their own right" than anything corruptible, since incorruptible things are the more complete and worthy parts of the universe, hence the more intended parts. A sign of this is the fact that, in the sphere of active things, only species are intended in their own right, since only they are perpetual. Now, since the supposition here is not only that each soul is in act but also that an infinity of them co-exist in act, it follows (as I said above) that all of them would be intended and produced in their own

⁵ Having argued that a set of things co-existing at a time *t* could count as a "created thing" and thus as clearly intended and thus as a definite purpose and/or a definite means, Cajetan finally comes to the neuralgic point in the Common Doctor's thumbnail sketch of an argument. It is this: an infinite set of such things would not meet the conditions to be a definite purpose and/or means. Only a finite set could meet these conditions. But why? This is what the readers need to be told at this point, and Cajetan abandons us to figure it out for ourselves.

The only answer this translator can see comes from confusing 'infinite' with 'indefinite'. Let 'finite' mean 'of definite cardinality', so that 'infinite' means 'of no definite cardinality'. A set of indefinite size could hardly stand as a definite purpose and could hardly be a definite means to any purpose. Realizing this, Avicenna tried to salvage a set of actually existing human souls, of no definite cardinality, by allowing that set to have been "incidentally" created, escaping the status of having been intended by God in any definite capacity. To this dodge, Cajetan is about to turn in §xiv.

⁶ On '*per se primo*'; see §iii of the commentary on I ST q.3, a.2, on p. 69 above, and my footnote 1 on p. 70.

right, and not incidentally, as Avicenna had claimed], so that they would be graspable under a definite intent; indeed, as far as they themselves are concerned, they would be producible in act all at once.⁷

xv. Note what you are learning from this passage: Aquinas secures for himself every way of agreeing with Aristotle's teaching as he interprets it. For he holds that Aristotle thought intellectual souls were immortal and as numerous as our bodies; and it is certain that Aristotle thought human generation had been going on forever. From these premisses it obviously follows that human souls are by now actually infinite in number — which is what Aquinas here sees to be impossible, but which he elsewhere says (in 2 CG, c.81) does not conflict with Aristotle's doctrine [rejecting an actual infinity] in *Physics III* [c.5] and in *De Caelo I* [c.6], because in those passages [says Aquinas] the topic was material infinity.⁸

Why can't a set be actually infinite? Further objections to the first conclusion itself

xvi. Regarding this conclusion, many arguments attacking it are put forward by Gregory [of Rimini] and Adam [Parvus?] and are reported by Capreolus [in his commentary on I Sent. d.43 and d.44, q.1. a.2. concl. 3]. But they all boil down to three.

First: there are infinitely many actual fractional parts in a continuous body; so there can be equally many separate ones; so [an actually infinite set can exist]. To support the inferences, they say: every existing non-relational thing can be conserved (by divine power) in a state stripped of what is not in its essence; but the connectedness of one part to another is not in any part's

⁷ Therefore, such a set would be a definite purpose and/or means, and so it would be of definite cardinality. Fine. But now comes the post-medieval question: Why couldn't that definite cardinality be transfinite?

⁸ This confusing paragraph seems to be a mess of Cajetan's own making. Aquinas read Aristotle as holding human souls to be immortal and to compose by now an infinite set. This last Aquinas thought wrong in point of fact; but he was prepared to agree with Aristotle that, while every material multitude-in-act had to be finite, some spiritual one, such as the set of immortal souls, could be infinite. Now it is impossible that a set of actually co-existing things should fail to be definitely so-many. In that case, Aristotle admitted a definite species of manyness which did not correspond to a finite number (so Thomas read him in 2 CG c.81 and agreed). In that case, as Cajetan understood matters, Aquinas was changing his mind here. He was now holding that every species of even immaterial manyness does correspond to a finite number.

If Cajetan were right, this article would do what most neo-Thomists have taken it to do: pit Aquinas against Cantor on a topic of pure mathematics, making the Angelic Doctor an ally of Haitinck and de Brouwer. But it would also pit Aquinas against himself. For in this same *Summa*, at q.14, a.12, Aquinas asks whether God grasps infinitely many distinct knowables, and he answers with a clear yes. It seems overwhelmingly likely, therefore, that Aquinas never changed his mind, and that this article is solely about material multitudes.

essence; ergo [each can be conserved by God in a state stripped of connection to the others, and hence in a state of being separate from the others].

Second: at the initial point of each fractional part of an hour, God can create an angel; so in an hour, He can create infinitely many in act; [therefore, God can create infinitely many things co-existing]. As a confirming argument they say: anything God can do successively as regards perduring things, He can do all at once.⁹

Third: God does not have less power than infinitely many souls would have, if they existed; nor does He have less power than hellfire. But the souls could do infinitely many things at once, and hellfire could torment infinitely many souls, if that many were in Hell at once. Ergo [God can make infinitely many effects at once].

xvii. To the first two arguments I can REPLY BRIEFLY. These do commit a fallacy of composition. For although connectedness to another part is not a defining trait of any individual part, it is a defining trait of them all together [*qua* parts]. For being *in potency* [to be divided or separated] is a defining trait of “the parts” all together, and separateness of each from the others conflicts with this. Numbering “all” the initial points of the fractional parts of an hour also involves this fallacy; for the count of them is supposed to be complete by successive enumeration by the end of the hour, and yet they are supposed to be infinite. If they are infinite, they will *never* be counted [by successive enumeration]; and if the count of them is complete, they will not be infinite. God, therefore, can create at particular initial points, but not at all of them. — We thereby have an answer to the confirming argument:

⁹ Taking an hour’s time as continuous, like the real number line from zero to one, this argument posits a scenario in which God would create in an hour as many angels as there are left-closed intervals in that line. Let there be τ many. The argument sees no difficulty about creating that many successively, hence none about creating that many at once.

neither all-at-once, nor successively, can God produce an actual infinity of things existing.¹⁰

As to the third argument, one can grant the whole thing and still have nothing against the conclusion we are defending. The reason why an actual infinity of things cannot exist is not a lack of divine power but an impossibility of the thing to be made. The conditionals in the argument are true and consistent with this. To take a similar case:

if a man is a lion, he can roar.

But it does not follow that God can make a man who can roar.¹¹

Analysis of the article, III

xviii. The second conclusion answering the question is this: a set can be found that is infinitely many in potency. The support is as follows: [*antecedent:*] the infinite is found in potency corresponding to the dividing of a continuum; [*inference:*] therefore a set that is infinitely many is found [in potency]. This inference is supported on the ground that increasingly many result from the division of an expanse. The antecedent, meanwhile, is clear and is supported on the ground that the division is going towards matter.

¹⁰ If Cajetan’s argument were just from countability, it would rule out God’s creating τ many angels but not His creating \aleph_0 many at a “Cantor dust” of moments. But his argument is from successive enumeration. It succeeds because \aleph_0 is an inaccessible cardinal. This means that there is no counting up to it. There is no finite number N , for example, such that $N + 1 = \aleph_0$.

¹¹ For material or strict indicative conditionals, it is a logical fact that the conditional is automatically true in case its antecedent is false or impossible. Analogously for counterfactual (subjunctive) conditionals, it is a logical fact that the conditional is automatically true in case its antecedent is unrealizable. *E.g.*, if wishes were horses, a beggar would ride. This is the point to which Cajetan is appealing. It is impossible (and so unrealizable) for a set of co-existent things to have no definite cardinality. So ‘if such a set existed, then ____ would be the case’ is true no matter how one fills the blank.

Inquiry Eight: Into God's existence in things

Because it seems that a limitless being would be everywhere and in everything, consideration must now turn to whether this applies to God. Four issues are raised:

- (1) is God "in" all things? (3) is God everywhere "by essence, power, and presence"?
(2) is He everywhere? (4) is being-everywhere a trait unique to God?

article I

Is God in all things?

In I Sent d.37, q.1, a.1, 3 CG c.68

It seems incorrect to say that God is "in" all things.

Ps 112 4 (1) For what is *above* all is not in all. But God is above all things, as a psalm says: "Exalted is the Lord above all nations," etc. So God is not "in" all things.

q 20
Pl. 40, 15 (2) Also, what is "in" something is contained by it. But God is not contained by things; rather the reverse. So God is not "in" things; they are in Him. This is why Augustine says in his *Book of 83 Questions*: "Rather than say that *He* is somewhere, it is more correct to say that *He* is the *where* where all things are."

(3) On another front, the more powerful an agent is, the farther his action reaches. But God is the most powerful of all. Therefore, His action can reach even those things that are distant from Him, and He does not need to be in them all.

(4) Furthermore, the demons are some things, and it is not the case that God is in the demons, because "light hath no fellowship with darkness," as it says in II Corinthians 6:14. Therefore God is not in all things.

ON THE OTHER HAND, a thing *is* wherever it is at work. But God works in all things, according to the statement in Isaiah 26:12, "all our works, O Lord, thou hast accomplished within us." Therefore, God is "in" all things.

ANSWER: God is in all things, not as a part of their essence, nor as an accidental trait, but as an agent is "at" that on which it acts.¹ For necessarily, whenever an agent acts on some *x* without intermediary, the agent is together with that *x* and touches upon it with its power. (This is the basis on which Aristotle proves in *Physics VII* that the changer and the changed have to be together.) Now God, thanks to His essence, is existence itself, and so His distinctive* effect has to be created existing, just as the distinctive effect of fire is setting things afire. But this effect is one which God is causing in things not only

c.2,
243a 4

* proprius

¹ Aquinas inherited as Christian orthodoxy the statements that God has no proper location in space, that He is *in* all things, and that He *contains* all things. The task of this article was to find a sense in which these claims would come out true.

when they first begin to be but also for as long as they are kept in being — just as the sun is causing light in the air for as long as the air remains illumined. It must be the case, therefore, that however long a thing has being, in whatever way it has being, is how long God is "at" that thing.

A thing's being, however, is that which is most "with-in" it, and deepest, since being stands form-wise [*i.e.* as actuation] to every other factor in a thing (as came out in points made above). Hence it must be the case that God is "in" all things, and deeply so.*

q.4, a.1 ad 3
* *intimè*

TO MEET THE OBJECTIONS — *ad* (1): God is above all things by the excellence of His nature, and yet He is "in" them by causing their being, as I said.

ad (2): although corporeal things are said to be "in" something as in a container, spiritual ones contain the things that they are "in," as the soul contains the body. God, too, therefore, is "in" things as their container. At the same time, thanks to a certain resemblance to the corporeal situation, all things are said to be "in" God, inasmuch as they are contained by Him.²

ad (3): no agent's action, no matter how powerful the agent, reaches anything distant, except to the extent the

² The logic seems to be this. In a domain comprising both corporeal things and spiritual ones, the equivalence

(E1) x is in $y = y$ contains x
holds in case $V(x)$ and $V(y)$ are both corporeal or in case $V(x)$ is corporeal and $V(y)$ spiritual. It breaks down when $V(x)$ is spiritual but $V(y)$ corporeal, for then a different equivalence

(E2) x is in $y = x$ contains y
holds, because a spiritual thing may contain a corporeal one, but never the reverse. (Nothing of either kind contains God.) The claim proved in the *corpus* yields a special case of (E2):

(x)(God is in $x =$ God contains x),
but here at the end of the *ad* (2) Aquinas makes further allowance. Since God contains all things, one may say that they are all in Him, as a special case of (E1):

(x)(God contains $x = x$ is in God).
By transitivity, (x)(God is in $x = x$ is in God). God is the singularity at which being-in is symmetrical.

agent acts upon it through intermediaries. God's power is superlative because He acts within all things without intermediaries. Nothing is far from God in the sense of not having God in it. Rather, we call things "far" from God because of their being unlike Him by nature or because of their failing to be like Him by grace, just as we call Him "far above" all things because of His being more excellent by nature than they.

ad (4): in the talk of demons, we understand both a nature, which is from God, and a culpable deformity of

it, which is not from Him. For this reason, one should not allow the claim, 'God is in the demons', to stand without a qualifier;* one should add, 'insofar as they are natural realities'. But when the terms name a nature not deformed, one may say that God is in them without a qualifier.³

* *absolutè*

³ 'God is in ϕ -things' cannot stand without a qualifier unless 'x is a ϕ -thing' describes x as God creates it. This test is failed by any term ' ϕ ' that carries privation in its sense or a negative evaluation.

Cajetan's Commentary

In the title, 'God' is taken formally, as a term speaking of God's nature as opposed to His power, so that the question is not about God in one or another power He has but about God in His substance. One can see as much from the words introducing q.8 and from the words introducing this whole treatise that runs from q.2 to q.14. To understand this better, please distinguish two ways of taking the word 'God': (1) in Himself, and (2) in His influence.* The question here is not whether God's *influence* is in all things, but whether He Himself is.

* *virtus diffusa*

The expression 'is in' is not being used in a pre-determined way, to mean some particular manner of being-in things, but is being used vaguely and in general. Take careful note of this, because Scotus misunderstood this title in his remarks on *II Sent.* d.2, q.5. But for his misunderstanding to be perceived, Scotus' argument is better postponed until after we have looked at the conclusion which this article reaches.

Analysis of the article

ii. In the body of the article, there is one conclusion, answering the question in the affirmative, and having two parts: God is (a) in all things and (b) deeply so.

First part (a) is supported. [*Antecedent:*] God is, by His essence, existence itself; [*1st inference:*] so His distinctive effect is created existing, not only as it comes about but also as it is conserved; [*2nd inference:*] ergo He is in all things as an agent, not as an accident or part. Therefore, He is in all things.

The first inference is illustrated by a comparison: as a fire's distinctive effect is setting-things-on-fire. The point about the conservation of being [that it is also His effect] is illustrated, too: as light is being caused by the sun for as long as the air is illumined. The second inference is supported on the ground that, necessarily, every agent is conjoined to that upon which it acts without an intermediary. This is supported by the authority of *Physics VII*, text 8: "the changer and the changed must be together."

243a 4

Part (b) of the conclusion, namely, that God is deeply within things, is supported thus. [*Antecedent:*] Being stands form-wise to every other factor in a thing; [*1st inference:*] therefore it is in the thing more deeply than any

other factor; [*2nd inference:*] therefore it is deeply within each. Therefore God, as the sole activator of being, is deeply within all things.

Understanding this reasoning process

iii. As regards this reasoning process, first its overall form needs to be clarified, then its terms, and thereafter particular points within it will be examined.

[As to the logical form], notice that the first inference drawn in the text [from 'God is existence itself' to 'His effect is created existing'] does not go so far as to include the two specifiers (to the effect that [created] existing depends on Him *both* as it comes about *and* as it is kept) but only gets to the point that created existence is His distinctive effect. These further points seem to be included in the consequent because, in the text, the second of them is left entirely unsupported; it is just illustrated with the example of light. In fact, the [further-reaching] inference is valid, but that will come out below, when the topic will be the dependency and conservation of things. The reason these specifiers are just touched on superficially here is the fact that they will be supported at the appropriate point below.

q.104, a.1

iv. [As to the terms in the article's reasoning,] notice next that, in the consequent of the second inference [from 'God's effect is created existing' to 'He is in things as an agent'], the phrase 'without intermediary' is implicit [after 'agent']. For as the supporting argument makes clear, we are talking here about a proximate agent, or one without intermediary, as such. And we are not talking about just any way of acting immediately but the way which is immediacy of referent. For an agent can be said to be producing its effect "immediately" in two senses (as Aquinas teaches in 3 *CG*, c.70), namely: with immediacy of power, and with immediacy of referent.

• There is immediacy of power [*immediatio virtutis*] when the agent's own active power is attaining the effect and does not depend upon any other active power to have this contact. This is why, the higher the agent, the more "immediately" it acts in the sense of immediacy of power; for a lower agent acts *via* the power of a higher one [*i.e.* the lower is empowered by the higher], and not *vice-versa*.

• There is immediacy of referent [*immediatio supposi-*

ti), by contrast, when, between the referent [described as] acting and its effect, there is no *subordinate* cooperating referent. This is why, the lower the agent, the more “immediately” it acts in the sense of immediacy of referent.

Since the talk here is about God in Himself, as to whether *He* is in things, referential immediacy is the relevant kind. As a result, the inference we are discussing was intended to reach the point that God is in all things as a referentially immediate agent, that is, as the proximate and referentially closest agent — such that, between God and any given thing, no other referent activating that thing intervenes.¹

That this is the meaning Aquinas intended is clear *both* from the textual support he adduced (since the point that the changer and the changed have to be “together” holds true only for this kind of proximate agent and changer) *and* from the fact that, given only immediacy of power, one could not draw the inference that ergo God in Himself is in all things but only that He is in them by way of His influence and participated power (Avicenna conceded that much, while holding that God in Himself had produced only the first of the Intelligences). But how this is so will be easy to show.²

v. Notice thirdly [as a further matter of terminology] that the consequent of the first inference, *i.e.*, “therefore His distinctive effect is [created] existing,” can be understood in two ways relevant to present purposes:

(1) Taken one way, ‘distinctive’ contrasts with ‘common’, and then the meaning is that [created] existing is an effect coming from God alone, to the exclusion of any in-

¹ The term ‘referent’ [*suppositum*] was introduced above in q.3, a.3. It has been clear since then that a *suppositum* was the sort of *res* of which one was prepared to say, “This is a case of *what* exists,” rather than the sort of thing of which one would say, “This is just a factor in (or modifier of) *what* exists.” For more on *supposita*, see the commentaries on q.3, a.7 above and on q.13, a.1 below.

² Suppose a *per se* set of causal factors (for which notion see q.7, a.4) produces an effect *e*. In this ordered set, the first causal factor, *c*₁, is the one whose operation puts the others into operation relevantly to producing *e*, and so their powers-to-act (relevantly) are dependent upon *c*₁’s power, while *c*₁’s power-to-act (relevantly) is not dependent upon theirs. This situation is expressed by saying that *c*₁ acts with immediacy of power towards producing *e*. Such immediacy, in other words, is the trait of a self-starter in a causal series. But so long as there are other causal factors in the series, which work as subordinate, secondary (or instrumental) causes activated by *c*₁ and contributing to the production of *e*, *c*₁ does not act with immediacy of referent towards producing *e*; in that respect, *c*₁ acts through the other factors, *c*₂ ... *c*_n, and it is the last of these that act(s) with immediacy of referent.

So, immediacy of power does not imply immediacy of referent. But the two immediacies will coincide in the odd case where the *per se* set of causal factors has only one member: a self-starter *c*₁ which also produces the whole of the effect *e* without the help of any subordinate cause. Such is the situation here, where *c*₁ is God and *e* is the existence of a creature according to the Thomist account of creation. God acts immediately in making things exist, with both immediacies.

intermediate efficient cause. This is the meaning that Scotus took up in his remarks on *IV Sent.* d.1, q.1, and wrongly so. But this point will be argued out below, in Inquiry 45 [a.5].

(2) Taken the other way, ‘distinctive’ contrasts with ‘not one’s own’.* In context, what is “not a thing’s own” is all that it has thanks to another* (even if it has it of itself[†]). So taken, then, ‘distinctive’ is a synonym of ‘of itself firstly’ [*per se primo*]. This is the intended meaning here, and the true meaning. For [created] existing is the of-itself-firstly effect of the First Cause; and, in every case, a thing’s existing is exactly what it takes for that thing to be [an effect] from the First Cause, as will become clear in the passage [in q.45] just mentioned. And this is what the inference in this article has focally in view, since it wants to say that, from the Case which is existing thanks to its essence, every case of existing, as such a case, is derived as a distinctive effect, that is, as an of-itself-firstly effect.

While there are many senses in which ‘existing is God’s distinctive effect’ would come out true, let just one suffice for present purposes — the one by which the drift of this article becomes clearest. On that policy, the article is saying that existence is the distinctive or of-itself-firstly effect of God, because God alone can produce all the factors required for a thing to exist, whatever that thing may be. Each thing is material or else immaterial. If it is material, matter is required for it to exist, and matter is created and conserved by God alone: if it is immaterial, it is from God alone, as will be shown below, when God’s power-to-create is discussed [in q.45, a.5 *ad* 1]. Thus in each and every thing, there is some factor produced and conserved by God alone acting proximately and without intermediary — in material things, the substance’s prime matter; in things separate from matter, their very substance. And this is why God is called the active cause of all things “immediately” with immediacy of referent. For it does not say in the text that God is the immediate active cause of everything in *every regard* but in *at least one regard*, namely, in regard to existing: for He produces each and every thing immediately as regards some factor required for that thing’s existing. And this is why Aquinas takes as the middle term of his argument the causality that God has *vis-à-vis* existing itself, which has to be common to everything there is — since what does not participate in existing *is not*.

vi. Notice fourthly that in the support for the conclusion’s second part, existing is said to be deeper and more inward than other factors because it stands form-wise to them all. And rightly so. For there is nothing in anything that is not actuated by existing, be it an essential part or an integral part, be it a substantial trait or an accidental one: existence touches every level* and every case of what-it-takes[†] to be thus or such. Yet there are many factors in a thing which are not its substance, or not its body, *etc.* Ergo what is deeper than all and stands as the last item in a thing’s analysis and comes first to terminate its synthesis is *existing. Etc.*

* *alium*
† *per aliud*
‡ *per se*

* *gradum*
† *ratio*

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* *altecum*
† *per aliud*
‡ *per se*

* *gradum*
† *ratio*

¹ The term ‘referent’ [*suppositum*] was introduced above in q.3, a.3. It has been clear since then that a *suppositum* was the sort of *res* of which one was prepared to say, “This is a case of *what* exists,” rather than the sort of thing of which one would say, “This is just a factor in (or modifier of) *what* exists.” For more on *supposita*, see the commentaries on q.3, a.7 above and on q.13, a.1 below.

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A difficulty from Scotus

vii. Concerning the meaning of the article's conclusion (and its title), doubt arises from Scotus' remarks on *I Sent.* d.2, q.5. "I am asking," he says there, "what you mean to ask and conclude. Either it is God's presence in all things by reason of operation, or else it is His presence by reason of limitlessness."

* immensitas
† petitio principii

• If the former, the argument is fallaciously circular[†], because its conclusion (that God is in all things, *i.e.*, conjoined to all things as agent) is the same as its middle term, as one can see from the text. Moreover, this conclusion is not germane, because your larger question is about the presence that goes with God's limitlessness, as you say in the words introducing q.8.

• If the latter is what you mean, then God's presence by limitlessness is established in your doctrine *a posteriori*, from His presence as an agent *qua* an agent. And in that case, [since *a posteriori* proofs argue to what is further back, *i.e.* prior, in natural order] it follows that, in terms of natural priority,³ a spiritual substance is in a place *prior* to producing something there — which you deny in your claims about the place of angels."

viii. IN RESPONSE TO THIS, I should say that God's "conjunction" with things can be taken two ways:

(1) to mean the very *contact* whereby God touches a thing through Himself;

(2) to mean a *relation of presence* whereby, using relational language, one says that God is, in Himself, "present to" something.

If 'conjunction' is taken the first way, then God's being-in-things is nothing other than His immediately producing and conserving things. If taken the second, then God's being-in-things is a relation of reason arising in God as a consequence of the said contact.⁴

ix. To meet Scotus' objection, then, I should say that, formally speaking, the question being raised in this article is about the presence that pertains to limitlessness, but not about the one that Scotus imagines to be prior to all contact. Rather, the presence coming from limitlessness (unless you are thinking of presence in potency rather than presence in act) is unintelligible apart from the existence of both sides [in the relation, *God* is in *x*]; therefore this presence

• *either* is identically God's contact with creatures, whereby creatures come to be and are, such that it is impossible for anything to crop up or exist which is not so

³ On "natural priority," cf. § viii in the commentary. on q.7, a.1.

⁴ The talk of being-in or being-present could be taken strictly, to indicate a relation (real or of reason), or more loosely, to indicate a basis or foundation for such a relation. In the case at hand, Cajetan calls the relevant foundation *contactus*, which he explains as immediate effectuation (with either sort of immediacy), and which he probably classified in the category of action. Unlike contemporary analysts, the Medievalists did not automatically reckon two-or-more-place predicates as relations. Some they took as actions, though they conceded that every transitive action founds a relation.

touched by God — much as the presence of an infinite body to all places would be its contact with all places, such that it would be impossible to posit a place that was not being touched by it (though, in this comparison, one's imagination goes wrong, as local contact presupposes that both sides [in the relation, *x* is in place *y*] are there, whereas divine contact does not presuppose creatures but produces them; otherwise it would not be that by which things come to be and are);

• *or else* it is a relation of presence, wherein God is called "present" by an actual relation to the creature; this relation obviously arises after the creature exists.

In the present context, then, one should say that what is being asked about is presence-by-limitlessness *vaguely taken* [that is, in either meaning].

And it doesn't follow that a spiritual substance has another presence prior to its operation, because presence-by-limitlessness coincides with presence-thanks-to-operation.

Nor does it follow that there is a fallacious circularity. [The issue is either God's presence vaguely taken or His presence not vaguely taken.] On the one hand: suppose the question and conclusion are about the presence vaguely taken. Then the middle term is about His presence specifically by way of being an immediate agent, and thus the argument is a case of reasoning affirmatively from a more specific description to a more general one.* On the other hand [suppose the issue is God's presence not vaguely taken. Then there are two possibilities]: suppose the question and conclusion is about the being-conjoined which is contact itself. Then the middle term is an explanation of such contact, and again there is no circle, since one is concluding that a subject has a certain state[†] *via* an explanation of that state. One is showing that God is, through Himself, conjoined to all things *via* an explanation of what it takes to be conjoined through oneself; [in His case] this is nothing other than to produce and conserve all things with immediacy of referent. [Alternatively]: suppose the question and conclusion are about God's being in things by a relation of presence; then the middle term is rather like the cause or foundation of the major term ['present to *x*'].

Obviously, then, if the issue in this article is understood to be about God's being-in-things non-vaguely, the reasoning process in the article is *a priori*, going from the definition of a state or from the foundation of a relation. But if the issue is about God's presence vaguely, then the reasoning is from specific to general affirmatively. In no case is there any fallacy.

* *ab inferentia ad superius* of *firmative*²

† *passio*

Another difficulty from Scotus

x. On the support for the second inference [going from "God's distinctive effect is created existing" to "ergo He is in all things"], doubt arises from Scotus' remarks on *I Sent.* d.37, q.1. Scotus contends that:

(1) the proposition used by Aquinas ("necessarily, whenever an agent acts on some *x* without intermediary, it is together with that *x*") is false [in its modality];

(2) Aristotle's principle ("the changer and the changed

* *accidentals* must be together') is something like a contingent* truth, and

(3) our reasoning, using these premises to infer from them that God is (in Himself) present to all things, is not valid.

His contention (1), then, he supports thus. [*Antecedent:*] The sun acts immediately where it is not; [*conclusion:*] ergo [an immediate agent does not have to be conjoined to what it is acting upon]. He supports this antecedent on the ground that the sun causes a mineral or compound to form in the bowels of the earth and that the causal source[†] proximately eliciting such a formation is the sun's substance; so [that substance acts where it is not].

† *principium*

[In support of this] it is obvious [he says] that the sun's substance is that from which the mineral compound comes, and the point that it is the proximate source is proved from the premise that an accident, be it light or anything else, cannot be the origin of a substance. — Furthermore [he argues], the fact that a natural agent cannot act upon a distant thing unless it first acts upon a close one owes its explanation to one or another of these two reasons: (a) because two powers, one subordinate to the other, work together in the same agent, or else (b) because the agent's active power is imperfect, being unable to produce a more finished effect except by going from the less complete to the more so. An example of where the first reason holds is the sun: [its powers to generate and illuminate are so ordered that] it does not generate *x* without illuminating an intermediary between itself and *x*. An example of where the second reason holds is a begetter: he does not beget except *via* altering and disposing, etc. So, the fact that an agent cannot act upon a distant thing without acting upon a close one is due to these conditions. It is not flatly "necessary" [as Aquinas had claimed]; rather, there could be an agent to whom neither condition applied.

This leads to his contention (2): Aristotle's claim about the changer and the changed just happens to hold true (says he) because of these same conditions.

Contention (3) he supports on the ground that God is an omnipotent agent, in whom neither of these conditions is found. As a result: from the fact that He produces some *x* "immediately," it does not follow necessarily that He in Himself is present to *x*.

Moreover, this third contention is confirmed, he says, from two angles.

(a) The first confirmation is that, if God were in some fixed place, He could, without intermediary, produce something at any distance, since He is omnipotent. So, from the immediacy of His producing *x*, one cannot make a necessary illation to His presence at *x* in His essence.

(b) The second confirmation is this: [*major:*] given a prior factor, it does not necessarily follow that a posterior factor is given; [*minor:*] but God's presence [at *x*] in His power is prior to His presence [at *x*] in His substance. Hence, given the former, one is not necessarily given the latter. He supports the minor on the ground that, in terms of natural priority, a creature terminates an act of God's

power *before* God is present to it [in His substance], as is obvious in the case of God's first act producing the world.

Cajetan's answer

xi. To clear these things up, one needs to know that, in the agents we encounter in our experience, there is a *double presence* of the agent to what it is acting on: one being a matter of location, whereby their end points are together, and the other being a matter of active power, whereby the agent's operation attains what it is producing or acting upon and doesn't just attain some intermediate effect (whether there is any *thing* in between them or not). So also in spiritual agents there are *two distinct presences* [of the agent to what it is acting upon]: the one according to substance, whereby the agent's substance (defined or quasi-defined) is "at" this thing being acted on, and the other according to active power, as above. Because of this double presence, Scotus worked hard to convict Aquinas of holding both sides of a contradiction, claiming that Aquinas posited the first presence [according to substance] in this article and denied it in his remarks on place among the angels, and (what is more) claiming that in St. Thomas' teaching here, at least, presence according to substance is prior to that according to active power. But the truth of the matter is quite different.

Yes, for to St. Thomas, being present in substance is one affair, and being present in power is another (for presence in power does not require immediacy of referent, as will come out later). But though being present in substance is one affair, still, being present in a power that *immediately attains what is produced or acted upon* is not entirely another. Nor are they entirely the same. Rather, they are distinct as *what* is present is distinct from the reason *whereby* it is present. [The agent's] immediate attainment [of its effect] is the reason for its presence, not only in power but also in substance. So: just as, in the case of a substance in space, its location is the reason *whereby* it is present, and yet the very substance is *what* is present, so also immediate-attainment-of-effect is the reason whereby a spiritual substance is present, in such a way that its very substance is *what* is present, not just its operation. And thus, in spiritual substances, these two presences are not entirely two things, nor entirely one, but stand at each other on a middle footing, like the *whereby* and the *what*. This is why I said above [in § ix] that the reasoning in this article, which sets out from immediate-attainment and concludes to presence-in-substance, is proceeding from the defining account to the thing accounted for, that is, from the definition of *that-whereby* [a spiritual substance is present] to [the substance which is] *what* thereby meets that definition [and so is present].

Point-by-point replies

xii. Moving on, then, to Scotus' contentions one by one: *against his first* I deny that the sun acts without intermediary upon what is distant from it: it is just not true that the sun's substantial form is the causal source that elicits mi-

neral formation. A thing's substance is not the proximate and elicitive source of any operation, as will be shown at length in q.77. And there is nothing wrong with an accident's being the *instrumental* origin of a substance's generation; for an instrument is not a cause but the tool or organ of a cause.

xiii. Against his *second contention*, I should say that the reason natural agents cannot act on the distant without first acting on the close-by is neither of the conditions proposed by Scotus but the fact that a limited active power, *as limited*, is not complete. (And this is why God is the only one to whom this explanation would not apply.) This is the explanation we learn from our senses, whereas Scotus' explanations are his own inventions. Hence it was on the basis of experience, from sensible things, that Aristotle proved in *Physics VII* that a changer (even an intentional one) and what it changes have to be together; you can see as much from his discussion there about the objects of the senses.

xiv. If you are looking for a fully universal reason why an agent and its immediate patient have to be "together" or conjoined, my answer would be this: 'being together or conjoined' and 'attaining-immediately' do not apply to all cases in the same way, and so one cannot give them a uniform, across-the-board explanation. I have already said [in § xi] that presence-in-substance and presence-in-immediate-power differ in some cases and coincide in others. One must say, therefore, that where they are different, presence-by-operation implies presence-in-power, thanks to the agent's limitation; but where they are the same, the inference [from presence-by-operation to presence in substance] holds as a result of their identity. Hence the proposition that

necessarily, whenever an agent acts on some *x*
without intermediary, it is together with *x*

is universally true of all agents but for different reasons in different ones. So it was quite all right to use it for purposes of inferring God's presence-by-limitlessness in all things.⁵

⁵ The upshot so far seems to be this. Immediacy (of power or of referent) in the action of *x* upon *y* either *is* the presence (taken as contact) of *x* to *y* (in power or in substance) or founds the presence (taken as a relation) of *x* to *y*. Suppose *C* is a *per se* ordered set of causes producing an effect in *y*. Typically, *C* has more than one member, and then:

- the element in *C* which comes first in its ordering acts upon *y* with immediacy of power
- and so has contact-presence to *y* in power (and so has a relation of presence to *y* based on power-immediacy)
- but does not act upon *y* with immediacy of referent and so does not have contact-presence to *y* in substance (and so does not have a relation of presence to *y* based on referential immediacy),
- but the element(s) of *C* which comes last in its ordering acts upon *y* with immediacy of referent and so does have contact-presence to *y* in substance (and so does have a relation of presence to *y* based on referential immediacy).

Thus, typically, presence in power and presence in substance are

xv. From there an answer emerges to both of Scotus' confirming arguments.

Against the first: I deny his counterfactual. From his antecedent, there would follow both his consequent and its contradictory; so neither follows. For if 'God is in some fixed place' were true, 'He can act upon anything anywhere' would be true (because God is omnipotent) and 'He cannot act on anything except by way of what is closest to Him' would be true, because He is in a fixed place [ergo spatially limited], and *this pertains to what it takes to be spatially limited*. Thus both sides of a contradiction clearly follow; so nothing follows.

Against his second: I grant that a prior item does not necessarily imply a posterior one, when they are entirely different. But these presences are not entirely different; rather, as I said above [in § xi], they coincide in spiritual things as the *whereby* and the *what* that has the whereby. So, they stand only "in a way" as prior and posterior.

Understanding the answer *ad* (3)

xvi. In the answer to the third objection, notice first that, for present purposes, there are four ways to be distant: (1) in space, (2) nature, (3) referent, and (4) power. Distance in space is obvious. Distance in nature is dissimilarity of nature. Distance in referent is having another referent in-between, and distance in power is having another power in-between as an intermediate power. The proposition that the more powerful the agent, the farther his action reaches.

when asserted not of this or that sort of agent but of agents in general without further qualifiers, is flatly true only in terms of distance in nature. As far as distance in space is concerned, it is obviously false, since not every agent has

different. But when *C* has just one member (call it *x*):

- *x*'s operation attains *y* with both kinds of immediacy,
- and so the presence of *x* in power to *y* coincides with its presence in substance to *y*,
- and (please note) the operation of *x* is the reason for its contact-presence in substance (and for its relation of presence to *y* based on referential immediacy).

In short, the presences of a spiritual being to something it acts upon are presence-in-power and presence-in-substance, each explained by the spiritual being's operation (in the typical case where they are different), both explained by its operation (in the odd case where they coincide). This is what Cajetan has been at pains to defend.

It looks, therefore, as though the basic mistake made by Scotus in his reading of Aquinas (or so Cajetan believed) was this: he thought the presences of a spiritual being to something it acts upon are presence-by-operation and presence-by-substance. An operation is the exercise of a power; so he thought immediacy of (or contact by) operation was by definition immediacy of (or contact in) power. With that assumption in place, contact or presence in power would be all that any operation could bring about, even in the case of a causal agent who uses no subordinates; and so presence in substance would have to be an utterly different issue, requiring some wholly different *ratio* or foundation. This is why Scotus thought the argument here in q.8, a.1 must be, at best, an *a posteriori* argument, etc.

a position in space even *definitivē*.⁶ As regards distance in power, it is also false in an obvious way, since the higher an agent is, and hence the more active power it has, the closer-in-power it stands to its effect, as came out above [in § iv]. As regards distance in referent, however, it is true in a way but quite false flatly taken. For in terms of such distance, the proposition can be understood two ways.

(1) The more powerful the agent, the more referentially distant *in some respect* is what it can act on.

This is very true, which is why God could, *via* limitlessly many intermediate cooperating referents, educe the form of a cow from potency (from matter), or do anything else of the sort He produces immediately with immediacy of power but not immediacy of referent.⁷

(2) The more powerful the agent, the more referentially distant in itself as a whole is what it can act on.

So taken, the proposition is utterly false. Indeed, as this article says, what marks God's power above all is that He can allow nothing to be referentially distant from Him in itself as a whole, because in anything existing in its own right there has to be some factor produced and conserved continually by God "immediately" with immediacy of

referent, as I said before [in § v]. And since this article is talking about this kind of distance vs. presence, the text correctly denies this proposition without drawing any further distinction, taking it in sense (2) rather than (1). But as regards distance in nature (to which the text also alludes), the proposition is flatly true: the more powerful an agent is, the slighter or more remote the potency from which it can produce something similar to itself; indeed, the Creator can produce His likeness out of what resembles Him in no way, namely, from no potency at all, as He creates out of nothing.

xvii. Notice secondly that, in the text, mention is made of referential distance, and of conjunction in a power penetrating and overcoming somehow referential distance, and of referential immediacy. And since what pertains to completeness of power is not referential distance but conjunction-in-power penetrating any referential distance that is found, Aquinas implicitly infers: therefore, what follows from an agent's perfection is not distance [from His effect] but His being conjoined with it. And from this he explicitly infers: therefore, what makes God's power superlative is that nothing can be referentially distant from Him in itself as a whole; rather He is necessarily in contact referentially with all things. The reasoning process here is by the type *a maiori*: if, in a production in which referential distance is found, the distance is not what follows from the agent's perfection (but rather, the conjunction overcoming it is), then, unqualifiedly, referential distance itself does not pertain to an agent's perfection (but conjunction does). Therefore, what follows from maximum completeness of power is not an ability to act upon things referentially distant in themselves as wholes but the trait of being necessarily conjoined to all things.

⁶ Position in space *definitivē* was the kind the human soul had *via* the body it animated.

⁷ This interesting passage confirms the interpretation I gave above to the First Way in 1ST q.2, a.3. The proof of a first cause was not appealing to the finitude of the causal series but to its well-orderedness.

Is God everywhere?

1 ST q.16, a.7 ad 1; q.52, a.2; In I Sent. d.37, q.2, a.1; 3 CG c.68; Quodlibet. XI a.1

It would seem that God is not everywhere.

(1) After all, 'is everywhere' means 'is in every place'. But 'is in every place' is hardly a suitable description for God, since 'is in a place' does not describe Him. As Boethius says in *De Hebdomadibus*, bodiless things are not in a place. Therefore, God is not everywhere.

(2) Besides, their place stands to permanent things as their time stands to successive ones. An indivisible unit [of a successive kind, say, the unit] of an action or motion, cannot be at different times. Neither, then, can an indivisible unit of a permanent kind be in all places. But the divine being is a permanent thing, not a successive one [and is indivisible]. Therefore, God is not in multiple places, and so He is not everywhere.

(3) Also, when a whole thing is somewhere, none of it is outside that place. But [if God is anywhere, He is in at least one place, and] if God is in a place, He is there as a whole, since he has no parts, and so none of Him is outside that place. Therefore, God is not everywhere.

ON THE OTHER HAND, we have what God says of Himself in Jeremiah 23:24, "I fill heaven and earth."

ANSWER: given that a "place" is a real entity,¹ the talk of being "in" a place can be understood two ways:

- (1) as it is understood in other cases, that is, as one thing is said to be in another after any fashion, e.g. as the accidents of a place are in the place;
- (2) as it is understood uniquely in the case of place, i.e., as the things located in a place are in it.

On either understanding, there is some rôle in which God is in every place, which is being everywhere. On the first understanding, as God is in all entities in the rôle of giving them being and operative ability and actual operation, so He is in every place in the rôle of giving it being and ability to locate. On the second understanding, located things are in a place inasmuch as they fill it, and God fills every place — not in the rôle of a body (for a body is said to fill a place insofar as it does not allow another body to be there, while the fact that God fills a place does not preclude others from being there), but rather in the rôle of giving existence to all the located *things* which fill all the places.

TO MEET THE OBJECTIONS — *ad* (1): bodiless things are not "in a place" thanks to the contact of dimensions

of quantity, as bodies are; rather, they are in a place thanks to the contact of active power.

ad (2): 'the indivisible' is used in two senses. One means a terminus of a continuum, be it of the permanent kind (like a "point") or the successive kind (like an "instant"). Among permanent things, such an indivisible [point] has a determinate locus* and so cannot be in more than one part of a place, nor in more than one place. Likewise, an indivisible [instant] of an action or motion has a determinate placement† within the occurrence of that action or motion and so cannot be in more than one part of time. But there is another sense of 'the indivisible', in which it means something outside the whole category of continua, and it is in this sense that bodiless substances (God, an angel, or the soul) are said to be indivisible. A thing indivisible in this sense, then, is not spoken of as being a part or aspect of a continuum, but only as touching the continuum with its power. Thus an indivisible thing of this kind, depending on whether its power can extend to one thing or many, to a small-scale effect or a far-flung one, is said to be in one place or many, and is said to be in a small place or a large one, etc.

ad (3): a thing is called a "whole" in relation to its parts. "Parts" are taken two ways:

- (1) parts of an essence, as form and matter are called the parts of a composite, as genus and specific difference are called the parts of a species, and
- (2) the parts of a quantity, into which it is divided.

[So conversely a whole is taken the same two ways.] A whole which is in a given place with the wholeness of quantity cannot be outside that place: the quantity of a located thing matches the quantity of its place, and so there is no wholeness of quantity without wholeness of place. But wholeness of essence does not match a wholeness of place, and so it does not have to be the case that a whole which is in some item with the wholeness of essence is in no wise outside that item. One sees as much in the case of accidental forms that just happen to have a quantity: the "whole" whiteness, for example, is in each part of a surface when 'whole' means wholeness of essence, since whiteness is found in each part of the surface according to its complete essential make up;‡ but if the wholeness is taken according to the quantity which the whiteness has by accident, then the "whole" whiteness is not in each part of the surface.

Well, in bodiless substances, there is no "wholeness" (intrinsicly or by accident) except the one that comes from complete essential make up. So, just as the whole soul is in each part of the body, so the whole God is in each thing and every thing.

¹ For the scholastics, "place" was a mind-independent accident of bodies, having to do with their surrounding or being surrounded by other bodies, and giving rise to relations of distance, proximity or contact. Where there were no bodies (e.g. beyond the universe), there were no places.

* situs

† ordo

‡ ratio

 Cajetan's Commentary

The title is clear. In the body of the article, Aquinas does two jobs: (1) he draws a distinction; (2) he answers the question with a two-edged conclusion in keeping with the distinction previously drawn.

The distinction is this. There are two ways to be "in" a place: (1) as in the *thing*, and (2) as in the *place*. The support given for this is that a place is both a thing* and a place.

* *res*

The conclusion answering the question is that, in both ways, God is everywhere in some respect. The support for His being everywhere in the first way is as follows. God gives being, ability to operate, and actual operation to all things; therefore [He gives them] to all places. The support for His being everywhere in the second way is this: God gives being to all the things

filling the places; therefore He is in all places in a certain manner as filling all places.

ii. As regards this last point, take note of the fact that 'to fill a place' can be taken two ways, namely, (1) form-wise* and (2) *via* an effect.† A located body "fills a place" form-wise; God does so *via* an effect. From this there follows the difference mentioned in the text, *i.e.*, that a body filling a place excludes other bodies [from its place], while God filling a place does not exclude them; indeed, He causes them to be placed. Hence the conclusion is not saying *unqualifiedly* that God is in a place [in the normal sense, namely] as located there without further nuance, but *with a qualifier*, namely, in some rôle or manner, because He does not do so form-wise, of course, but cause-wise.

* *formaliter*

† *effectivè*

Is God everywhere "by essence, presence and power"?

1 *ST* q.43, a.3; 3 *ST* q.6, a.1 *ad* 1; *In I Sent.* d.37 *expositio*; d.37, q.1, a.2

It seems that the ways God is said to be in things are badly classified when He is said to be in them "by essence, presence, and power."

(1) After all, what is in something "by essence" is in it essentially. But God is not in things essentially, since He does not belong to anything's essence. One ought not say, therefore, that God is in things "by essence, presence, and power."

(2) Besides, being present to something is not being absent from it. God's not being absent from anything is His being "in" things by essence. Thus God's being in all things "by essence" and "by presence" are the same. It has been useless repetition to say that God is in things "by essence, presence, and power."

(3) Further, just as God is the origin of all things through His power, so He is also their origin through His knowledge and will. But one does not say that God is in things "by knowledge and will." Neither, then, should one say He is in them "by power."

(4) Furthermore, as grace is an extra completeness added onto the substance of a thing, so are many other complete traits added on. Hence, if God is said to be "in" certain things in a special way thanks to grace, any extra completion of them would seem to give Him a special way of being in things.

Glossa ordinaria

ON THE OTHER HAND, Gregory's comment on Song of Songs [5:17] says "God is in all things in the common manner by presence, power, and substance, but thanks to grace He is said to be in some in a familiar manner."

ANSWER: God is said to be in a thing in two ways: (1) as its agent cause (and thus He is in all the things created by Him), and (2) as the object of an operation is in the one operating (which happens only in operations of the soul, along the lines of how the known is in the knower and the object desired is in the one desiring it). In this way, God in a special manner is "in" a rational creature who knows and loves Him (actually or habitually). Because a rational creature has this attitude thanks to grace, as will come out below, God is said to be in the saints in this manner "by grace."

q.43, a.3;
2/1 *ST* q.109,
aa.1, 3

But one needs to turn to human usage for clues as to how to describe the manner in which God is in the other things created by Him. Thanks to the scope of a king's power, one says that he is "in" his whole realm, even though he is not present throughout it bodily. Thanks to one's presence, one says that one is "in" all the places that are in one's sight, as all the places in a house are said to be present to someone in the house, even though he is not in each part of the house in his

substance. But in its substance or essence, a thing is said to be "in" the place where its substance is found.

Given these usages, there have been some writers — Manichaeans, to be exact — who said that while spiritual and incorporeal things are subject to God's power, visible and bodily things are subject to the power of a contrary Principle. To counter them, one needs to say that God is in *all* places by His power.

There have been others who believed that all things were under God's power but said that the purview of His providence did not extend down to these lower bodies. Their view is represented in Job 22:14: "He bestrideth the vaults of heaven and payeth no heed to us." To counter this view, one needs to say that God is in all places by His presence.

There have been still others who admitted that all things were in God's purview but claimed that not all things were created by God directly. He created the first creatures without intermediary, they said, but then those creatures created the rest. To counter them, one needs to say that God is in *all* by His essence.

So, then: God is in all places by power, because all things are subject to His power; He is in all places by presence, because all things are naked and open to his sight; He is in all by essence, because He is "at" all things as the cause of their being, as said above.

Hebrews 4:13

a.1

TO MEET THE OBJECTIONS — *ad* (1): God is not said to be in all things by the essence of those things, as if He belonged to their essence, but by His own essence, because His substance is "at" them all as their cause of being, as I said.

ad (2): one can say that *x* is present to *y* inasmuch as *x* lies within *y*'s sight, even though *x* in its own substance is distant from *y*, as I said above. Hence it has been necessary to assign two ways: by essence and by presence.

ad (3): the correct accounts of knowing and willing are such that the known is in the knower and the object willed is in the willer. So "by knowledge and will" things are better said to be in God than He in them. But the correct account of power makes it the starting point of action upon another. By its power, an agent relates to and bears upon an outside thing. So it is "by power" that an agent can be said to be "in another."

ad (4): no other extra completeness added to a substance causes God to be in it as an object known and loved. Only grace does this, and so only grace brings about a unique manner in which God is "in" things. (There is, however, another unique manner in which God is in a man, by a union; but this will be dealt with in its proper place.)

3 *ST* q.2

The title is clear as a result of the explanations of terms given in the body of the text.

Analysis of the text

In the body of the article, Aquinas does two jobs: (1) he draws a distinction; (2) he answers the question at [the paragraph beginning] "So, then . . ."

As to job (1), the distinction is that God can be "in" something two ways: (a) as causing an effect, and (b) as being an object. For present purposes, these ways differ in that the former is general (God is in all things as causing an effect in them) while the latter is special. As an object, God is only in a rational creature. This latter manner is called His being there "by grace," because it is from grace that a rational creature derives its knowing and loving God in act or habit. But God's general way of being in all things is subdivided into being there by essence, by presence, and by power. This is illustrated by taking the example of a king *vis-à-vis* (a) his exact place, (b) a place in his sight, and (c) his realm, and then applying the example to God.

ii. Notice here first that, although at the outset the text distinguishes "how" God is in things (into as-causing-an-effect and as-being-an-object), it does not then subdivide this "how" into by-essence, by-presence, and by-power, since this would be a false subdivision. Rather, the text intends to subdivide only the *general* manner in which God is in all things. Taking a distinction from human affairs, the text applies it to God *vis-à-vis* all creatures.

Notice secondly that these ways of being-in that are illustrated in the text are not only applied to God but also justified (to some extent) as so interpreted, on the ground that they line up one-by-one against mistakes made by eminent persons. Against the Manichaeans [stands] the being-in-by-power, that is, God's being in all things "immediately" with immediacy of power, such that all things do whatever they do through the power of God. Against Averroes [stands] the being-in-by-presence [which is God's] penetrating each and every thing with His insight. Against Avicenna [stands] the being-in-by-essence, that is, [God's being in all things] immediately with immediacy of referent, because in any created thing there is some factor created by God without intermediary.

iii. As to Job (2), he answers the question with yes: God is in all places "by presence, essence, and power."

Problems and solutions

iv. Doubts about each of these ways arise from the work of Aureol, as reported by Capreolus at *1 Sent. d. 37*.

As to the special way, there is doubt because (a) God is in non-saints as an object and is in some saints (such as infants) without being an object, and (b) Augustine gives a different reason why God is [specially]

in the saints, [namely] that [He acts] more intensely.

The short answer is that this way "by grace" is not contrasted with the way whereby God is in things as an object but is part of it — the part that the holy doctors call presence-by-grace. It involves God's being known with an understanding that gives rise to love. This belongs only to the saints and belongs even to infant saints, because they receive the habits of faith and love from their baptism. — Augustine and the Master of the *Sentences* [Peter Lombard] described this special way from a causal point of view, rather than the formal view that Aquinas took. From the fact that God causes rational creatures to become godlike, *i.e.* operates in them more intensely and more fully, it comes about that God is known by them and held dear.¹

v. Aureol objected to the way "by presence" on the ground that the known is in the knower, and not *vice-versa*; so, by the insight or knowing [which is the basis assigned for presence], one should not say that God is in things [but that they are in Him].

THE SHORT ANSWER is that there are two things to consider in knowing: the *how* of knowing, and the *force* of knowing. If one is talking about the how, the objection is sound. But if one has in mind the force of knowing, the reverse is true [the objection fails]. For the force of knowing consists in penetrating all things to the inmost depths of each. This is why Hebrews 4:12 says that the word of God, which is a sign of His understanding, "pierces even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart." This is what St. Thomas was thinking of when he said that God is in all places "by presence."

One could also say, however, that knowledge in general is one thing and intuitive knowledge, which is the topic here, is another. Thanks to the distinctive makeup whereby it is intuitive, this knowledge tends towards the thing it knows and hence serves quite well to set up a way of being-in "by presence." But the [less specific] make up of knowledge in general does not result in the knower's tending towards the known.

vi. Against the way "by essence," Aureol objects further that it coincides with the way "by power." This I have already addressed [in § *ii*]. With being-there "by power" one posits immediacy of power, but with being-there "by essence" one posits immediacy of referent. The former pertains to all things in all respects. The latter applies to all things but not in all respects — rather, in some respect for each thing, as said above.

vii. Against the way "by power," he objects further

¹ In other words, God's being in a creature as an object known does not of itself constitute the special presence whereby God is in His elect by grace but is either a preliminary to it or a formal ingredient of it (along with the affective elements).

that a king is not really in his realm by his power but by the acceptance of his decrees.

My short answer to this is that a king is in his realm "by his power" in the manner that suits his kind of power, and that this manner is "via acceptance," *etc.* God is in all things "by His power" analogously,* that is, in

* *proportionaliter*

the manner that suits His power, and this manner is a real [mind-independent] participation in God's power in all things. So there is nothing to object to here, unless someone thinks that arguments by analogy have no place in the sacred learning — which is a mistake about the art of knowing [*i.e.* about methodology].

Is being-everywhere unique to God?

1 ST q.52, a.2, q.112, a.1, *In I Sent* d.37, q.2, a.2, q.3, a.2, 4 *CG* c.17.
Quodl XI, a.1, *In De divinis nominibus* c.3, lectio 1

It seems that being everywhere is not unique to God.

c 31;
87b 33
q 3, aa. 5, 8
(1) After all, a universal is always and everywhere, as Aristotle says [in *Posterior Analytics* I]: prime matter is everywhere, too, since it is in all bodies. But, as became clear above, neither of them is God. Therefore, being everywhere is not unique to God.

(2) Besides, a number is in the things numbered. The whole universe was set up numbered, as Wisdom 11: 21 declares. Therefore, there is some number which is in the whole universe and thus is everywhere.

268b 8
(3) Further, the universe as a whole is a complete whole body, as it says in *De Caelo et Mundo I* [c.1]. But the universe as a whole is everywhere, because outside of it there is no place. God is not alone, therefore, in being everywhere.

(4) Furthermore, if a body were infinite, there would be no place outside it. Therefore it would be everywhere. And thus being everywhere would not seem to be unique to God.

c 6;
PL 42, 929
(5) Also, the soul "is a whole in the whole body and is a whole in any part of it," as Augustine says in *De Trinitate VI*. So, if there were nothing in the world but one animal, its soul would be everywhere. And thus being everywhere is not unique to God.

Ep 137;
PL 33, 518
(6) Moreover, as Augustine says in a letter to Volusian, "where the soul sees, it feels; and where it feels, it lives; and where it lives, it is." But the soul sees practically everywhere because, eventually, it sees all of Heaven. Therefore, the soul is everywhere.

1, c 7;
PL 16, 723
ON THE OTHER HAND, there is what Ambrose says in his *De Spiritu Sancto*: "who would dare call the Holy Spirit a creature — Him who is in all and everywhere and forever — which is unique to divinity?"

I ANSWER: what is unique to God is being everywhere firstly and of Himself.*

* *primo et per se*

I say that a thing *x* is everywhere "firstly" when it is everywhere thanks to its whole self. If *x* were everywhere thanks to its various parts (one part being here, and one there), *x* would not be everywhere firstly. For what belongs to something by reason of a part does not belong to it firstly [but to the part]. For example, if a man is white in his teeth, whiteness does not belong firstly to the man but to his teeth. Next, I say that a

thing *x* is everywhere "of itself" when its being there does not apply to it by happenstance, on a supposition one has made. *E.g.*, a grain of wheat would be everywhere by happenstance, on the supposition that no other body existed. But being-everywhere applies to *x* "of itself" when *x* is such that, no matter what supposition one makes, it still follows that *x* is everywhere.

This is what belongs to God uniquely. For necessarily, if any number of places is posited to exist, God is in all of them (and this would remain true even if infinitely many more were posited, beyond those there are), because nothing can exist except through Him. Thus, being everywhere firstly and of Himself belongs to God and is unique to Him, because, necessarily, given any number of places, God is in each — and not in part but in His whole self.

TO MEET THE OBJECTIONS — *ad* (1): a universal and prime matter are indeed everywhere but not in the same existing [instance].

ad (2): since number is an accident, it is in a place accidentally and not of itself. Nor is the whole number in any one thing counted [in counting up to it] but only a part of it. And thus it does not follow [from the text of Scripture] that a number is everywhere firstly and of itself.

ad (3): the whole body of the [actual] universe is everywhere — not firstly, however (because the whole is not in any one place), but according to its parts. Nor is this body everywhere "of itself;" if some other places were put into being, it would not be in them.

ad (4): if there were an infinite body, it would be everywhere, but only according to its parts.

ad (5): if one animal were all that existed, its soul would be everywhere "firstly," but by happenstance.

ad (6): the statement that a soul "sees somewhere" can be taken two ways. In one way, 'somewhere' modifies 'sees' in regard to its object. So taken, it is true that while a soul is seeing Heaven, it is seeing in Heaven and (for the same reason) feels in Heaven. But it does not follow that the soul lives in Heaven or exists there, because living and existing do not involve a transitive action upon an outside object. In the other way of taking the statement, 'somewhere' modifies the very act of seeing as it comes from the seer. So taken, it is true that the soul exists and lives where it feels and sees, but it does not follow that it is everywhere.

 Cajetan's Commentary

The title is clear. — In the body of the article, there is one conclusion, answering the question in the affirmative: being every-where of Himself and firstly is unique to God.

Having set this down, he clarifies the terms 'firstly' and 'of itself'.

Then the conclusion is supported thus. [*Antecedent:*] Necessarily, God is in all places, however many there may be, and not part-here, part-there; [*inference:*] so being everywhere firstly and of Himself is unique to God. The antecedent rests (as to the point that God is in all places, however many, *etc.*) on the ground that nothing can exist without God in it. The inference is ob-

vious, given the meanings of the terms.

Notice that, because the matter is clear, Aquinas sought brevity and did not take the trouble to support [both parts of] the exclusive claim [that God alone is everywhere in this way]. Only the affirmative part of it [that God is thus] is supported explicitly, while the negative part [that nothing else is thus] is left as obvious enough from the same supporting considerations. After all, other than God, there is nothing that is necessarily in however many places there are and not in such a way as to be part-here, part-there. Obviously. And this is why the trait not only belongs to God but belongs to Him alone — *i.e.* is unique to Him.

Inquiry Nine: Into God's changelessness

Consideration should turn next to God's not being changeable and then to His eternity, which is a consequence of His not being changeable. Two questions are posed:

- (1) is God entirely unchangeable? (2) is being unchangeable distinctive of God?

article I

Is God entirely unchangeable?

*In 1 Sent. d.8, q.3, a.1. 1 CG cc 13-14; 2 CG c 25, De potentia Dei q.8, a.1 ad 9;
Compend. theol. c.4, In Boetiu De Trin. q.5, a.4 ad 2*

It would seem that God is not entirely unchangeable.

c 29,
PL 34, 388

(1) After all, whatever moves itself is in some way changeable. But as Augustine says in book VIII of his *Super Genesim ad litteram*, "The Creator Spirit moves itself, though not in time and not in space." Therefore, God is in some way changeable.

(2) Also, Wisdom 7:24 says that wisdom is "more mobile than all mobile things." But God is wisdom itself. Therefore, God is changeable.

(3) Furthermore, 'drawing near' and 'drawing away' indicate change, and such terms are applied to God in Scripture. James 4:8 says, "Draw ye nigh unto God, and He will draw nigh to you." Therefore, God is open to change.

ON THE OTHER HAND, there is Malachi 3:6, "I am God, and I change not."

ANSWER: points already established show that God is entirely unchangeable.

q 2, a.3

In the first place, it was established above that there is a first being, which we call God, and that a first being has to be pure act without trace of any potency, in that potency is subsequent to act in overall terms. But everything that undergoes change in any way is in potency in some way. So, it is evident that God's undergoing change in any way is impossible.¹

q.3, a.1

¹ This first argument depends on the precise notion of 'to change' made explicit in the *ad* (1) below: a thing changes in some way if, and only if, it passes from potency to act with respect to some trait ϕ . This will serve to support a *de re* strict implication:

- (1) $(y) \square(y \text{ changes to being } \phi \supset y \text{ passes from being potentially } \phi \text{ to being actually } \phi)$.

Aquinas had already secured the premises that

- (2) $(y) \exists x \square(y \text{ passes from being potentially } \phi \text{ to being actually } \phi) \supset (x \text{ causes } y \text{ to be } \phi \text{ and } x \neq y)$ and
 (3) $(y)(x) \square((x \text{ causes } y \text{ to be } \phi \text{ and } x \neq y) \supset (x \text{ is prior to } y \text{ in some causal ordering}))$.

By transitivity, we have this important lemma:

- (4) $(y) \exists x \square(y \text{ changes to being } \phi \supset x \text{ is prior to } y \text{ in some causal ordering})$.

Secondly, everything that undergoes change remains the same in some respect and shifts in some respect. For example, what undergoes change from white to black remains the same in substance [while shifting in color]. In everything that undergoes change, then, one finds some composition. But it was shown above that there is no composition in God; He is entirely simple. Obviously, then, God cannot undergo change.

q 3, a.7

Thirdly, everything that undergoes change acquires something by its changing and reaches some state or trait that did not belong to it beforehand. But since God is infinite [in essence], comprising within Himself all the fullness of the completeness of existence as a whole, He can neither acquire any trait nor reach any state that did not belong to Him already. Changing, therefore, does not apply to Him in any way.

q 7, a.1

Then, by substitution in the general modal principle that $\square(p \supset q) \supset (\square p \supset \square q)$, which Aquinas knew from the *Prior Analytics* 34 a.22-24, we have this conclusion about "changeability":

- (5) $(y) \exists x \square(y \text{ changes to being } \phi) \supset \square(x \text{ is prior to } y \text{ in some causal ordering})$.

By transposition, we have the point that

- (6) $(y)(x) \sim \square(x \text{ is prior to } y \text{ in any causal ordering}) \supset \sim \square(y \text{ changes to become } \phi)$.

which can be read thus: if no actual thing can be prior to y in any causal ordering, then y is unchangeable in any way.

Well, Aquinas thought he had shown that God was such a y (see above, 1 ST 3, l. note 1). For God was a *de re* necessarily first being. A first being is one that has nothing prior to it in any causal order, and a *de re* necessarily first being is one to which no actual thing can be prior:

- (7) $(y)(x) \square(y \text{ is a first being}) \supset \sim \square(x \text{ is prior to } y \text{ in any causal ordering})$.

As the first efficient cause (W.), God was such that no actual thing could be prior to Him in any efficient causal ordering. As the first and self-perpetual cause of anything else's perpetuity (W.), God was such that no actual thing could be prior to Him in any order of causes of always-being. And as the first exemplar of the transcendental traits (W.), God was such that no actual thing could be prior to Him in any exemplary causal ordering. Hence, by points (7) and (6), if God was such a first being, God was unchangeable.

Physics I, c.2,
184b 16

This is why certain ancient philosophers, compelled by the truth, so to speak, admitted that the first causal origin is unchangeable.

TO MEET THE OBJECTIONS — *ad* (1): in that passage Augustine is employing Plato's usage. Plato said that the first inducer of change "changed itself," using 'change' to cover any operation, so that even sheer understanding, willing, and loving came to be called "changes." So, because God understands Himself and loves Himself, the writers who followed this usage said that God "changes" Himself — but they didn't mean what we now mean by 'change' and 'alteration', *i.e.*, [reducing to act] something in potency.

ad (2): wisdom is called mobile in a *simile* based on how it spreads its likeness down to the last and least of things. For nothing can exist which did not proceed from the divine wisdom, as from a first efficient and

formal causal origin, thanks to being some sort of reflection of it, as artifacts proceed from the wisdom of the artisan. Inasmuch, therefore, as likeness to divine wisdom proceeds by degrees from the highest things, which participate more in that likeness, to the lowest, which participate least, one speaks of divine wisdom as proceeding and moving into things, just as if we were to say that the sun proceeds to the earth inasmuch as its ray of light reaches the earth. This is how Denis interprets the text, too, in c. I of *De caelesti hierarchia*, where he says, "every procession of divine majesty <or: manifestation> comes to us from the Father of lights, as He is moved."

PG 3, 120

ad (3): these things are said of God metaphorically in the Bible. As one says that the sun enters the house (or leaves) because its rays reach the house, so God is said to draw near to us, or away from us, because we accept the influence of His goodness or fail to.

Cajetan's Commentary

The title is clear. — In the body of the article, a single conclusion answers the question with yes: God is entirely immutable.

This is supported by three arguments and by authority. The first argument goes as follows. [*Antecedent:*] God is a first being; [*1st inference:*] so He is pure act; [*2nd inference:*] so He is wholly immutable. The antecedent was established in q.2. The first inference is supported on the ground that act is prior to potency in the order of nature. The second is supported on the ground that there has to be potency in every changeable thing. — The second argument goes this way. God is entirely simple; ergo He cannot undergo change. The inference is supported on the ground that everything which undergoes change is composed in

some way, since it remains the same in some aspect (the underlying subject) and does not remain the same in another. — The third argument is this. [*Antecedent:*] God is infinite; [*1st inference:*] therefore He cannot reach or arrive at some new trait; [*2nd inference:*] therefore He cannot undergo change. The first inference is supported on the ground that what is infinite [in essence] comprehends within itself the whole perfection of being. The second inference is supported by the fact that everything which undergoes change comes to have some trait which it did not have already. — The authority, finally, is that of the ancient philosophers who, as if compelled by the truth, admitted the first causal principle of things to be unchangeable.

Is being unchangeable distinctive of God?

1 *ST* q.10, a.3, q.65, a.1 *ad* 1; 3 *ST* q.57, a.1 *ad* 1; *In I Sent.* d.8, q.3, a.2, d.19, q.5, a.3;
In II Sent. d.7, q.1, a.1, *De Malo* q.16, a.2 *ad* 6, *Quodl.* X, q.2

It seems that being unchangeable is not unique to God.

c.2; 994b 25
 (1) After all, Aristotle says in *Metaphysics II* that matter is in everything that undergoes change. But certain created substances (such as angels and souls) do not have matter, according to some writers. Therefore, being unchangeable is not unique to God.

(2) Moreover, everything that undergoes change is changed for some purpose; so, what has already attained its ultimate purpose does not undergo [further] change. Well, some creatures have attained their ultimate purpose by now, such as all the blessed [in Heaven]. Therefore some creatures are [by now] unchangeable [and the trait is not unique to God].

PL 188, 1257
 (3) Besides, whatever undergoes change is variable. Forms, however, are invariable. It says in [Gilbert of Poitiers'] *Liber sex principiorum* that form "consists in a simple and invariable essence." Therefore, being unchangeable is not something unique to God alone.

c.1; PL 42, 551
 ON THE OTHER HAND, there is what Augustine says in his book *De natura boni*: "only God is unchangeable; the things that He has made are changeable, since they come from nothing."

I ANSWER: God alone is entirely unchangeable, while every creature is in some way changeable.

One needs to realize that a thing can be called changeable on two grounds:

- (1) thanks to a potency which is in the thing itself;
- (2) thanks to a power which is in another.¹

[To begin with the latter:] before any creatures existed, they were not "possible beings" thanks to some potency of their own as creatures (since nothing created is eternal). It was thanks only to God's power, in that God was able to bring them into being. Now, just as a thing's production into being depends upon the will of God, so also a thing's preservation in being depends upon His will; for the way He preserves them is just by continually giving them being. If He withdrew His action from them, they would all relapse into nothing, as Augustine says in *Super Genesim ad litteram IV*. As it was in the Creator's power, then, that things *might* be, before they existed in themselves, so it is now in the Creator's power that things *may fail* to be after they do exist in themselves.² They are "changeable" on the ground of a power lying in another, i.e., in God: they could be brought into being by Him from nothing and can now be reduced to non-being by Him.

¹ A potency lying within *x* is ground for a *de re* mutability of *x*; a power lying in another, *y*, may be ground for either a *de re* or a *de dicto* mutability of *x*. See next note.

² Pre-creation, the "possibility" of creatures to be was a *de dicto* affair: $\exists x(\text{God creates } x)$. Given creation, creatures' possibility not to be is *de re*: $(x) \exists(\text{God stops creating } x)$.

Next, if a thing is called "changeable" thanks to a potency lying within itself, it is still true that every creature is in some way changeable. A potency within a creature is either active or passive. I call a potency for a thing to be brought to completion — either in being or in attaining its purpose — a passive potency.³ Now, if a thing's changeability is identified with its potency to be [otherwise], then changeability is not found in all creatures, but only in those in which the potential to be [otherwise] is consistent with their not being so.

- In terrestrial bodies, there is changeability both as to being otherwise substantially (because their matter can survive the loss of their current substantial form) and as to being otherwise accidentally, if the subject can survive the loss of the accident, as the subject *man* can survive not being white and so can change from white to non-white. But if the accident is such as to follow from the essential traits of the subject, then its loss is incompatible with the subject's survival, and so the subject cannot change with respect to that accident, as snow cannot become black.

- In celestial bodies, by contrast, the matter cannot survive the loss of its form, because the form finishes [i.e. reduces to act] the *total* potentiality of the matter, and so those bodies are not changeable as to becoming another substance; but they are changeable as to being elsewhere, since the subject survives the loss of this location or that one.

- In bodiless substances, finally, the case is still different. Because they are pure forms subsisting — forms which nevertheless stand to their existence as potency stands to act — they cannot survive the loss of this [form or] act. The reason for this is that existence follows upon form, and nothing suffers corruption except by losing its form. Since there is in the form itself no potency to not be [what it is], such substances are unchangeable and invariable in being [what they are]. This was Denis's point in c.4 of *De divinis nominibus*, where he says that intellectual substances "were created without any taint of generation and variation, since they are bodiless and immaterial." Yet even so, they have changeability in them in two ways. One is their being in potency to their purpose: in this way there is changeability in them *via* choice, from good to evil, as Damascene says. The other way has to do with

PG 3, 693

De fide ortho-
dota II, c. 3,
 PG 94, 865

³ The talk here is of natural potencies, not forced ones. From the fact that a thing *x* can (with active potency) make another thing *y* have the trait of being- ϕ , it did not follow for Aquinas that *y* automatically had a *natural* passive potency to be made ϕ . Rather, natural passive potencies were tied to the tests for completeness (cf. 1 *ST* q.6, a.3). Since we were told above that matter is brought to completion by form (1 *ST* q.7, a.1) and that substances are completed by certain "finishing" accidents (1 *ST* q.5, a.1 *ad* 1), it now follows that the openness of matter to receive various forms is a "passive potency" and that the openness of substances to receive their finishing (as opposed to inchoate) traits is a "passive potency." Both are potencies to be *made otherwise*.

place: by their finite active power, they can reach places they were not reaching beforehand. (This cannot be said of God, who fills all places by His infinity, as I said above).

Thus, within every creature, there is potency to change

- either as to what substance it is (as in corruptible bodies)
- or as to place alone (as in celestial bodies)
- or as to its standing towards its purpose and the application of its active power to various points (as in the angels).

• And across the board, all creatures are alike vulnerable to change thanks to a power in the Creator, who has in His control their existing and not existing.

Hence, since God is not changeable in any of these ways, being entirely unchangeable is unique to Him.

TO MEET THE OBJECTIONS — *ad* (1): this objection has

to do with what is changeable as to its substance or as to its accidents — the kind of change the philosophers treated. [Hence, their remarks about creatures without matter exclude from them this *kind* of change but not other kinds.]

ad (2): besides their unchangeability in being [what they are], which angels have by nature, the good angels have, from God's influence, an unchangeability in their choice [in favor of their ultimate purpose]; but even so, there remains in them a changeability as to place.

ad (3): pure forms are called invariable because they themselves cannot be the subject varying; yet they are subject to variation in the sense that their subject varies as to which of them it has. It obviously follows that the way in which forms “vary” is exactly the way in which they are said to “be.” For when forms are called “beings,” it is not as subjects existing but just as factors whereby something is [thus or such].

Cajetan's Commentary

In the title, ‘distinctive of God’ is taken in the sense opposed to ‘common to Him and other things’. ‘Unchangeable’ is taken negatively [rather than privatively], so that it negates any kind of change.

Analysis of the article

ii. In the body of the article there is one conclusion, giving the question a yes-answer: only God is entirely non-changeable. Since this conclusion is an only-claim,* its exposition has an affirmative part,

* *exclusiva*

God is entirely non-changeable, established in the preceding article, and a negative part,

Nothing other than God is entirely non-changeable, which is equivalent to the universal affirmative with the un-negated or opposed predicate:

Everything else is in some way changeable.

Hence, in the text, this universal affirmative is established first; then, in an afterword, proof is gathered for the whole *exclusiva* in answer to the question.

iii. Support for this universal affirmative comes along two lines; the first deals with a type of change common to all creatures; the second deals with the particular sectors of creation, as they are open to different changes.

The first line of support, then, is that every creature is changeable by a power in another. It goes thus: [*antecedent:*] every creature is changeable from nothing to something and back again from something to nothing; [*inference:*] so [every creature is changeable through a power in another]. The antecedent is obvious. The inference rests on the ground that creation and preservation depend upon the sheer will of God.

The second line of support is that every creature is changeable thanks to a potency in itself, either as to substantial and accidental being, or as to accidental being such as place, or as to being evil and good and applying [itself] to different places. It goes as follows. [*Ante-*

dent:] In every creature there is something that can survive the loss of being-of-this-substance or being-here or being-good and having-this-influence-on-that. [*Inference:*] So [every creature is changeable thanks to a potency in itself]. The antecedent emerges by distinguishing the three sectors of the universe: the sphere of the elements and mixed things, the heavenly bodies, and the spiritual substances. The inference rests on the fact that every change occurring in a thing *x* through a potency in *x* itself is a successive change from *x*'s contingently being in one state to its contingently being in an opposite state.

iv. *Re* the statements made here, note two points.

(1) When Aquinas divides a thing's passive potency into its potency to *be* and its potency to attain its purpose, he is not contrasting attaining-the-purpose with being in general, as if a thing's reaching its purpose did not amount to any state of being at all; rather, he is contrasting it with the thing's merely existing,* which is its *being* what substance it is (as Aristotle says in *Metaphysics VII*), or with the being which the thing has as the proper effect of its first act. By contrast, the thing's attaining its purpose is a matter of second act.¹

* *esse absolut*

c. 1,
1028a 14

(2) To round out his teaching, Aquinas not only lays out the factors directly relevant to his conclusion here — those that make for changeability in every creature — but also lays out the factors relevant to any immunity to change they may have. Since further discussion will be devoted to the latter when he treats the angels and heavenly bodies, below, we shall pass it over until then. It is the others, the factors that make for mutability, that must concern us now.

q 50, a 5,
q. 67, a. 11

¹ A thing attains its purpose in and through its activities, but these presuppose its nature. Thus in scholastic idiom, a thing's *having* its nature was called its “first act,” while its operations or activities were called “second act.”

Modality and existence

v. Concerning the first kind of changeability distinguished in this article [changeability through a power in another], applied here to a creature's coming to be from nothing and passing away into nothing, a great mob of attackers rises up, due to ignorance of Peripatetic philosophy. The attackers cannot or will not see that a created thing may be unalterable in itself as to what substance it is and yet be changeable through the power in another — I mean, changeable in the way explained. And though their arguments keep growing in number and volume, the root of their complaint comes down to just two things: an argument from reason, and an appeal to authority.

— Their argument from reason is this. Given an angel, *A*, one asks: is it a contingent being, or a necessary one?

c 10;
1058b 36ff

- If *A* is contingent, they have what they want, because contingency is not an accidental or extrinsic trait (cf. *Metaphysics X*) but is the thing's very substance, or is in its substance.
- If *A* is a necessary being, then it is impossible that *A* not be; in that case, there is no power [in another] through which *A* may cease to be, because no power can achieve the impossible.

Philos I, tr.2

— Their authority is Averroes, comment 124 on *De Caelo* and comment 41 on *Metaphysics XII*. Also, al-Ghazali says the "contingent" is that which is not, if another does not exist. [So even an angel must be contingent or changeable.] — It is also against the Faith to posit any necessary thing other than God. Ergo.

vi. To clear up this muddle, three points need to be kept in mind which are sufficient to solve all the relevant objections, from whatever quarter they may come.

FIRST: there is a big difference between 'necessary' and 'contingent' used to differentiate *real beings* and the same modalities used to differentiate *true propositions*. When used to differentiate truths, the modalities are taken in their logical sense and depend on nothing but how the terms in the proposition stand *vis-à-vis* each other. By contrast, when the modalities are used to differentiate "real being" (which means substance, quantity, etc., as it says in *Metaphysics V* [c. 8] and *V* [c. 2]), these modalities are substantial states* of things, intrinsic to the things themselves, as Aristotle says in the last text of *Metaphysics X*, talking about the corruptible and the incorruptible. So, it is one thing to talk about "necessary" and "contingent" as real differences, and quite another to talk about them as different standings between propositional terms. In the logical way of taking them, modalities abstract from the difference between potency-in-the-thing-itself and power-in-another: indeed, they abstract from all powers and potencies properly so called, because they turn up in mathematics, without any such basis, as Aristotle says in the chapter on power in *Metaphysics V* and as he also says at the beginning of *Metaphysics IX*. But when the modalities are taken the other way, they line up with the intrinsic features of things. One should therefore distinguish real necessity from logical necessity and real contingency from logical contingency, and one should avoid confu-

* conditions

c 10;
1058b 36 –
1059a 9

c.13: 1019b 21-35

c 1;
1046a 5ff

sing them.²

SECOND: only in an indirect sense, by any stretch of the imagination, can one posit a potency within an existing thing for it not to exist, thanks to which the thing would be called contingent; for what is *there* in the thing is potency to be *something else* impossible with what it presently is. There is no such thing as a potency or tendency that looks directly to not-being. So says Aristotle in book I of the *Ethics*.³ Necessarily, then, if a thing

² These modalities work like quantifiers over situations. The necessary holds in *all* situations, while the contingent (or merely possible) holds in *some* situations and not in others. It should be obvious, then, that there is a difference between quantifying over merely "thinkable" situations and quantifying over those that are "reachable," given the laws of physics and the *de facto* components of the universe. These impose limitations which may be "contingent" in a logical sense but nevertheless impose boundaries between the physically possible and the physically impossible. For example, one sees no contradiction between going someplace and getting there instantly. Instantaneous travel is thus logically possible. But physically speaking, it cannot be done. Travel consumes time. This fact is physically necessary (it holds in all physically reachable situations) but logically contingent (since it fails to hold in at least one thinkable situation).

Nevertheless, Cajetan's distinction (and Aristotle's) between these two senses of the modalities became lost for a long time in modern philosophy. Certain nominalist ideas blurred it, and the "renaissance" dropped modal logic altogether. David Hume made it the badge of his system to deny that any necessity was real; it was all logical, with the result that it could only be found in "connexions of ideas," never in connexions between real things. Thanks to Hume's influence, real necessity was lost to Kant and the logical positivists.

Only when C. I. Lewis began to formalize "strict implication" in the 1920s was it re-discovered that "necessary" admits of many degrees of strength, only one of which (captured in Lewis's system *S*₁) comes close to our intuitions about logical necessity. Lewis's weaker systems (and others soon discovered) remained a puzzle; modal logic as a whole remained a suspect discipline, until a break-through came in the early 1960s. Saul Kripke and Jaakko Hintikka independently provided suitable formal models for these systems, and almost overnight the clouds of doubt that had hung over physical interpretations of the modalities (and over the difference between *de re* and *de dicto* placements of such modalities) cleared away. Aristotle's talk of real potencies (not logical possibilities) and causal (not logical) necessities was rehabilitated, because it could be reconstructed rigorously in the models for quantified modal systems.

The present translator has been using one of these systems already in appropriate footnotes on previous passages in this *Summa*. The chosen system has been the one known as *T*, first published by Robert Feys in 1937 ("Les logiques nouvelles des modalités," *Revue néoscholastique de philosophie* 40). It best captures the model intuitions of Aristotle and his Scholastic disciples.

³ In ordinary language, we say of a contingent being that it can cease to exist, which amounts to $\exists x \neg (x \text{ exists})$. But Aristotle refused to posit real, natural potencies on the basis of language alone. It seemed to him that all a thing's inbuilt potencies should be to states consistent with its existing. Aquinas agreed in his definition of 'passive potency', as we read in the body of the article, and it never occurred to him to posit within a thing an active potency to un-make itself. Hence

lacks a potency to be something else impossible with what it is, it also lacks a potency to not-be. And since it is known that a real potency to be otherwise remains and is completed upon the arrival of that otherwise, it follows necessarily that every item in which there is a potency to not-be [as it is] has or is a factor able to survive the loss of the being it actually has. Hence Aquinas is perfectly right in this article in saying that, necessarily, what *can be otherwise through a potency within itself* is of this kind, meaning to speak of real contingency, while what *must be as it is*, which is to say, the immutable, is what lacks such a potency. [A celestial body is an example of such an immutable thing.⁴] And hence it follows that something is logically contingent which nevertheless in real terms must be as it is [physically]. It is logically contingent because neither of the opposed existence claims,

There is a celestial body

There is no celestial body

involves a contradiction. But a heavenly body is physically necessary [must be as it is] because there is no potency in it for another being [i.e. for being otherwise than it is] and thus no potency in it for being deprived of the being it has. Furthermore, we assume that whatever involves no contradiction is “possible” not just in the logical sense but also by the real power of almighty God.⁵ Thanks to this assumption, what is logically pos-

Cajetan also declined to posit a natural potency to non-existence within anything — be it ever so contingent a being.

It may be well to add at this point that, for Aquinas and Cajetan, the *things* that can sensibly be said to *have* active or passive potencies (natural, forced, or whatever) are either individual substances (the values of bound first-order variables) or, at least, items belonging to another one of Aristotle’s categories. By no stretch of the imagination are “essences” under discussion here. The extra-categorical “potency” of essence to existence was a metaphysical affair developed by Aquinas, having nothing to do with any of the kinds of potency distinguished in the *Physics*. For apart from existing, an essence is not even a “factor” (much less an entity); and there is no extra-mental actuality alternative to existing in which this factor could “stand” as in its other state; hence “potential to existence” cannot be construed as a “potency to be otherwise.” Only *things in being can be otherwise*.

⁴ This obsolete example is hard to replace with anything from modern astrophysics. It has sometimes been suggested that certain sub-atomic particles might be so immune to transformation as to be physically indestructible. Or think of particles in total entropy.

⁵ The assumption equating the logically possible with what

sible [or contingent] can also be called really possible [or contingent] — but *extrinsically* so, because it is called really possible thanks to a *power in another*. This is why St. Thomas, in the part of the article where he is dealing with God and [created] things, calls those things “possible through a power in another.”

THIRD: the condition common to everything other than God is not, properly speaking, this affirmative condition,

of itself it counter-exists [*ex se non esse*],
but rather this negative condition,

it does not exist of itself [*non ex se esse*],

because it depends upon another, not only in coming to be but also in staying in being, much as the air is not lit of itself [but depends upon the sun to be lit]. This latter condition is the reason we say of creatures that they are “of themselves nothing,” and that they are “naturally defectible” thanks to their origin [in nothing], and that they “can fail to be,” and so forth. All these familiar sayings should be traced back to the meaning just stated, because they indicate a dependence on another in coming to be and staying in being; they do not indicate a potency in creatures to do the opposite of being.

vii. With these points in place, the answer to all the objections is obvious. Both here and in 2 *CG* cc.30 and 55, and in *De potentia Dei* q.5, a.3, and everywhere else, St. Thomas says the angels and heavenly bodies are beings really necessary but logically contingent (and this thanks to the power in another) and that God alone is a necessary being in every respect. — This conflicts with neither philosophy nor the Faith. That it doesn’t conflict with philosophy is already obvious. It doesn’t even conflict with the philosophers, because they equivocate on [the two senses of] ‘necessary’ and ‘contingent’, as one can easily check. And to say this position conflicts with the Faith is abysmal ignorance, the kind that seems to reign these days in certain circles at the University of Paris, where the above-mentioned texts of St. Thomas are held suspect. But we should leave these chaps to their nescience; on a subject this hard, they are not worth trying to talk to.

God can do was actually more complicated in medieval theory than Cajetan bothers to indicate here. One had to set aside things logically possible but morally wicked. Apart from those, the equation held when God’s power was looked at “absolutely,” that is, independently of His free decisions. But God’s power was narrower than the logically possible when it was looked at “ordinately,” that is, as limited by the demands of consistency with His logically prior decisions.

Inquiry Ten: Into God's being eternal

The inquiry to take up next is the one about eternity. Six questions are raised:

- | | |
|---|---|
| <p>(1) what is "being eternal"?</p> <p>(2) is God eternal?</p> <p>(3) is being eternal a distinguishing trait of God?</p> | <p>(4) does eternity differ from time?</p> <p>(5) do time and an age [<i>aevum</i>] differ?</p> <p>(6) is there just one <i>aevum</i>, as there is one time and one eternity?</p> |
|---|---|

article 1

Is being eternal¹ complete possession of illimitable life all at once?

In I Sent. d 8, q.2, a.1; In De divinis nominibus 10, lectio 3; In De causis, lectio 2

prosa 6;
PL 63, 858

Boethius' definition in book V of *The Consolation of Philosophy* — "eternity is complete possession of illimitable life all at once" — does not seem suitable.

(1) After all, 'illimitable' is a negative term, and a negative does not belong in the scientific account of anything but deficiencies. Eternity is not a deficiency. So 'illimitable' does not belong in its definition.

(2) For another thing, 'eternity' means a sort of duration. But duration is more connected with being than with life. So 'life' should be replaced by 'being'.

(3) 'All at once' applies to what has parts. Eternity has no parts, being simple. So 'all' does not belong.

(4) Furthermore, many days cannot occur all at once, nor can many times. But days and times (in the plural) are said to be in eternity. Micah 5:2 says that His going-forth is "from of old, from the days of eternity." Romans 16:25 speaks of the revelation of a mystery "which was kept secret from the times of eternity." Therefore, eternity is not "at once."

(5) In addition, 'all' and 'complete' are the same. Since 'all' has been put in, 'complete' is redundant.

(6) Furthermore, a duration is not a case of "possessing" something. Eternity is a duration. Ergo eternity is not the "possession" of anything.

ANSWER: we have to think through composed things to reach a knowledge of simples; so we have to think through time to reach a knowledge of eternity; and time [as it says in *Physics IV*, c.11] is just a numerical measure* of change according to *before* and *after*.²

202a 25
* numerus

¹ For Aquinas, the property of being eternal, like a temporal property of being-an-hour-long, being-a-year-old, etc., was a measurement. A thing's "measurement" was its property *vis-à-vis* a measure. Being eternal was the property called *aeternitas*, which God had *vis-à-vis* a measure that was also called *aeternitas*. This article will clarify both.

² For Aristotle, the mind-independent basis for time was the occurrence, in any change, of multiple successive phases. Time itself arose in a mind with the counting of these phases, so that

After all, succession occurs in any change, and one phase occurs after another: so we number the earlier and later phases and thereby grasp time, which is nothing but a numerical measure of before and after in a change. But in a thing that admits no change and always holds itself in the same state,* one does not get a before and after. Just as the right account of time, then, depends on reckoning before and after in change, so the right account of eternity depends on grasping the *uniformity* of what is utterly exempt from change.³

* eodem modo

Next, the things which are "measured by time," we say, are the things that have their beginning in time and their end in time, as Aristotle says in *Physics IV*. In everything that undergoes change, after all, one gets a beginning [of its changing] and an end. By contrast, what is entirely unchangeable can have no [such] beginning or end, as it can have no succession.

c 12;
221b 28

Eternity, then, is marked by two characteristics:

(1) what is "in eternity" [*i.e.* measured as eternal] is *illimitable*, which means lacking a beginning *and* an end (since "a limit" could be either), and

(2) "eternity" itself [the measure] is non-successive, [so that fitting it] lies in existing *all at once*.

TO MEET THE OBJECTIONS — *ad* (1): it is standard pro-

time "formally" was a numerical measure of change. Unlike those who think of time as a "flow" whose passage is measured in hours, etc., Aristotle denied that time was passing. He took time to be itself a measure, took change to be what it measures, and took so-many successive phases to be the measurement that a change yields by this measure. Each set of such phases could then be compared to a standard set, such as the phases of the sun's passage across the sky, or clock movements, adopted to exemplify time and to yield the conventional "units" of time. By these, one can compare rates of change

³ Absence of change meant absence of *number* of phases. Absence of number, for Aquinas, did not mean zero, however, but one. "Number" represented the break-up of one and so began with two. Absence of *number* of phases in a thing thus meant *one* invariant phase or "form" in the thing: uni-formity.

cedure to define simples by a negative, as in [the famous example from Euclid:] "a point is that which has no parts." The reason for this is not that a negative belongs to their essence but that our intellect, which grasps composed things first, cannot get to know simples without thinking away composition.

ad (2): the one who is in fact eternal is not just a being but also alive; and 'to live' stretches to cover activity, while 'to be' does not. [This matters because] the on-goingness of a duration seems to emerge more from activity than from just being, which is why time, too, is numerical measure [of activity, *i.e.*] of change.

ad (3): eternity is called "all at once" because no-

thing is lacking to it, not because it has parts.

ad (4): just as the incorporeal God is described in the Bible metaphorically, with words for corporeal things, so also His all-at-once eternity is described with words for temporal successions.

ad (5): there are two things to see in time: time itself, which is successive, and the *now* of time, which is incomplete. The definition says "all at once" to remove time and "complete" to exclude the now of time.

ad (6): what is "possessed" is held stably and in a state of satisfied repose.* So the term 'possession' is used to indicate that being eternal is a matter of being at once unchangeable and not-lacking.

* *quies*

Cajetan's Commentary

Analysis of the Article, I

The title is clear. — In the body of the article, four jobs are done. (1) He states a method: how to inquire into God's eternity. (2) He pursues the method to get the intrinsic parts of the definition [eternity is complete and all-at-once possession], beginning at, "After all, succession ..." (3) He pursues the method to get the additional parts of the definition [... possession of unbounded life], beginning at, "Next, the things which ..." (4) Applying all results to the task at hand, he answers the question affirmatively at "Being eternal, then ..."

ii. As to job (1): eternity must be learned about *via* time. — This is supported on the ground that eternity stands to time as the simple to the composed. For eternity, as will soon emerge, is a oneness (there being no succession in it), while time is a plurality (of before and after). Plurality is composed, of course, compared to oneness; "before" and "after" make for composition, compared to what stands without these differentiators.

iii. As to job (2): the account of eternity depends on apprehending the uniformity of that which is entirely exempt from change. — This is clarified on the following basis. [*Antecedent:*] The account of time depends on reckoning before and after in a change; [*Inference:*] so [the definition of eternity depends on the opposite, *i.e.*, grasping the uniformity in the unchanging]. The inference rests on seeing a proportionality here: as time pertains to the succession of phase-after-phase in a change, so eternity pertains to what lacks these [*i.e.* to the non-succession or uniformity of the whole with itself in an utterly changeless thing].

Ambiguities to note

iv. Notice right away that, in a proposition set down in the text,

the right account of eternity depends on grasping* the uniformity ... ,

the phrase 'on grasping' can be taken in two ways.

* *apprehensio*

(1) Taken one way, it would mean that eternity is found in being apprehended or being-known, so that eternity would get its finishing touch from the mind, as we say is the case with time. In my judgment, this is not what Aquinas means, since the oneness of an ongoing uniformity is actually *there* apart from any act of the mind, just as the oneness of the divine essence is.¹

(2) Taken the other way, 'on grasping ...' would mean the same as 'on the right grasp of ...' We often call the definition of something the right grasp* of it. It would be as if Aquinas had said that getting the definition of eternity right depended on getting the definition of uniformity right. This [in my judgment] is the sense he had in mind.

* *conceptio obiectiva*

Thus interpreted, the proposition can still be refined in different ways: It can be taken (1) in its formal sense or (2) in a material sense.

• If taken formally, it means that the defining component of eternity is *uniformity itself*.

• If taken materially, it allows the defining component to be the oneness of uniformity.

Some commentators have thought the text should be taken materially, because of St. Thomas' words at *I Sent.* d.11, q.2, a.1, where he says that the before and after of a change *as numbered* constitute time, and that

¹ The issue is whether time and eternity are alike in being observer-dependent. Aristotelian time was observer-dependent in the sense that while it had a basis in the real, it did not have its whole "being" there. Its final touch was contributed by the mind, so that time itself (taken "formally" as a measure) was a matter of being apprehended. If eternity, taken in the same formal way, is also a matter of being apprehended, it will be a conscious uniformity, and then it will be easy to understand why being eternal is possessing life: it will be the *conscious* possession of illimitable life, *etc.* But Cajetan declines to take this interpretation for a reason having to do with the mind-independent character of oneness, even where the oneness at stake is the one that amounts to a "measure." See the next footnote.

likewise the permanence of an act *as one*, with the oneness that meets the definition of a measure, is eternity.² These commentators have thought they could thus solve all the objections posed by Aureol (as listed by Capreolus at *I Sent.* d. 9), because his objections go against the formal way of taking the proposition, not the material way.

I, however, take this text and others form-wise. Nothing compels one to adopt the material sense here, and the formal sense should always be preferred to the others if there is a fair way to maintain it.

What one needs to realize is that uniformity is already a *kind* of oneness. It means oneness applied to form: our calling a thing uniform means the same as calling it “a thing of one form.” To talk, therefore, of the “oneness of uniformity” [as the other commentators propose to do] is redundant, like talking of “animal man.” In the text on *I Sentences*, Aquinas does not say “the uniformity of an act as one” but “the permanence of an act as one.” Saying that eternity is a uniformity and that it is a oneness do not differ — except that the former is more specific, more complete, and better said. Anything’s nature is better expressed by its proximate kind than by a remote kind. Thus it is fitting that here in the *Summa*, written later, he puts down a better elucidation. The account of eternity depends on the account of “uniformity” in the sense in which uniformity has what it takes to be a measure.

That this was the meaning intended in this article emerges from the fact that, in the proportionality Aquinas posits, he lines up the “grasp” (account) of uniformity with [what *formally* defines time, namely] the reckoning of before and after in a change.

Answering Aureol

v. Meanwhile, Aureol’s arguments are easily broken. They amount to the following two contentions.

(1) [*Antecedent*:] Uniformity is identically unchangeability and thus is what is measured by eternity; [*inference*:] ergo it is not formally eternity. — The inference holds because immutability is one attribute, and eternity is another. The antecedent is supported on the ground that uniformity contrasts with change precisely as to variety-of-forms [a change exhibits such variety, while uniformity does not]; ergo [uniformity is identically unchangeability].

(2) Time is not, formally speaking, the pluriformity

² ‘Oneness’ for Aquinas could mean not-being-divided (this was the “transcendental” sense in which every real thing is one), or it could mean a unit of measurable extent from which greater such extents arise by addition. See below, q. 11. Which of these was the oneness that meets the *ratio* of a measure? Aristotle argued in *Metaphysics X* (1052 b 15ff) that each thing in any category, just by being undivided, has what it takes to be a unit and hence a measure. On this basis Cajetan contends that the oneness in God’s uniform being is already a “measure,” independently of His apprehending it. But Aquinas may have been a step ahead. God’s uniform being *is* His uniform self-apprehension.

of change [but the numerical measure of it], so eternity is not, formally speaking, the uniformity of the unchanging [but the measure of it]. This is established by the course of reasoning in this very article.

One may answer these contentions by showing how uniformity in fact relates to unchangeability. As came out in the previous inquiry, a thing is called unchangeable (and is so) thanks to the absence [*negatio*] of any potency to be otherwise. From this there arises in the thing an absence of all succession and of any count of before and after. This latter absence, along with what it takes to be a measure, is *being uniform*. “Uniformity” posits nothing but being *one* (which immediately has what it takes to be a measure, according to *Metaphysics X*) *in form* (taking ‘form’ as broadly as possible). This is why we also apply the term ‘uniform’ to cases of motion, just as ‘one’ applies to everything. Thanks to this breadth of application, uniformity comes in many kinds, just as unity or oneness does. The uniformity of a uniform change or motion is one thing; the uniformity of a being in stasis is another. The uniformity of what is measured is one thing; the uniformity of the measure is another. But Aureol uses ‘uniformity’ as if it were a univocal term — contrary to the doctrine of Aristotle in *Metaphysics II*.³

Now, to address Aureol’s arguments directly: I deny that uniformity *is* unchangeability, formally speaking; it is more like a state⁶ borne by the latter. By the same token, I deny that uniformity is what is measured; it is in fact a measure. Against the support he gives for his antecedent [in contention (1)], I say that the variety-of-form exhibited by a change is not opposed to uniformity in general but to uniform *change*, in the sense in which we call the first [heavenly] motion a uniform change. But that kind of uniformity is not under discussion here. We are talking about uniformity as a measure of the unchanging.

As for his second argument, I deny the alleged parallel. The pluriformity of change and the uniformity of the unchanging do not stand the same *vis-à-vis* what it takes for there to be time and what it takes for there to be eternity. In order for there to be time, it is not enough that there be diversity of form in a change; it is required that there be the diversity of *earlier* form from *later* form, as such. So, since “the pluriformity of a change” posits nothing but form-different-from-form

³ In order to yield a measurement, a thing must be such as to allow a given mode of measuring to be applied to it. By being changing, a thing shows succession of phases and thereby allows the measure called “time” to be applied to it. By being entirely unchanging, God allows the measure called “uniformity” to be applied to Him. The uniformity of an unchanging thing (as opposed to, say, the uniformity of a motion at constant speed in a constant direction) is eternity *as the measure*, and being eternal (that is, possessing illimitable life all at once) is the property which God yields *vis-à-vis* that measure. In a word, it is God’s measurement. What Boethius defined, then, was eternity *as the measurement*, while Cajetan is quarreling with Aureol here about eternity as the measure.

q.9, a.2

c.1,
1052b 34fc.2,
1003b 23ff

* passio

in the change, it does not posit a number of such forms according to before and after, and hence it does not suffice to meet the definition of "time." By contrast, "the uniformity of an unchanging thing" posits oneness of the whole form, that is, oneness of the immutable thing's whole condition, and so this uniformity embraces everything that enters into what it takes for there to be eternity, formally speaking.

Analysis of the article, II

vi. As to job (3): a thing entirely exempt from change lacks a beginning and an end. This is supported on the ground that such a thing lacks succession, and it is further explained as follows: since everything that undergoes change has a beginning [of its changing] and an end, everything measured by time [*i.e.* every change in a thing that changes] has both its beginning and its end in time.

c.2,
221b 28
vii. Take a moment to notice here that these points are drawn from *Physics IV*, where what is directly under discussion is the beginning and end of a duration [or period] — except for the last proposition, where what is measured by time [the change] is shown to have limited duration because of the fact that the thing undergoing the change has limits. [Even there,] we are not talking about [just any] limits of what exists through the

* subjecti
durations

duration* (because one could posit a changing thing which is everlasting, such as a heavenly body), but about its size-limits.⁴ The point is that, since every movable/changeable thing begins its moving/changing from some intrinsic terminus *a quo* and moves/changes to some other intrinsic terminus *ad quem*, everything measured by time [*i.e.* every change in a thing thus changeable] has a beginning and end of duration [*i.e.* lasts for a bounded period]. This is a perfectly good *a priori* argument,[†] because the "before" and "after" found in change/ motion and in time come from the "before" and "after" of the changeable/movable thing's

† p. 52, note 1

219a 14f
239b 18

size and space, as one can see in *Physics IV* [c.11] and in *Physics VI* [c. 1]. The terminus *ad quem* is "other" than the terminus *a quo* (as I have said), whether it be both formally and materially other, as in rectilinear motion [or linear change], or just formally other, as in circular [or revolving] motion [or cyclical change]. In the latter case, the otherness would hold up even if one thought a heavenly body had been in motion continually, from all eternity. For Aristotle says in *De Caelo II* c 11; 282b 5 that [in order for the termini to be formally different] it

⁴ A thing without size-limits would be infinitely big. On the point that such a thing could not change place, nor rotate, see above, I ST q.7, a.3. On the point that it could not exhibit change of any kind, Aquinas and his commentator are following Aristotle, and perhaps rightly so. Take the change called

suffices that the heavenly body have had a virtual beginning — that is, it suffices that the heavenly body have what it takes to verify [the claim] that, if it had begun [to move], its motion would have started [someplace], *e.g.* [Mars' motion would have started] where Mars is now.

Analysis, III

viii. As to job (4): the answer implicitly elicited is yes: the definition given at the outset is suitable. — The support given is that eternity is characterized by two points, one drawn from the thing measured as such ('illimitable life'), and one drawn from the nature of the measure ('uniform' in the sense of 'existing without successive phases', hence 'existing all at once').⁵

ix. Notice that the effort here to synthesize a definition puts it together by a method of division.

- As far as the measure is concerned, Aquinas divided "measure of duration" into (1) measure by way of successive plurality, and (2) measure by way of unchangeable oneness. With the former excluded, because it is time, he put the latter into the definition.

- As far as the thing measured is concerned, he divided the measurement into (1) delimited by a beginning and an end, and (2) undelimited by either. With the former excluded, because it belongs to the temporal, he put the latter into the definition.

Since these points are covered in the definition quoted [from Boethius], the conclusion was drawn that his definition was suitable. It doesn't matter that 'complete' was not mentioned. For one thing, completeness was touched upon implicitly in positing the uniformity of an entirely unchangeable thing. The uniformity of the now of time is not like that, since it is not [defined] apart from change. For another thing, the word 'complete' is explained in the answer *ad* (5).

melting. Could it occur in a snowball of infinite size? It seems coherent to suppose that an infinite volume of the solid becomes an infinite volume of the corresponding liquid. But there are problems. The change could not occur gradually, a finite volume at a time, because no finite extent of thaw would alter the fact that the object was still an infinite volume of snow. To count as even one percent, say, of melt, the change would have to be instantaneously infinite in extent, which is physically impossible.

⁵ The phrase "thing measured" [*mensuratum*] could be taken materially or formally. Materially, it meant the thing which yielded a measurement (here: God). Formally taken, it meant the thing *as* measured by this measure, *i.e.* the measurement yielded (here: illimitable existence possessed all at once). In other words, when the unchanging God was described in light of His phaseless uniformity, He was seen to be as Boethius said the eternal was.

article 2

Is God eternal?

In *I Sent* d.19, q.2, a.1; 1 CG c.15.
De Potentia Dei q.3, a.17 ad 23; *Compendium theologiae* cc 5, 7, 8

It would seem that God is not eternal.

(1) After all, no way to be “made” can be attributed to God. Being eternal is a way to be made, since Boethius says “a passing now makes time, a standing now makes eternity.” Also, Augustine says in his *Book of 83 Questions* that God is the “author of eternity.” Ergo, God is not eternal.

De Trinitate IV:
 PL 64, 1253
 q.23,
 PL 40, 16

(2) Also, what is before and after eternity is not measured by it. But God is before eternity, as it says in the *Liber de causis*, as well as after it, as Exodus 15:18 says: “unto eternity shall the Lord reign and beyond.” So being eternal is too narrow for God.

Prop. 2

(3) Moreover, being eternal is a measurement, and it does not befit God to be measured. Therefore, it does not befit Him to be eternal.

(4) Furthermore, there is no past, present or future in eternity, since it is “all at once,” as said above. But past, present, and future tense verbs are applied to God in the Scriptures. Therefore, God is not eternal.

a.1

ON THE OTHER HAND, there is the Athanasian Creed: “Eternal is the Father, eternal the Son, eternal the Holy Spirit.”

ANSWER: what it takes to be eternal is a consequence of being unchangeable, just as what it takes to be temporal is a consequence of change (both of which points came out above). Since God is supremely unchangeable, then, He is supremely suited to be eternal.

What is more: God is not just eternal but *is* His eternity. No other thing is its own duration, because no other thing is its own existing. But God is identically His uniform existing. Thus He is identically His eternity, as He is identically His essence.

TO MEET THE OBJECTIONS — *ad* (1): the standing now is said to “make” eternity in the sense of making it clear

to us. Just as our grasp of time is caused to arise in us by the fact that we grasp the passing-away of time’s “now,” so a grasp of the eternal is caused to arise in us insofar as we grasp “a standing now.” [In other words, the idea of a “standing now” causes us to grasp the idea of eternity.] — Augustine’s statement about God as “author of eternity” is understood to be about participated eternity: God gives a share of being eternal to some others in the same way as He gives a share of being unchangeable.

This makes it clear how to answer objection (2) also. God is said to be “before eternity” in the sense of the participated eternity that immaterial substances have. Thus it says in the same passage that an immaterial intelligence is “made equal” to eternity. As to the text in Exodus (“God shall reign unto eternity and beyond”), the word ‘eternity’ there is being used for an age, as another translation says. It is saying that God will reign “beyond eternity” in the sense that He lasts beyond any age, *i.e.* beyond any given duration. For the age of anything is just its life-span,* as Aristotle says in *De caelo et mundo* I. — Alternatively, it is saying that God will reign “beyond eternity” because, even if something else were everlasting (like the motion of the heavens, according to some philosophers), it would still be the case that God reigns “beyond” that, inasmuch as His reign is all-at-once.

* *perihodus*
 c.9, 279a 23

ad (3): eternity is not another thing distinct from God Himself. So when we say that God is eternal, it is not as if He were being measured by an alien standard. The makings of a standard[†] only arise here in our way of representing the matter.

† *mensura*

ad (4): verbs of various tenses are applied to God inasmuch as His eternity covers all times: it is not the case that God varies in Himself as between [what He is in our] present, [what He is in our] past, and [what He is in our] future.

Cajetan’s Commentary

Analysis of the article

The title is clear. — In the body of the article, two jobs are done. (1) He answers the question directly with a yes: God is supremely eternal. The support is that God is supremely unchangeable; therefore, He is supremely eternal. The reason this follows is that being eternal is a consequence of being unchangeable, as being temporal is a consequence of changing.

ii. In job (2), he determines *how* God is eternal by putting down a second conclusion: God *is* His eternity. (This amounts to saying that ‘eternal’ does not name God after an extrinsic standard[‡] but names Him essentially.) In dealing with this conclusion, he (a) shows that it involves a unique excellence in God; then (b) he supports it; thirdly (c) he illustrates it.

‡ *denominativè*

(a) Since eternity is a sort of duration, saying that

God is His eternity is saying that God is His duration, too. But this — a thing's being its own duration — is found in God's case alone. Hence the text says that no other thing has this trait.

(b) The conclusion and the uniqueness are supported together: God is His own uniform existing, and no thing other than God is its own existing; so, He alone is His own duration (which, in His case, is eternity).

(c) Lastly, the point is illustrated with a comparison: as God is identically His essence, so He is His eternity.

In defense of the second conclusion

iii. As to the sense and force of the supporting argument given for the second conclusion, be aware that the word 'thing' here [in the phrase 'no other thing'] is being used to mean subsisting thing, the only sort of thing that exists, strictly speaking. Thus the text does not mean to say that every *item* other than God is distinct from its own duration (since time is not), but that no other thing which is *what exists* and *what lasts* is its own duration. The force of the reasoning depends on the fact that these three items,

p. 87, note 1

the thing — its existing — its duration stand in a certain relation to each other. The thing's duration attaches to it only *via* its existing; the thing only lasts by reason of its existing; everything "lasts" because it retains existence and for no other reason. Now, because matters so stand, it follows that if either extreme [the thing, or its duration] fails to be identical to the middle item [the existing], it will also fail to be identical to the other extreme. For the extreme items are farther from each other than either is from the middle. Well, apart from God, the lasting *thing*, which is the one extreme, is not identical to its own existing (as we Thomists think, at any rate) and therefore is not identical to its duration, which is the other extreme.

Trouble from Aureol

iv. Concerning this same supporting argument, doubt arises from the remarks of Aureol, as cited by Capreolus on *I Sent* d.9. Aureol attacks a point assumed implicitly above, namely, that God's eternity is formally a duration. His argument goes thus. [*Major:*] Every duration is greater than, less than, or equal to any other duration; [*minor:*] eternity is none of those [ergo, eternity is not a duration]. In support [of his minor] he says that [eternity is not greater than other durations] because a "greater duration" is unintelligible apart from "extending farther" in one or the other direction, before or after; therefore every greater duration has a "before" or an "after" [not matched by the lesser]. But that [implies successiveness and so] conflicts with eternity.

v. One can ANSWER this briefly in either of two ways:

(1) One approach is to deny Aureol's minor.

Against his support for it, one can say that there are two ways in which a "greater duration" can include a before and after:

- (a) form-wise, or
- (b) virtually and in a higher manner, as the sun contains heat.

Then one can say that eternity is greater than other durations and does in fact extend before or after any given stretch of time, because it pre-contains them in a higher manner.¹

(2) The other approach is to deny Aureol's major. Strictly speaking, one can only "compare" things that meet a common definition. Eternity and time are not durations by the same definition of 'duration', speaking of each in intrinsic terms.² (Admittedly, though, when eternity is thought of as co-existing with time, the two are customarily compared, even by eminent authors.)

Understanding the answer *ad* (1)

vi. In considering the answer to the first objection, take note of two items.

(1) A moving point is said to "cause" a line, and yet there is no type of causality by which it causes a line to exist. It is not the cause of a line in real being but in *being-known*. It makes knowledge of the line arise in us. Just so, a "standing now" is said to cause eternity not in real being but in being known; it makes the definition of eternity occur to us. Just as a mathematical point cannot in fact move, and yet we think and say that a moving point causes (*i.e.* if it were moving, it would ...), so also a "now" cannot stand, and yet we say perfectly well that "a standing now makes eternity" (*i.e.* if it stood, it would constitute eternity).³

(2) Clearly, then, Aureol was wasting his time (in the places cited above) with his arguments against this Boethian and Thomistic dictum — arguments to the effect that a "now" cannot be conceived as standing, and that the talk of a "now" has to be removed from God. He equivocates on 'now'. In fact, he supposes that there is no now but that of time, when in fact there is a now of eternity meeting a loftier definition than the now of time. To repeat: the very now of time, if it stood still, would constitute eternity, just as a point, if it moved, would make a line.⁴ I did not think it necessary to bring Aureol's objections forward here, as they are easily answered from the points just developed.

¹ Given that God's illimitable existing already contains, in a higher manner, all the completenesses found in creatures (1 *ST* q.4, a.2), and given that the existence of each creature is the completeness which gives it its duration (this commentary, § *iii*), it follows that God's existing already contains in a higher manner all duration-giving completenesses. God's eternity of uniform existing thus pre-contains all possible stretches of time (taking 'stretches' not as abstract intervals, but as possible life-spans).

² So 'duration' is used analogously in this article.

³ If a point cannot move (and a now cannot stand), then supposing that it does is supposing an impossibility. Is the impossibility logical? If it is, why is the supposition not an absurdity, given which, anything you like would follow, as Cajetan argued in § *xvii* of the commentary on q.7, a.4? Cajetan does not explain, but perhaps he sensed that there was no impossibility here, just conflict with the pre-modern way of axiomatizing the talk of points and instants.

⁴ On the "now" of time, see below, footnote 1 on the text of q.10, a.4.

article 3

Is being eternal unique to God?

In *I Sent.* d.8, q.2, a.2, In *IV Sent.* d.49, q.1, a.2, q.3; *Quodl. X.* q.2;
In *Dionysius De divinis nominibus*, c.10, *lectio 3*, In *librum De causis*, *lectio 2*

It seems that being eternal is not the property of God alone.

(1) It says in Daniel 12:3 that those who turn the many unto righteousness "shall be as stars in everlasting eternities." There would not be many eternities, if God alone were eternal. It is therefore not the case that God alone is eternal.

(2) Matthew 25:41 says, "Depart, ye cursed, into eternal fire." God is not the only thing that is eternal, then.

(3) Besides, whatever is necessarily the case is eternally the case, and many points are necessarily the case — all the axioms of deductive science, for example, and all the propositions involved in apodeictic* proofs. Therefore, God is not alone in being eternal.

* *propositiones demonstrativae*

Epistle 15;
PL 22, 357

ON THE OTHER HAND, Jerome says in a letter to Marcel-la [actually, to Damasus]: "God is the only one who has no beginning." Whatever has a beginning is not eternal. Therefore, God is the only one who is eternal.

ANSWER: "eternal," in its true and proper meaning, applies to God alone, because being eternal is a consequence of being unchangeable (as came out above), and only God is entirely unchangeable (as we established above). Nevertheless, certain things receive from God a share of His unchangeability, and to that extent they get a share of His eternity.

Some things get enough immutability from God that they will never cease to be. On this basis, Ecclesiastes says of the earth that it "standeth forever." Other things are called eternal in the Bible on the basis that,

although they are subject to eventual decay, they last a very long time; thus "the eternal mountains" are mentioned in a Psalm, and Deuteronomy 33:15 speaks of the produce of "the eternal hills" [I.g. LXX]. Yet another class of things share in more of the definition of eternity, to the extent of having an unalterability in being [what substances they are] — or even an unalterability in doing what they are doing, such as the angels and saints who enjoy the Word. Their Vision of the Word precludes from the saints any "turning thoughts," as Augustine says in *De Trinitate XI*: For this reason, those seeing God are said to have eternal life, as in John 17: 3, "this is eternal life, that they should know thee..."

I.g. Ps 75: 5
LXX Ps 75:4

c.16,
PL 42, 1079

TO MEET THE OBJECTIONS — *ad* (1): they are called many eternities insofar as many are participating in eternity from contemplating God.

ad (2): the fire of Hell is called eternal merely because it will never cease. Moreover, there is change in the pains of those who are in it, as Job 24:19 says, "they shall pass from waters of snow to excess of heat." In Hell, then, no true eternity is to be found but something more like time, as the Psalm says: "their time will last forever."

Ps 80, 16

ad (3): 'necessary' indicates a way of being true; and the true (as Aristotle says in *Metaphysics I7*) is in the mind. Thus necessarily true propositions are "eternal" on the basis that they are in an eternal mind. There is only one such mind: God's. Hence [from the fact that certain propositions are eternally true] it does not follow that something outside God is eternal.

c.4,
1027b 27

Cajetan's Commentary

In the title, '*proprium*' is the opposite of 'common'.

Analysis of the article

In the body of the article there are two conclusions. The *first* is that 'eternal' applies to God alone, truly and properly speaking. The support is as follows. Only God is entirely unchangeable; so only God is truly and properly speaking eternal. The inference holds because: being eternal is a consequence of being unchangeable.

The *second* conclusion is that 'eternal' applies to other things in a participative sense. The support is as

follows. [*Antecedent:*] There are four ways in which other things get a share of unchangeability; [*inference:*] so [there are four ways the others get a share of] eternity. The inference holds because, to the extent things are unchangeable, they are eternal. The antecedent is clarified by laying out the four levels of [participated] unchangeability. The first [and lowest] is the level of longevity, where we find things that corrupt but are very long lasting, such as mountains and hills. The second level is that of perpetuity *in toto*; here belong the elements [like earth] corruptible in part but not globally or *in toto*. The text presents these two in reverse order.

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The third level is that of unalterability as to substance alone; here we find heavenly bodies and angels. The fourth level is unalterability as to [substance and doing] numerically one operation, and here we find the blessed [angels and saints] *qua* blessed.

On the answer *ad* (3)

ii. In the answer *ad* (3), if you are unaware, dear beginner, of how 'necessary' is understood to mean a mode of truth, check Aristotle's *De interpretatione* [cc. 12-13], where modal topics are handled. You will see that 'necessary' (as signified act) adds to 'proposition' the information that the proposition is so composed as to be true exclusively [*i.e.* never false]. Then you will realize that the proposition's being necessary in exercised act is a matter of its really being so composed. The axioms and conclusions of apodeictic proofs are called "necessary," as the objection noted, precisely

because they are propositions composed in this way.¹

¹ Cajetan's remark helps a beginner who misreads Aquinas' answer as meaning that a necessary proposition is one that is everlastingly entertained. But once this mistake is out of the way, there remains a deeper problem. The *ad* (3) will answer no one but an opponent who fancies that propositions float about independently of minds. But suppose the objection goes like this. A proposition picks out a state of affairs, and a true proposition picks out one which obtains. So a necessary truth corresponds to an eternal state of affairs, it would seem, and if there are many such truths, not all of them about God, there ought to be many eternal things other than God. Aquinas needs more of an answer, then, and it will emerge in time that he has more. He will not identify "states of affairs" with things, nor timeless obtaining with eternal existing. The necessary truths in question, he will say, are ones which make no existential claim. *E.g.* if the definition of horse picks out any state of affairs at all, it obtains without a horse existing. If one objects that the *what* of the horse is eternally "there," he will say: only in God's thought.

Does eternity differ from time?

Infra, a. 5; 2/1 *ST* q. 31, a. 2, *In 1 Sent.* d. 8, q. 2, a. 2, d. 19, q. 2, a. 1;
De Potentia Dei q. 3, a. 14 *ad 10*, *ad 18*; *In Dionysii De div. nom.*, c. 10, *lectio 3*

It does not seem that eternity is an altogether different affair from time.

(1) After all, one cannot have two measures of duration running concurrently unless one is part of the other. Two days cannot be occurring at once, nor two hours. But a day and an hour can both be occurring, because the hour is part of the day. Well, eternity and time are both occurring, and each provides a measure of duration. So [one is part of the other, and] since eternity is not part of time, as it exceeds and englobes time, it seems that time is part of eternity. In that case, time is not an altogether different thing from eternity.

219b 11
222a 15

(2) Further, Aristotle says in *Physics IV* that the “now” of time remains the same in all of time. But that seems to match the definition of eternity, which is to stay the same over the whole of time while being indivisible. Therefore, eternity is the “now” of time. And since time’s now is not a substantially different affair from time itself, eternity is not a substantially different affair from time.

c 14,
223b 18

(3) Furthermore, the measure of the first [heavenly sphere’s] motion is the measure of all motions, as it says in *Physics IV*. In parallel fashion, it would seem that the measure of the first act of being would be the measure of every act of being. Well, eternity is the measure of the first act of being, which is God’s act of being. Therefore eternity is the measure of every act of being. But the existence of corruptible things is measured by time. Therefore time either is eternity or is something pertaining to eternity.

ON THE OTHER HAND, there is the fact that eternity is all-at-once, whereas in time there is “before” and “after.” Therefore, time and eternity are not the same thing.

ANSWER: time and eternity are obviously not the same, but there is disagreement over how they differ.

Some have given the reason that eternity lacks a beginning and an end, while time has both. But this proposal reaches an accidental difference only, not the intrinsic one. Suppose (like those who make the celestial movements everlasting) that time has always been and always will be; [then time, too, will have no beginning or end, but] there will still be a difference between time and eternity, as Boethius says in *The Consolation*, based on the fact that eternity is all-at-once, and time is not; for eternity is the measure of being-in-stasis, while time is the measure of motion or change.

PL 63, 858
Prosa IV

The proposed difference has some merit, however, when it is applied to the things measured rather than to the measures themselves. The only things that yield a time-measurement are things that have a beginning and end in time, as it says in *Physics IV*. So, if a celestial

c 12:
221b 28

motion were everlasting, its whole duration would have no time-measurement (the infinite not being measurable), but any given revolution of it would, since it starts in time and ends in time.

Alternatively, the proposed difference can be justified as applying to the measures themselves if “beginning” and “end” are taken differently, *i.e.*, in a potential sense. For then, on the supposition that time lasts forever, one can still designate beginnings and ends in time by taking arbitrary intervals of it, as we talk about the beginning and end of a day or a year. With eternity one cannot do that [one cannot mark off intervals].

At best, however, these differences are consequences of the intrinsic and primary* difference, namely, that eternity is all-at-once, while time is not.

* *per se et primo*

TO MEET THE OBJECTIONS — *ad* (1): that argument would work if time and eternity were measures of things sharing a common genus; but they are not, as one can see from the things they measure.

ad (2): in its underlying subject, the “now” of time is the same all the time; but the right account of it keeps shifting — in that just as time corresponds to a motion, so the now of time corresponds to the thing moving. As the subject underlying change-of-place, the thing moving is the same over the whole time [of its motion], but the right account of it keeps shifting, in that the thing is *here* and then *there*; and this change is its motion. Similarly, the fluctuation of the “now,” as the account of it shifts, is time. But eternity stays the same both in its subject and in the right account of it. Hence eternity is not the same as the now of time.¹

¹ This objection and its answer are taken from Aristotle’s none too perspicuous remarks. One wants to interject: “now” always has the same (indexical) sense but keeps shifting in referent. Aristotle would answer (I think) that “now” can have no referent until some count of phases has been taken to exemplify time; then the counted phases can be seen as unit-intervals dividing a directed real-number line (vector). Then the vector becomes time-the-measure, against which any changing/moving thing can be measured in its phases, and then one can account for “now.” In *Physics IV*, c. 13 (222a 10-20), Aristotle seems to have been talking very abstractly about the “now of time” as a point on the vector itself. Earlier, in c. 11 (219b 12-30), he seems to have been talking concretely about the “now of time” as a state of the temporal thing measured.

In the abstract discussion, he said that the now of time was (at any time) a point which (a) ended the past as a right-closed interval, (b) opened the future as a left-closed interval, (c) linked the two (so closed) as their common point, and (d) divided the two (as open intervals). This was the now of the vector *in subiecto*. But where the time-apprehending mind located this point (at the juncture of *what* interval as past and *what* as future) was different case by case, and so the now of the vector kept shifting *in ratione*. Clearly, the topic was “the current instant.” Mean-

ad (3): as eternity is *the* right measure of the act of being, so time is the uniquely right measure of change. To the extent that any act of being is removed from permanence of being and comes under the sway of alteration, to that extent it is removed from eternity and comes under the scope of time. The existing that cor-

ruptible things do, then, because it is subject to alteration, is not measured by eternity but by time. Time measures not only those things which are actually suffering alteration but also those that are *open* to alteration. Hence time measures not only the change/motion of a thing but also the stasis/rest of a thing that is naturally subject to change but is not undergoing it.

while, in the concrete discussion, he had said that the now is *what* is before and after (e.g., the *stone* that was here before it was there, etc.) viewed as the juncture (or at the juncture) of its prior phase and its next phase. This was the now of the measured *in subjecto*. But where the time-apprehending mind located this thing (at the juncture of *what* phases) was different case by case, and so the now of the measured shifted *in ratione*. Clearly, the topic was “the current state.” In sum,

the “now of time” was either “the current instant” or “the current state of a changeable thing.” Well, each current state (of anything) is mapped to a current instant; so perhaps the objector thought there was some one instant to which (eternity-like) every state of anything was mapped. Apart from some such fallacy, it is hard to see what could be mistaken for eternity in Aristotle’s talk of “now.”

Cajetan’s Commentary

In the title, ‘differ’ means in real terms [not just verbally or conceptually].

Analysis of the article

In the body of the article, five jobs are done. (1) He says the doubt is not whether they differ but why.

(2) He considers an opinion about the matter in doubt (the reason for the difference), namely, because time has a beginning and end but eternity does not.

(3) He invalidates this reason, because it is incidental. This is supported on the ground that, if this difference were removed, the one posited by Boethius would still be there, namely, that eternity is all-at-once while time is successive.

(4) He salvages two other senses of the refuted opinion: (a) by taking it as the difference between the things measured [by time vs. the one measured by eternity], (b) by taking the beginning and end as potential [rather than actual].

(5) He answers the question as debated with a conclusion covering everything he has said one way or another. It is this: the intrinsic and primary difference is that eternity is all-at-once while time is not, with the result that other differences are consequences of this one. This is left as obvious enough from the points already made.

ii. Observe that the opinion criticized in the text can have three meanings. It can say they differ (1) in terms of whether the *measure* has in itself an *actual* beginning and end; or (2) in terms of whether the *things measured* have an *actual* beginning and end; or (3) in terms of whether the *measure* has in itself a *potential* beginning and end.¹ Now, given that [the rules of pro-

per interpretation are such that]

- an alleged difference is taken to be a difference in the thing itself [here: the measure], and
- unqualified talk of a beginning and an end is taken to mean actual ones,

sense (1) is [the first one up for consideration here and is] invalidated without qualification. Senses (2) and (3), however, which can be reached and supported by [standard techniques of] exposition, are then appended as true. But since they do not get at the root difference but only secondary ones, Aquinas lays down the root difference in his ultimate answer. All the points are clear and obvious in the text.

iii. As to the point made in connection with sense (2), namely, that if the motion of a heavenly body were everlasting, the whole of it would yield no temporal measurement, but only the parts — a doubt arises from Scotus’ remarks on *II Sent.* d.2, q.3. But because this debate bears on *Physics IV* at text 117, I shall not go into it here, where it is not germane.

There is dispute, too, about the sameness of “now” over the whole of time, touched upon in the answer *ad (2)*. But since this is also treated in *Physics IV* texts 103-108, it will be discussed (if God allows me to get to it) at that point. It is a specialized question.²

iv. In the answer *ad (3)*, there is dispute over the claim that the existing done by generable [corruptible] things is measured by time. Scotus argues against this in *II Sent.* d.2, q.4, holding that their existing, in itself, is measured by age [*aevum*]. But since the nature of an age is about to come up in the next article, and since Scotus uses the same argument against [our view of] what measures an angel’s activity, this discussion will be postponed until the next article.

¹ The fourth combination is ignored because no one would have suggested that the things measured by time have only a potential beginning and end.

² It had to be very specialized, indeed, prior to the development of a proper semantics for indexical terms.

Does an age [*ævum*] differ from time?

1 *ST* q.61, a.2 ad 2, q.63, a.6 ad 4, q.85, a.4 ad 1, 2/1 *ST* q.113, a.7 ad 5; in 1 *Sent.* d.8, q.2, a.2; d.19, q.2, a.1;
 In 11 *Sent.* d.2, q.1, a.1, *De Potentia Dei* q.3, a.14 ad 18, *Quodlibet X*, q.2

An age¹ does not seem to be different from time.

cc 20, 22,
 PL 34, 388f

(1) Augustine says in *Super Genesim ad litteram VIII* that God “moves a spiritual creature through time.” But the measure of spiritual substances is supposed to be an “age.” So time and age do not differ.

(2) Furthermore, time by definition has before and after, while eternity by definition is all-at-once (as said above). Now an “age” is not eternity (since it says in [the Vulgate of] Sirach 1:1 that eternal wisdom is “before all ages”). In that case, an age is not all-at-once; so it has a before and after; so it is time.

(3) Also, if there is no before and after in an age, then in age-long things there is no difference between being, having been, and going to be. In that case, since it is impossible for age-long things to have not existed [once they have], it is impossible for them to be going to not exist.² But that [consequent] is false, because God can reduce them to nothing. [So the antecedent is false, and there is before and after in an age.]

(4) Moreover, since the duration of age-long things, once begun, goes on to infinity, if an age is all-at-once, it will follow that a created thing is infinite in act — which is impossible. Therefore, an age does not differ from time.

III, *metra* 8;
 PL 63, 758

ON THE OTHER HAND, Boethius addresses God [in *The Consolation of Philosophy*] as the one “who commandest time to go forth from an age.”

I ANSWER: an age differs from time and from eternity in holding a middle status between them. But as to how this is so, [opinions vary]. Some say:

- eternity lacks a beginning and an end,
- an age has a beginning but no end,
- and time has both.

But this difference is incidental, as I said above. For if age-long things had always been and were always going to be (as some maintain), or if they were going to cease at some point (as God could bring about), an age would still be different from time and from eternity.

Others account for the difference between the three on the following basis:

- eternity has no before and after;
- time has before and after with newness and oldness;
- an age has before and after without newness or oldness.

But this hypothesis implies its own contradictory, as one

¹ Before “an age” acquired its current meaning as a geological period or a long stretch of history, it had had a spiritual use among neo-Platonists, as the sort of duration enjoyed by heavenly beings other than God. Such is the meaning here.

² The argument is: since the past is unalterable, a being whose past and future are the same has an unalterable future.

sees especially clearly if it means to deny newness and oldness in the measure itself. The before and after of a duration cannot be simultaneous; so it must be the case that, if an age has a before and after, then as the before-part of the age recedes, the after-part comes on as new. So there will be newness in an age [contrary to the hypothesis], just as in time. Alternatively, if the newness and oldness are supposed to be absent from the things measured, there is still a contradiction. For the reason a temporal thing grows old with time is because it has a mutable being, and this mutability of the thing measured is the reason there is a before-and-after in its proper measure (as one learns quite clearly from *Physics II*). Ergo, if an age-long thing is not itself subject to oldness or newness, the reason will be that its being is immutable. In that case, its measure will not have before-and-after [contrary to the hypothesis].

The right thing to say, then, is this. Since eternity is the measure of PERMANENT BEING, a thing falls short of being eternal as it falls short of permanence in being. Well, some things fall so far short of this permanence that their very existing is subject to, or constituted by, change, and such things are measured by time. So it is with all change-processes and with the existence of corruptible things. Other things fall less short of permanence in being, because their existing neither amounts to changing nor lies subject to change, and yet their existing is (either actually or potentially) in union with change. An obvious example is the heavenly bodies, which have change-free substantial being and yet have this change-free being in union with a changeableness as to place. The angels are another clear case, because they have change-free [substantial] being in union with changeability as to choice on the natural level³ and in union with changeability as to insights.* affections, and (in their own way) places. Thus such things are measured by an “age,” which has middle status between eternity and time. By contrast, the existing which eternity measures is neither capable of change nor in union with such a capability.⁴

In sum, then:

- time has before and after;
- an age has no before and after, but it can be in union with them;⁵

³ He adds “on the natural level” because the good angels also have a supernatural level on which they are immutable in their choice for God.

⁴ For Aquinas, locations and activities (operations) are accidents in creatures, and wherever there is composition of substance and accident, there is a kind of union between the “substantial” esse actualizing the creature in what it is and the accidental esse actualizing the creature in where it is or how it is operating. This is the union Aquinas is talking about here. God is exempt because He can have no accidents (1 *ST* q.3, a.6).

⁵ So a thing is age-long in case (a) its existing has at most a beginning or end in time, not both; (b) it passes through no suc-

* *intelligentias*

- eternity has no before and after, and it cannot be in union with them.

TO MEET THE OBJECTIONS — *ad* (1): spiritual creatures are measured by time as to their insights and affections, among which there is succession. This is why Augustine says in the same passage that [for the angels] to be moved through time is to be moved in their affections. Yet as to their natural existence, the angels are measured by an age. And as to their Vision of Glory, they are sharing in eternity.⁶

ad (2): an age is a simultaneous whole but is not eternity because it is compatible with before-and-after.

ad (3): the difference between past and future is not in the angel's existence considered in itself but arises by way of changes united to it. When we say that an angel "is" or "was" or "will be," the difference arises from how we think of its existence. [Since we think in tensed language] our minds think of it in relation to the several parts of time. Our saying that an angel "is" or "was" assumes a point to have been reached where the alternative is not [any longer] in God's power; but our

cession of states as to what-it-is (so that its substantial being is succession-free), and (c) its being what-it-is is compatible with successive accidental states (such as choices and operations upon various locations).

⁶ Their supernaturally immutable choice to see God is their "eternal life;" see a.3 above, at the end of the *corpus*.

saying that an angel "will be" assumes no such point. So since, taken independently [of tense-talk], an angel's existing and not-existing are in the power of God, God can bring it about that the angel's existing is not future, even though He cannot bring it about that it is not occurring when it is, or did not occur after it has.⁷

ad (4): the duration of an age is "unbounded" in that it is not bounded by time. For a created thing to be "infinite" just because it is not bounded by this or that other thing in particular is not a problem.

⁷ The objector hoped to falsify the theory that an angelic age is without succession by deriving from it a conclusion inconsistent with the acknowledged power of God to bring about the non-existence of an angel already created. To succeed, he had to get a *de dicto* impossibility for such an angel to cease to be. The objector hoped to get this result from a point of tense-logic (that the past cannot become otherwise than it has been) and the idea that, if succession is denied, an angel's future is the same as its past. Aquinas is defeating this by saying two things. (1) If an angel's being is without succession, it has *neither* past *nor* future. (2) Even though we speak of its being in tensed sentences, we cannot hand on the modal implications of one tense to another. The unalterability of the past is entirely due to the fact that a past-tense sentence assumes a *de facto* truth distribution (e.g., a divine decision); this unalterability cannot be handed on to the future, because a future-tense sentence does not assume such a distribution. So 'Michael will cease to exist' does not become impossible just because 'Michael has not existed' is no longer possible and 'Michael exists without succession' is true. So nothing prevents the *de dicto* claim, 'It is possible that Michael not exist', from being true, and the objection fails.

Cajetan's Commentary

The title is clear.

Analysis of the article, I

In the body of the article four jobs are done. (1) Aquinas states what is clear about this question and what is unclear. (2) He handles a certain opinion dealing with the latter. (3) He handles another. (4) He presents his own opinion and answers the question.

ii. As to job (1), what is clear is that an "age" is in the middle between eternity and time. What is unclear (thanks to the plethora of opinions) is *how* it is in the middle.

iii. As to job (2), Aquinas begins by setting forth the opinion that an age is intermediate in terms of whether it has a beginning or end. Then he overthrows this opinion by showing that such a middle status is coincidental. If age-long things had been produced from all eternity [they would have had no beginning or end and thus would not have been intermediate in this way].

iv. As to job (3), Aquinas begins by setting forth a second opinion, which says that an age is intermediate in terms of lacking newness and oldness (and thereby resembling eternity) while yet having before-and-after (and thereby resembling time). — Then he overthrows

this opinion in two ways, corresponding to the two interpretations it can bear: (a) both traits are attributed to the age itself [the measure]; (b) the trait of having before-and-after is attributed to the age itself, while the trait of lacking newness and oldness is attributed to the age-long thing measured by the age.

His argument against interpretation (a) goes as follows. When before-and-after are taken according to duration, they cannot be simultaneous; hence, as the "before" passes away, the "after" comes on as new; ergo, if there is before-and-after in an age, there is newness and oldness.

His argument against interpretation (b) goes thus. [*Antecedent:*] Suppose an age-long thing can neither enter a new state nor grow old in any way; then [*1st inference:*] it is immutable, and in that case [*2nd inference:*] its measure has no before-and-after. The antecedent is the claim of this opinion [so interpreted]. The first inference is obvious in itself and is supported by *Physics IV*: the exact reason a thing grows old is because it is changeable; hence the reason it would *not* grow old is because it is *unchangeable* (according to the rule that if A is the reason for B, not-A is the reason for not-B). The second inference is also supported by *Physics IV*: changeability in the thing measured is the reason for before-and-after in its measure.

Therefore the unchangeability of the thing measured will be the reason there is no before-and-after in its measure (according to the same rule).

How Scotus defends the second opinion

v. About these arguments, note that Scotus (writing on *II Sent.* d.2, q.2) does not adopt this second opinion; he just tries to break down the arguments against it offered here. He defends interpretation (b) as tenable by offering the following example. Suppose there were a case of flesh that did not have a part here and a part there under quantity.¹ Then such parts would be in the measure [for flesh] but not in the thing measured by it [in this case]. So, too, in the case at hand: the angel's existing would admit no new state, and yet its measure would be successive. So in countering the argument of Aquinas against this interpretation, Scotus is denying that changeability in the thing measured is the exact reason there is succession in its measure.

* *ad hominem*
† *simplificiter*

vi. On the contrary: this counter is easily shown to be false, both on Scotus' own terms* and on independent grounds.[†]

* On Scotus' own terms: if there can be succession in a measure *whether or not* there is change in its distinctive subject (*i.e.*, in the thing it is designed to measure), then drawing an inference from succession in the measure to change in its subject is not valid; it commits the fallacy of the consequent.² Yet Scotus himself says in the same passage that drawing this inference *is* sound and is a case of reasoning from effect to cause. Therefore [his attack on Aquinas is inconsistent with his own position]. — Confirmation: Aristotle drew this inference, and the reasoning in this article is no different from his. We are saying that *if* there is succession in the measure, *then* there is succession *in the measured*, because variation in the measured is the reason for succession in its measure. It is astonishing, really, how Scotus takes opposite views of one and the same argument, approving of it when it occurs in Aristotle, and disapproving when it occurs in St. Thomas. Inevitably, he is rejecting either his own approval or his own disapproval.

* *certificetur*
† *ex propriis*

* On independent grounds: [*antecedent*:] it is impossible for an indivisible thing to be disclosed* in features distinctive to it[†] by a divisible one, and hence

¹ Scotus is thinking of the body of Christ in the Eucharist, where the flesh of the Lord is present, but its parts are not extended under quantity, so that they do not lie outside each other. In that way, when the host is broken, the whole Christ is not divided but remains present as a whole in each morsel.

² The fallacy of the consequent is the attempt to go from the premise 'if *p* then *q*' to the conclusion 'if *q* then *p*', without having in hand the additional premise that 'if not-*p* then not-*q*'. This mistake would certainly be going forward, if it had been stipulated in advance that *q* held whether or not *p* held. For then one would have both 'if *p* then *q*' and 'if not-*p* then *q*' — in direct contradiction to the additional premise needed. In the example at hand, *p* = 'there is change in the subject', and *q* = 'there is succession in the measure.'

[*inference*:] it cannot be measured by it. The inference holds because a measurement is a disclosure of the thing measured. The antecedent is obvious from Scotus' own example: one would never *learn* how much indivisible matter was present by looking at a divisible size, if that were its measure. Thus, in point of fact, the body of Christ is *not* measured by the size of the species in the Eucharist, because His body is not present in a divisible manner under those species. The same goes for a quantity of duration. If the quantity itself is extended [so as to be a "length"], a durationally indivisible and unextended thing will never be measured by it. One cannot even imagine how the natural duration of such a thing is supposed to be learned from such a means. It has to be the case, then, that an extended measure corresponds to an extended thing-measured, and an indivisible measure to an indivisible thing, as St. Thomas infers here, from Aristotle.

Analysis of the article, II

vii. As to job (4), the conclusion given in answer to the question is this: an age is intermediate between eternity and time, because it is immutable and yet united to mutability. — The support goes as follows. [*Premise*:] Eternity is the distinctive measure of an act of being that is in all ways permanent; [*1st inference*:] so removal from eternity arises as a matter of falling short of permanence; [*2nd inference*:] so change or what is subject to change is at furthest remove; hence [*3rd inference*:] the middle is occupied by what is unchangeable yet joined to change in act or in potency. — The second inference becomes obvious on the ground that change is what is directly opposed to permanence, while eternity itself is neither change nor in any way compatible with change. The last inference is quite clear, as are the others.

Clashes with Scotus on the answer *ad* (1)

viii. In the answer to the first objection, you should be aware that Scotus quarrels with four propositions. The first is an affirmative:

(1) An angel's operations are measured by time.

The second is a negative virtually contained in (1):

(2) An angel's operations are not measured by an age.

The third is affirmative:

(3) The blessed Vision in angels is measured by participated eternity.

These are all present in this answer *ad* (1), as you can see from the text. The fourth proposition is also affirmative:

(4) The existence of generable things is measured by time.

This is said in the previous article's answer to the last objection [*ad* (3)], and in the body of this article, where it says that what is measured by time is both that which is constituted by change (motion, change itself) and that which is subject to change, as we experience our own substantial existing to be.³

³ Our substantial existing is our being humans in actuality.

Angelic operations measured by an age?

ix. First Scotus quarrels (in *II Sent.* d.2, q.4) with the second of those propositions, supporting on three grounds the contradictory to it, which he holds to be true, namely, that the angel's operations *are* measured by an age. The grounds are as follows.

(1) [*Antecedent:*] An angel's existence and its operation have the same way of lasting: both are uniform so long as they last; [*inference:*] ergo they have the same kind of measure. [Ergo, since an age measures the former, it measures the latter.] The antecedent is clearly true, because both are indivisible and yet defectible. Drawing the inference is supported by the fact that measures are assigned to things according to their different ways of lasting — according to whether they are successive or permanent, for example, as is obvious.

(2) An angel's beatific Act is measured by an age, as Augustine makes clear in *De fide ad Petrum*, c.18. Ergo [the same should apply to its other operations].

(3) An angel's operation is not measured by eternity, nor by time; ergo [by process of elimination, it is measured] by an age.

x. To CLEAR UP this difficulty you need to know that, in the passage cited, Scotus posits three measures of duration (time, age, and eternity) in such wise that time is supposed to measure a successive thing; age, a thing that is permanent but defectible; and eternity, a thing which is in every way indefectible. Hence he holds that the substantial existence of things-towards-which-change-is-impossible, and angelic operations, etc., are measured by an age. The whole basis on which his position rests is the following very general statement:

All things that last uniformly so long as they last have a measure of the same kind.

By contrast, here in this article, measures of duration are distinguished in terms of the changeability and unchangeability of things. And rightly so. A measure of duration for x is what discloses the natural duration of x in itself; otherwise it would be useless.* But the natural duration of x arises out of its changeability or unchangeability. I am talking about its native or intrinsic changeability or unchangeability, since that is the only kind of changeability on which its natural duration depends. For it is irrelevant to the natural duration of x whether there is a power to destroy x in another thing, y . All that matters is whether x has in itself the wherewithal to fail. This is where Scotus went wrong — he went so far as to say, "Neither not-being at some time nor being able not-to-be thanks to its own potency varies the measure of a thing." The basis on which he said this is extremely weak, viz., that if an angel were about to be annihilated, it would still be measured by an age. For it is perfectly clear that being naturally such as not-to-be at some time, like being naturally able not-to-be, varies the nature of a thing. The [traits of being] corruptible or incorruptible, as it says in *Metaphysics X*, are [a thing's] substance, or in its substance. They vary the thing's nature down to its very

category. I say, so that no trait of corruptibles applies univocally to incorruptibles. So neither is the distinctive measure of a corruptible the measure of an incorruptible. This is why an angel about to be annihilated is still measured by an age: the annihilation is not coming from the angel's nature but from outside. If left to his own devices, the angel would go on existing forever.

What we Thomists say, then, is that a thing unchangeable in every respect is measured by eternity; a thing unchangeable in the main respect but changeable in others is measured by an age; what is changeable in the main respect is measured by time. By that standard, since an angel is unchangeable as to its substance but changeable as to accidents, the angel itself is measured by an age. But its natural operations, since they are naturally changeable, cannot be measured by an age. For what is measured by an age is age-long,* and an age-long thing is naturally perpetual, and nothing naturally changeable is naturally perpetual.

xi. As to the basis for Scotus' position, namely, all things that last uniformly so long as they last have a measure of the same kind, it needs first to be distinguished. If it is taken in the composite sense, it is utterly false. For as one reads in *De Interpretatione I*, "everything has to be so long as it is." So all things that last, so long as they last, have a uniform manner of being: they *are* necessarily. And yet they don't all have the same measure.⁴ But this is not what Scotus was after when he formed the proposition; he meant it overall or in a divided sense.⁵ That way, "manner of lasting" divides up in many ways — i.e. between necessary and contingent, or between permanent and successive, or between defectible and indefectible. But whichever way you slice it, Scotus' proposition keeps turning out false. Not every necessary thing has the same measure:

⁴ It is common to say, "Things can last and fail to last." The composite sense of this remark alleges a possible conjunction: $\exists(\phi x \ \& \ \sim\phi x)$. This conjunction is contradictory; so it is not possible. $\sim\exists(\phi x \ \& \ \sim\phi x)$. The necessary implication, $\Box(p \supset q)$, is defined as $\sim\exists(p \ \& \ \sim q)$. Substituting ϕx for p and for q , we have $\sim\exists(\phi x \ \& \ \sim\phi x)$, which gives the strict implication: $\Box(\phi x \supset \phi x)$. Since this is a thesis of modal logic, it can be quantified universally, that is, stated as a universal truth about things — $\forall x\Box(\phi x \supset \phi x)$ — which is what Aristotle states in the folksy form, "every being has to be when it is." Now let ϕ stand for 'lasts', and let M_x be a given measure, say, an age. Cajetan is pointing out that, if the antecedent of Scotus' proposition is taken in the composite sense, the whole proposition amounts to this:

$\forall x(\Box(\phi x \supset \phi x) \supset x$ is measured by $M_x)$, which is false because every value of x (everything there is) satisfies the antecedent, but not everything is measured by M_x .

⁵ The same remark, "Things can last and fail to last," in the divided sense, alleges a conjunction of possibles: $\exists\phi x \ \& \ \exists\sim\phi x$. This is logically in order, and the second conjunct can be used in two ways: (1) It can be used to divide up the manners of being- ϕ , as ϕ is given a series of modifications: a thing can last necessarily and non-necessarily (i.e. contingently); a thing can last permanently and non-permanently (i.e. successively), defectively and indefectibly, etc. (2) It can be used to say that a thing can last a certain way but defectively so, e.g. a thing can last permanently but defectively. This is what Scotus was after

Actually, Fulgentius, *Dc fide*, c.23

* frustra

1059a 6f

* aeviternum

c.9; 19a.23

* *possibilia*

in § xiv

there is one measure for an altogether necessary thing, like God, and another for what is substantially necessary but contingent in some respects, like the other incorruptibles. Again, not all contingent* things are measured by the same measure: some are measured by continuous time, some by discrete time, as we shall discuss below.¹ Likewise, not every permanent thing has the same measure, as one learns by comparing the higher ones [heavenly bodies] with the lower ones [the elements]. Not even all successive things have the same measure, since the measuring of such things by continuous succession is one affair, and the measuring of them by discrete succession is another (as we shall discuss below). When it comes to the defectible and the indefectible, however, I have already pointed out that defectibility is not a manner of being that is *in the thing* (as Scotus and Co. assume) but indicates an outside power and thus is not germane [*i.e.* it does not belong on a list of the *intrinsic* manners of lasting]. And if it were germane, Scotus' proposition would still turn out false: not every defectible thing is disclosed by the same measure. — From this treatment of the simple ways-of-lasting, you can see how to treat the compound ways, such as permanently-but-defectibly. *etc.*

xiii. To fix Scotus' proposition, one should say that having a uniform manner of lasting that is *intrinsic to x* and directly affects the natural duration of *x* is what it takes to put a class of things under a uniform or single measure of duration. Overly general talk of just "having a uniform way of lasting" does not suffice. This is why the antecedent of his proposition is wrong. As to the support he gave it, I have already knocked it down

listed in § ix

As to Scotus' second ground: we deny his antecedent, as you can see in the text of this article. Augustine did not say what Scotus claims (except in a sense to be explained below, namely, the sense in which 'age' is used to mean participated eternity).

As to his third ground, we deny the second part of his antecedent: an angel's operation is measured by a *now* of time (not of continuous time, but of discrete).

Angelic operations measured by time?

xiii. In the same passage, Scotus quarrels with the first proposition listed above, namely,

(1) An angel's operations are measured by time.

Correction: omit 'discrete'

His arguments tell against those who hold that these operations are measured by the <discrete> time which is a species of quantity, but such is not the claim of St. Thomas. For us Thomists, discrete time is nothing but plurality of before and after in a discrete change; and discrete change is nothing but the succeeding of one spiritual operation upon another, such as two acts of understanding done without the support of a phantasm.⁶ The plurality or "number" that belongs to the

⁶ The phrase, 'done without the support of a phantasm', was included to insure the entire spirituality of the operations in question. Human intellects were not thought to be quite so pure because, although they were not themselves the act of a bodily organ, they relied upon the output of such an act, the "phantasm" or mental image derived from the senses.

category of quantity comes from the division of a continuous thing: [pure spirits are not continua, because they are not extended, and their operations succeed one another discontinuously;] it must be the case, then, that this time [which measures their operations] is a transcendental plurality, composed of transcendental units.⁷ So I have thought it appropriate to bring forward only one of Scotus' points here, namely, his point that those who hold our view "posit more kinds of time than are needed." We are forced [he says] to multiply kinds of time not only in distinct things but even in one and the same thing — one kind for its acts of understanding, another for its acts of volition, *etc.* Such moves seem very awkward. Ergo [one ought to drop the theory that imposes them].

xiv. The SHORT ANSWER is that there is a strong need to raise the kinds of time to [at least two:] continuous and discrete. We need the latter on account of the spiritual operations of spiritual substances: without discrete time, they would lack proportionate measures. For since these operations succeed one another immediately, and since they are, in themselves, instantaneous because each is all-at-once, they are obviously elevated above continuous time and its "instants." Yet they do not attain the excellence of an age because they are naturally corruptible. Necessarily, then, either such noble entities remain without a proper measure of their own, or else one posits a discrete time by whose instants these operations are measured in themselves. For these are the "spiritual movement of the angels" whose plurality [of phases] is the "time" through which Augustine says "God moves the spiritual creature."

Multiple discrete times in multiple angels or in the same angel are not necessary, in my opinion, unless it be materially, in the same way as the continuous time by which our actions are measured is materially multiplied in all changeable things, and as the age is materially multiplied in all age-long things. It seems reasonable to sup-

⁷ What was in the Aristotelian category of quantity was an accident of material bodies, their size or volume, and this was a continuous quantity. The division of a matter into so-many parts would yield a discrete quantity, say, 24 slices of bread. The application of number terms beyond the realm of bodies was thought to require a different use of these terms, called transcendental for two reasons: (a) because it was not confined to any one category but could range across all the categories (as in 'Michael and his defending us make two'), and (b) because such extended use of the number terms was not felt to posit any real accident of quantity (so the truth of 'There are three Persons in God' did not posit an accident of quantity in God.) A full discussion comes in I ST q 30, a.3.

The changes occurring in or among material bodies were thought to yield states of their matter, and the bodies were thought to change from one state to another in a continuous way, hence the plurality of phases that measured their changing was seen as the dividing of continuous change; so division into a number of phases was called continuous time. The changes occurring in or among purely spiritual beings did not yield states of matter, obviously, and were thought to occur discontinuously, hence the plurality of phases that measured their changing could not be seen as dividing a continuous process; hence it was called discrete time; and since the phases counted could not be states of any thing to which a real accident of quantity would attach, the use of number words to count the phases would have to be a transcendental use.

pose that, just as all age-long things are measured by the simplest age (which alone is formally “the age”), so every such operation is measured by the simplest operation or by its simplest “now.” Likewise, every succession of operations will be measured by the simplest succession. These simplest cases will be the ones found in the temporally first angel to act, and this will be the highest angel (the one in whom the age is found, as will emerge in the next article). Then, because the intellect’s operations are naturally prior to and simpler than the will’s operations, there will be one *time* of all such temporal events: it will be the measure of the successive operations in the intellect of the first angel, and thereupon it will be the extrinsic measure both of his other operations and of the other angels’ operations. Consistent with this view, one can say (as I have said) that this [discrete] time is materially multiplied with the number of actions measured, in that “one” and “many” as consequences of being are multiplied with things themselves. But I said, “unless it be materially.” Not every feature in the proportion between our time and the time whose subject is the first motion has to carry over univocally to the proportion between the simplest of them. It suffices if they are somewhat alike.⁸

Blessed operation measured by participated eternity?

xv. In his commentary on *IV Sent.* d.49, q.6, Scotus quarrels with the third proposition listed above, *i.e.*,

(3) The angel’s blessed operation is measured by participated eternity.

[*Antecedent:*] A beatific operation, he says, is no more immutable than an age-long one; so [*consequent:*] it is not measured by eternity but by an age. That the consequent follows is well known. But accepting the antecedent is supported [by two arguments] as follows. (1) In overall terms, a beatific operation is less noble than the substance of the beatified angel, because substance is nobler than accident. (2) The very perfection of the blessed operation is not more immutable than the substance of the operation, because that which is in a subject by accident is not more immutable than the subject it is in. Well, the substance of this operation is measured by an age. Ergo [so is its perfection].

Furthermore, the eternal as opposed to the age-

long is not only all-at-once but also indefectible, having no potency to not-be. Nothing created is like that. Ergo [nothing created is measured by eternity].

xvi. To CLEAR UP this difficulty, you need to realize why, although an age is just exactly a participation in eternity, St. Thomas distinguishes here (and in 3 *CG* c.61 and at *In IV Sent.* d.49, q.1, a.2, q3) a “participated eternity” from an age. He distinguishes them not as perfect from less perfect in the same species, but as the more perfect from the less perfect of diverse orders. For since eternity is the distinctive measure of God’s being, participated eternity is the right measure of being-of-God’s-order. I am talking about the being-of-God’s-order which cannot be connatural to any creature, actual or possible — which will get a fuller discussion below in q.12. An age is a measure of changeless being, to be sure, but of the natural order. And this is the intrinsic, primary difference between participated eternity and an age. From it, any other differences flow; by appeal to it, all the difficulties are solved. For a beatified operation is of God’s order, and that is why it is said to be measured by participated eternity. The force of the conclusion attacked by Scotus also comes from this source, namely,

(a) a created intellect cannot of itself attain a beatified operation so as to be measured by eternity.

For what follows from (a) is that

(b) therefore the attainment is of God’s order, and then what follows is therefore it is measured by eternity.

xvii. In response to Scotus’ first argument, then, we deny his antecedent. Granting that a beatified operation is not more immutable in itself than an age-long one, it is still of a *more immutable order*, because it is of God’s order. And hence it is called (and is) more immutable as to its kind. But I said “granting that” it is not, *etc.*, because it takes less change for a beatified operation to not-be than for the angel’s substance to not-be (the latter requires annihilation, and the former does not). But in another way, the operation is more immutable: it contains many mutable things in a more immutable fashion. For a single beatific vision, apart from any change, contains in a higher way the visions of all the on-lookers of everything. No age-long act can rise to this level of immutability.

As to the first line of support Scotus gives for this argument, we say that, *just as* (α) act is overall nobler than potency, and yet (β) a substance is overall nobler than its accident, and because of (α) an act of understanding is nobler than prime matter, while, because of (β), the reverse holds, *so also*, on the topic at hand, it is true that (γ) the angel’s substance is nobler than its accident, and yet it is true that (δ) an existence of God’s order is nobler than a natural existence. Both are true in different orders. The angelic substance is nobler *in terms of natural being*;^{*} the blessed operation is nobler *in terms of the excellence of divinity*.[†] And if we care to speak with propriety, these comparisons are seen to equivocate.

As to his second line of support, one may deny that the substance of the beatific operation is measured by an age. For the substance of the operation and its perfection are

⁸ Comparing the scholastics’ crude and purely verbal account of time with the accounts to be found in a philosophy informed by contemporary physics is not a particularly rewarding exercise. Still, a few points of comparison deserve mention. First, the distinction between continuous and discrete time is still respectable. In terms of the pure logic of temporal concepts, axiomatic systems suitable for each have been worked out. In terms of physical applications, the time-dimension in general relativity is continuous; but at the micro-level, quantum mechanics supports a discrete time. Secondly, the “material” multiplication of physical time of which Cajetan speaks is roughly suggestive, at least, of the break-down of Newton’s absolute time into the local time-orderings of relativity. Thirdly, as mentioned above, the Aristotelian approach to time resembles the contemporary approach in that both reject the “myth of passage.”

* *esse naturae*
† *excellenciae divinitatis*

numerically one thing and are measured by the same measure. Hence it is not only the blessedness of the operation that is measured by participated eternity but also the blessed operation itself. — It is also wrong to say that the perfection is not more immutable than the substance of the operation, given the way in which they are distinguished. For if the substance of the operation were there without the perfection of blessedness, it would be measured by an instant of discrete time. — The perfection of divineness introduces the measure of eternity, not as an accident is induced, but rather as a difference coming to a genus introduces the species' nature. So the support drawn for the opposite view by Scotus — drawn from the case of what is in another as its accident — is invalid. For it is clearly the case that a generic or quasi-generic nature, not of thus-much completeness in itself, acquires that completeness from the difference coming to it; and although the difference is viewed as an "accident" to the genus, the genus nevertheless acquires that completeness in such a way as to be one complete being.* And so it is in this case.⁹

* ens

xviii. In response to Scotus' other argument, the main thing to say is that, strictly speaking, a blessed angel as such lacks a potency to not-be-blessed, as a heavenly sphere lacks the potency to not-be-round. Suppose prime matter received some master form *F* that was equivalent to all the forms of generable/corruptible things; then [it would already be everything it could possibly become, and so] it would have no potency to not-be-*F*. In much the same way, a mind having the blessed act *A* [has everything it could possibly become and so] lacks the potency to not-be-*A*. For that act is a complete [possession] of all the goods, not by aggregation but by elevation, and so it renders the angel at once happy and immutably so.¹⁰ — If one extends the

⁹ One had to be careful when the first-order language of things with their accidents was used again in a second-order context, to talk about properties with their traits (as though these were accidents of the properties). Such talk was engaged in but recognized to be misleading. Since 'A mammal is a horse' is not always true, the specific difference of horses was called "accidental" to the genus, mammal. But lest one be misled by this idiom, one had to acknowledge that, when a mammal was a horse, it was one complete *ens* — one value of a first-order variable, or one second-order "substantial form" — not two *entia* (mammal and horse) in composition.

¹⁰ The blessedness of a kind of agent *K*, according to a definition Aquinas inherited from Boethius, is "a state made perfect by presence of all the goods," that is, a state that contains all the ways in which a *K* agent can be well-off. Cajetan is alluding here to this definition and distinguishing between compressence by mere aggregation (a state vulnerable to loss by external circumstances) and compressence by elevation. By the latter he means at least the "divine milieu" of Heaven, where a rational creature experiences no changes except the actions resulting from its own intentions. Such intentions would have to be desires for a better state, and hence would have to come from grasping a way to be better off. As blessedness leaves no room for a possible object of desire outside itself, blessedness in such a milieu would leave the rational creature with no potency to be otherwise.

word 'potency' as Scotus does, so that one calls a potency to not-be a logical or objective potency, one can say that what is *eternal by essence* lacks all potency to not-be; and one cannot say this about what is *eternal by participation*. Rather, it suffices that the latter be distinguished from the age-long by diversity of order. For being eternal by participation is coming into the *order* of what is eternal by essence, while being age-long is staying in the order of nature.

The existence of generables: measured by time?

xx. In his Commentary on *II Sentences*, at the place cited above, Scotus quarrels with the fourth of the propositions listed above, [namely,

(4) The existence of generable things is measured by time.]

and he proceeds no differently than he did against (1). To wit: the substantial existence [of generables] has the same way of lasting-as-long-as-it-lasts as an age-long thing has, *i.e.*, without succession, *etc.* Ergo [the substantial existence of such things is measured by age]. — We don't need to make any further response to this than was made above: a thing gets a different measure according to whether it is changeable or unchangeable, as was said above, not according to whether it has existence in a successive or non-successive way.

xx. But note that in the same place Scotus tried to break down the reason for this that St. Thomas gave in answering the third objection in the previous article, to the effect that "time" is the measure not only of change but also of rest. Scotus says that the substance of a cow, taken just by itself, is measured by an age, while its rest is measured by time; nothing further follows, he says, from the reason Aquinas gives. — But this counter does not suffice to evade [the force of the original]; for the text showed time to be the measure not only of rest but of the thing resting; for everything resting is mobile, and everything that is changeable, insofar as it is changeable, is measured by time. It is clearly the case, meanwhile, that we are changeable according to our substance; and hence we are temporal according to our substance. Here is where the force of Aquinas' reasoning lies. [Antecedent:] When 'change' and 'rest' are taken substantially, that is, to mean substantial change and resting in a substantial existence [respectively], they are measured by time both in act and in potency. [Inference:] Therefore our substantial existence is measured by time. The antecedent is clear from the fact that an act and the potency to it look to a measure of the same sort, as you gather from *Caeli I* [c.12] and *Physics II* [c.12]. The inference holds good on the basis that such a potency is substantial potency, as it says in *Metaphysics X* [c.10].

283a 8

221b 25ff

1058b 36ff

On the answer *ad* (2)

xvi. In the answer *ad* (2) a doubt arises about the claim that an age is all-at-once. This point had been contested by an opinion rejected in the body of the article, and the argument [not quoted by Aquinas] went like this. An age is continually being produced by God, and thanks to Him it can fail to be; hence an age can be annihilated and then created again. So, it is not all-at-once. The citations are

in Scotus on *II Sent.* d.2. q.2, and in Capreolus on the same text [*contra concl.* 5].

The ANSWER to this is easily seen from what we have said. An age, or an age-long thing, is not continually being produced, properly speaking, but preserved by God. It cannot fail to be out of its intrinsic potency, but God can annihilate it. Hence "it is not all-at-once" does not follow. If out of its own potency it could be more in duration, or less, or just so-much, then it would not be all-at-once. But from the fact that God can [make it cease to be], it does not follow that this is in the nature of the age or the age-long thing. For the nature of a thing is not set by God's powers but by its own. — In the case of annihilation and re-creation, there would be a succession of instants measuring the creation, annihilation, and recreation: they would not be measured by the age itself. For those instants have nothing to do with the age; they are parts of the discrete time already mentioned. One would speak about that angel the same as one would about two angels of whom one was created prior to the other; the re-created angel would use the age like those two.

On the answer *ad* (3)

xxii. In the answer to the third objection, notice that the existence of the angel is being taken in two distinct ways. The first way is *in isolation*: and so taken the angel has no past nor future but lies under God's power and can fail-to-be thanks to a power in another [*i.e.* in Him]. The other way is *coexisting with differences of real or imaginary time*, so taken the angel has a past and a future (and we say of the angel that it was and that it will be). So taken, the angel's existence lies under God's power as to the future, but not as to the past, because that would involve impossible assumptions, as it says in the text.

At this point, note carefully that certain authoritative quotations (such as that of Jerome to Marcella, "Only God knows no past or future," and the saying of Augustine, "The present, if it stands, is eternity," and some more of the same sort) are to be understood of their topics *in themselves and together with everything in them*. For an angel taken with its volitions has a past and a future (as it says in this article); and likewise an age taken together with the items joined to it does not stand (as it says here too).

in fact to
Damasus
Confessions
XI. c 14

Is there just one age?

In II Sent. d.2, q.1, a.2, Quodlibet V, q.4, Opusculum 36, De Instant., c.3

It would seem that there is not just one age.

3 Esdras 4:40

(1) It says in the apocrypha of Esdras, "The majesty and the power of the ages is before thee, O Lord."

(2) Also, different kinds have different measures. Some age-long things are of the bodily kind (the heavenly bodies), while some are spiritual substances (the angels). So it is not the case that there is just one age.

(3) Furthermore, since 'age' is a term of duration, things of one age have one duration. But not all age-long things have the same duration; some of them started to exist after others, as is most clearly the case with human souls. Thus there is not just one age.

(4) Moreover, things that are causally independent do not seem to have a single measure of duration. The reason why all temporal things seem to have a single time is because all <changes> are caused one way or another by the first change, the primary thing measured by time. But age-long things do not form such an order of dependency: <one angel is not the cause of another>. Therefore there is not just one age.

ON THE OTHER HAND, an age is simpler than time and relates more closely to eternity. Yet there is just one time. *A fortiori*, there should be just one age.

ANSWER: there are two opinions about this. Some say there is just one age; others say more. To see which is truer (given that we come to know spiritual things by way of bodily ones), we need to consider what makes for the oneness of time.

Some say the reason there is one time of all temporal things is because there is one number [system] for all numbered things (since time is a numerical measure according to Aristotle). But this is not enough. Time is not "numerical" as abstract, outside what is numbered, but as existing in it. Otherwise it would not be continuous. After all, ten yards of cloth are continuous because of the cloth yielding that measurement, not because of the number. But a measurable extent that exists in the things measured is not the same in all but different in each.

Physics IV,
c.12, 220b 8

* principium

Hence others say that the oneness of time comes from the oneness of eternity, which is the source* of all duration. All durations are one (as to their source), but they are many if you look at the variety of things receiving duration from the first source. Others say time is one because of prime matter, the first subject of change, whose measure is time. — Neither of these accounts seems sufficient. Things that are "one" just in source or subject, especially a remote one, are one in a very qualified respect, not straightforwardly.

The reason for the oneness of time, rather, is the one-

ness of the first change, in keeping with which (as the simplest) all others are measured, as it says in *Metaphysics X*. Time stands to that change not only as measure to measured but also as accident to subject [like the length in the yardstick], and thus time gets to be one from it. To all other changes, time stands only as measure to the measured [like yardstick to cloth], and so its count does not rise with theirs: by a single separated measure, many things can be measured.¹

c.1, 1053a 8

With that much settled, one needs to know that there have been two views about the spiritual substances. According to the first, they all came forth from God with equal primacy, as Origin said, or many of them did, as others have said. According to the other view, they came forth from God in a certain rank and order. This seems to have been Denis' view, since he says in c. 10 of the *Celestial Hierarchy* that, among spiritual substances, there are first, middle, and last, even within a single Order of angels. If we adopt the first view, then, we must say that there are many ages, in keeping with the many co-equally primary age-long things. But if we adopt the second view, we must say that there is just one age, on the ground that (since each thing is measured by the simplest thing in its genus, as Aristotle says in *Metaphysics X*), the existence of all age-long things has to be measured by the first of them (since this one is simpler in proportion to its priority). And since the second opinion has more truth to it, as will be shown below, we grant for the present that there is just one age.

PG 3, 273

c.1, 1052b 33

q.47, a.2,
q.50, a.2

TO MEET THE OBJECTIONS — *ad* (1): 'age' [*aeuum*] is sometimes used for 'saeculum', to mean something's period of duration; and thus there are said to be many ages, as there are many such periods.

¹ It is significant that for Aquinas time is "one" on a *physical basis* (i.e., that there is a fundamental cosmic process which conditions somehow every other physical change), not a transcendent basis (like Newton's absolute time, which was supposed to "flow equally" in sublime independence of any physical motion), and not an epistemological basis (say, that an observer with a clock in some privileged spot can in principle assign a time on his clock to every event occurring anywhere in the material universe). The latter is now known to be impossible, and Newton's fiction never made sense, either as science or as metaphysics. But "one time" on a physical basis has been part of cosmology since 1917. The classic discussion is G. J. Whitrow, *The Natural Philosophy of Time* (New York: Harper and Row, 1963). Unfortunately, Aquinas did not know that (1) the fundamental process giving the universe its temporal character ≠ (2) the simplest or quickest process yielding the smallest physical unit of time (the chronon), and ≠ (3) the most regular clock-like process. He identified all three with the motion of the first heavenly sphere.

ad (2): although heavenly bodies and spiritual substances differ in natural kind, they nevertheless agree in having unchangeable being. Hence they are measured by an age.

ad (3): not all temporal things begin to exist [or to happen] simultaneously, and yet they all have the one time because of the primary thing measured by time.

So, too, all age-long things have the one age because of the primary thing measured by it, even if they did not all begin to exist together.

ad (4): in order for a certain set of things to be measured by some one thing, *x*, it is not required that *x* be the cause of them all; it only has to be simpler than they are.

Cajetan's Commentary

In the title, 'one' means numerically one.

Analysis of the article

In the body of the article, Aquinas does four jobs. (1) He sets forth differing opinions on the question.¹

(2) He lays down a method of getting at which opinion has more truth to it: he says one should proceed from the reason why there is one time. This is supported on the ground that the route by which we come to know spiritual things is *via* bodily ones.

(3) He pursues the method. Four opinions as to why there is one time are brought forward: (a) because there is one number-system;² (b) because all changeable things have one source;³ (c) because all changes have one subject;⁴ (d) because they all depend on a single first motion/change. — Opinion (a) is criticized thus. Time is not number in isolation but what is *numbered* (in a continuous change); therefore it is not one simply because there is one number-system. Opinions (b) and (c) are criticized together, as follows. Time is unqualifiedly one; so it is not "one" merely because of a remote source or subject. This follows because what is "one" on either of those bases is only qualifiedly so. Opinion (d) is supported this way. [*Premise:*] The first change/motion is the simplest: [*1st inference:*] so it is the measure of the others; [*2nd inference:*] hence it stands to time not only as the measured to the measure but also as subject to accident; [*3rd inference:*] hence its oneness makes time one. The first inference is supported from *Metaphysics X*. The rest are left as obvious. For we know that the quantity *Q* of the primary thing measured is a conjoined measure, but *Q* stands as a separated measure to the rest; we know that this is why the measure itself is not multiplied as the other things it measures are multiplied, but only as the primary things are multiplied; we know, too, that this is how [cases of] accidents in general are multiplied, namely, as their subjects are multiplied.

Therefore, since the primary thing measured by time is not multiple, neither is the measure.

(4) As a result of the method pursued, he induces an answer to the question after putting down two lemmas in keeping with two views about the angels. The one lemma is that *there are many ages*, on the ground that [on the one view] there are many first age-long things; ergo. The other lemma is that *there is just one age*, on the ground that [on the other view] there is just one first age-long thing; ergo. — Thus the antecedent for each lemma is a different theory about the angels. Drawing the lemma is based on the reasoning done above about the oneness of time, and the key point in that reasoning is that *the count of measures rises with the count of primary things-measured*. — Since these steps do not yield a definite answer to the question, he adds that the second lemma is to be adopted, because the view from which it comes is more likely to be true, as will come out in a later inquiry. Thus the conclusion in answer to the question is: there is just one age.

ii. Bear in mind here that, just as each change has in it its own before-and-after phases, so also it has in it its own number of phases to be counted and hence has its own time. Not every change's number serves by its nature to disclose* all changes, but only the first change's number (on account of its maximal simplicity); so only the first change's number has all that it takes to be "time." This is why time, taken formally and completely, is numerically one, while taken quasi-materially and incompletely, it is many. The same is to be said about the age: it is one and many the same way.

Whether the age is an accident of [the primary] age-long thing, or its existence, or its essence, is a topic for specialized inquiry, a business for metaphysicians.

Quarrels with Scotus and Durandus

iii. Concerning the points staked out here, there are quite a few doubts.

• In the first place, Scotus (in remarks on *II Sent.* d.2, q.3) rejects our claim that the first age-long thing is measured by an age (but he admits that *that* angel is the extrinsic measure of the others). He advances just one argument. [*Major:*] By its nature, a measure is better known than the thing measured [is known] by its

¹ Alexander of Hales argued for one age; Bonaventure, for many.

² This theory goes back to Themistius, a Greek commentator on Aristotle.

³ This account was advanced by Alexander of Hales.

⁴ This was St. Bonaventure's opinion.

* *certificare*

nature. [*Minor:*] In the first age-long thing, nothing is better known than its own substance. So nothing in that angel has what it takes to measure its substance.

In II Sent
d.2, q.5

• Then Durandus rejects the whole idea that one age-long thing serves as the extrinsic measure of another. He has three arguments.

(1) [*Major:*] A thing whose duration is better determined from its own scientific definition than by comparison with something outside it, is not measured in duration by anything outside it. [*Minor:*] Well, an age-long thing is of this sort. The proof? Because its scientific definition is “naturally immutable existence.”

(2) An infinite duration is not measurable; ergo [since an age-long duration is infinite, it is not measured by anything].

(3) What is not quantified cannot be measured; ergo [one age cannot be measured by another]. The inference holds because an age lacks succession.

These and many other arguments are rehearsed by Capreolus, at *II Sent.* d.2 [q.2]. We omit the others on purpose, because we propose to spell out the basis on which they can all be dissolved.

iv. TO CLEAR THIS UP, what you need to know is the fact (which can already be gleaned from points made above) that the way in which an age-long thing is measured by an age (be it intrinsically or extrinsically) is not by way of continuous quantity, or successive quantity, or even discrete quantity, but *by way of unity*: for an age is indivisible, all-at-once, *etc.* Since an age is the unity of an unchangeable life joined to changeability, the less that unchangeable thing is joined to changeability, the more unchangeable it is and the less composed, and so the simpler it is, and hence the more “one” it is. What we now suppose is that, the lower an age-long thing is, the more it is joined to plurality [of insights, *etc.*], and so (a) the species [through which it understands] are less universal, and (b) its actions are less far-reaching as to the places or bodies affected. On this basis, the supreme age-long thing, as the most unchangeable among the beings that are unchangeable in that way (*i.e.* in union with change), is the most thoroughly “one”; and hence it has by its nature the standing whereby other age-long things as such, by their nearness to it or remoteness from it, are

measured extrinsically.

v. THE ANSWER TO SCOTUS, therefore, is to deny his minor. I say that the age existing in the first age-long thing (whether or not it be his substance, or his existence) is better known in its capacity as a measure than the very substance of that age-long thing [is known in its capacity] as unchangeable. For the age is nothing but oneness serving as the measure of such unchangeability; and by this very fact the age is formally a oneness — and oneness is that to which we must primarily ascribe the wherewithal to be a measure, as you can see from *Metaphysics V* [c.6] and *Metaphysics X* [c.2]. A substance thus unchangeable is named “one” after another [its age], and “age-long” implies this naming-after-another. Well, it is clear in all cases that what is formally ϕ is, by its nature, more clear-cut and better known than what is named ϕ after another. So although the angel’s substance is, in overall terms, the best known item in it, still, as a kind of measure, or in terms of what it takes to be a measure, its age is better known than its substance. Matters stand much the same with a bodily substance: although the bodily substance is better known in itself than its size,* still, as a kind of measure, its size is better known in itself.

* *quantitas*

vi. TURNING TO DURANDUS, the answer to his first argument is to deny its major. It is clearly false in the case of a quidditative completeness and measure. For a quidditative completive trait is better known intrinsically than extrinsically, and yet each quiddity is measured by the first quiddity in its genus. Durandus’ argument thus commits the fallacy of taking a non-reason for a reason. The reason for having an extrinsic measure is not better disclosure from an outside factor than from inside ones: the reason is rather the dependence of internal disclosure upon outside, as upon what is simpler, as I have said.

As to his second and third arguments, the response is that, again, they are not valid in the case of what is measurable by unity. A thing can be infinite and non-quantified and still meet the definition of uniformity.

It remains in suspense what that first age-long thing is; but since that topic would be incidental in the present context, it will be taken up in a treatise on the angels [in God’s governance of things, below, q.108].

Inquiry Eleven: Into God's oneness

After the foregoing topics, inquiry turns to the divine oneness [or singularity]. Four questions are raised about this:

- | | |
|---|--------------------------|
| (1) does being one add anything to a being? | (3) is God one? |
| (2) are one and many opposed? | (4) is He supremely one? |

article I

Does being one add anything to a being?

1 ST q 30, a 3; In I Sent d.8, q 1, a.3; d 19, q.5, a.1 ad 3; d 24, a.3; De veritate q 1, a.1, q 21, a.1;
De potentia Dei q 3, a.16 ad 3; q 9, a.7; Quodl. X, q.1, a.1; In III Metaphys., lectio 12; In IV Metaphys., lectio 2; In X Metaphys., lectio 3

It looks as though being "one" adds something¹ to just being "a being" [ens].

(1) If being- ϕ is in a definite category, being- ϕ compares to just being "a being" (which applies across all the categories) as adding something to it. Being *one* is in a definite category, since one generates number,* which is a kind of quantity. Therefore, being one adds something to a being.

(2) Moreover, what partitions a common trait adds something to it. Being is partitioned into being one and being many. So, being one adds something to a being.

(3) Furthermore, if oneness did not add anything to being, saying 'one' would be the same as saying 'being'. In that case, since saying 'a being being' is redundant, saying 'one being' would be redundant — but it is not. Therefore, oneness adds something to being.

ON THE OTHER HAND, there is what Denis says in the last chapter of *De divinis nominibus*: "no existent thing fails to participate in one." This would not be the case if 'one' added to 'a being' anything to narrow its extension. Therefore being 'one' does not stand to being "a being" as adding anything to it.

ANSWER: being "one" does not add any *thing*[†] to being "a being," but only a negation of division. For 'one' means nothing more than 'an undivided being'. From this [definition] alone it becomes obvious that being one is coextensive[‡] with being at all. For every being is either simple or else composed:

- if it is simple, it is undivided actually and is not even potentially divided;
- if it is composed, it has its being only after its parts are together and composing it, not when they are divided.

Clearly, then, the existing of each thing is a matter of its not being divided. So each thing is such that it keeps its oneness as it keeps its being.

TO MEET THE OBJECTIONS — *ad* (1): some philosophers thought that 'one' in the sense coextensive with 'a being' was the same as the 'one' that generates the numbers; and they broke down into opposed factions. — Pythagoras and Plato, seeing that being "one" in the sense coextensive with being "a being" adds nothing to a being [but is just its substance, undivided], thought that the same held of the "one" that generates the numbers. Since a number is composed of ones, they then thought the numbers were [combinations of substances and thus were] the substances of all things. — Avicenna was on the other side: noting that being "one" in the sense generating the numbers adds something real to the substance of a being (on the ground that, otherwise, a number composed of ones would not be a species of *quantity*),² he held that being "one" in the sense coextensive with "a being" adds something real to the substance of the being, as being white adds something to being a man. But this is obviously false. Each thing is one just thanks to its own substance. If each thing were one thanks to some further factor, then since that factor is itself one, if it were one thanks to some further factor, we should be going on *ad infinitum*. We should stop before starting down that road.

The thing to say, then, is that [the two uses of 'one' are distinct, and that] being "one" in the sense coextensive with being at all does not add anything to a being, while being "one" in the way that generates numbers adds something belonging in the category of quantity.

ad (2): nothing prevents what is divided in one respect from being undivided in another — as what is di-

² By "generates the numbers," the Mediaevals meant not only "starts a count" but also "is the unit measure of how-much," such as one cc. A thing's how-much [*quantitas*] was a "number" of such units, and each number differed from another by at least one such unit. A modern analog is the *quantum* of ϕ -ness; it yields a least measurable extent of ϕ -ness.

¹ The issue is not whether 'one' conveys information beyond what 'a being' conveys; the issue is whether that information is merely negative or indicates a positive, second-order "thing," i.e., a further real trait enhancing a being.

vided numerically is undivided in species — and thus it comes about that something is “one” in one respect and “many” in another. Now, if an item is simply speaking undivided, because it is undivided (say) in its essence yet divided in its non-essentials (as is the case with a single subject having many accidents), or because it is undivided in act yet divisible potentially (as is the case with what is one whole having many parts), such a thing will be flatly* “one” and yet “many” in a qualified respect.[†] If, on the contrary, the item is undivided only in a certain respect and is flatly divided, because it is divided (say) in its essence and is undivided only in the sense of having a single explanation, origin, or cause, then the item will be “many” flatly speaking and yet “one” in a certain respect. Such is the case with things that are numerically many but one in species or origin. This is how [what counts as] “being” is partitioned into one and many: a being is “one” simply speaking and is “many”

* simpliciter

† secundum quid

in a certain respect. After all, a multitude would not be included under ‘is a being’ unless it were included in some way under ‘is one’. In the last chapter of *De divinis nominibus*, Denis says, “there is no multitude that fails to participate in One. Things that are many in their parts are one as wholes; those that are many in accidents are one in subject; those that are many numerically are one in species; those that are many in genus; and those that are many in coming-forth are one in origin.”[‡]

PG: 3, 980

ad (3): the reason there is no redundancy in saying, ‘one being’, is because the definition of ‘one’ adds to the definition of ‘a being’ [it adds ‘undivided’].

[‡] Now that set theory has been invented, one wants to ask whether Aquinas is conceding in this answer that some sets are beings (e.g., those whose members pass one of Denis’ tests) or whether he means that even such a set is not ‘a being’ simply speaking. Cajetan takes the latter view (below, § vi.)

Cajetan’s Commentary

Is the placement right?

Doubt arises about the placement of this inquiry in relation to its predecessors. [*Antecedent:*] [In the order of explanation] oneness is an attribute that a being has prior to simplicity, unchangeability, and the other attributes treated from Inquiry 3 up until now. [*Inference:*] So it is hardly fitting that oneness is being treated here in last place. — The antecedent is supported on the ground that every being [hence every simple being and every unchangeable being] is one, but not [every being] is simple or unchangeable; [hence ‘one’ is more extensive than ‘simple’, ‘unchangeable’ etc., and hence fails to convert with them]; but the non-converting* term is prior [in the order of explanation].¹

* a quo non convertitur consequentia

† quidditative

‡ passio

ii. My REPLY is that, just as learning an animal’s nature in all its defining[†] predicates comes ahead of discussing the animal’s oneness, so also learning of God’s nature, going into His quasi-defining predicates, comes ahead of discussing His oneness. For oneness is like a distinctive state[‡] of a being, and the oneness of *this-sort*-of-being is like a distinctive state of *this sort*.² The four aspects of God’s nature handled thus far (after the inquiry into His existence) — simplicity, completeness, infinity, and unchangeability — are (broadly speaking)

defining traits, as is clear case-by-case;* and so Aquinas treated them first. (And to round them out, he inserted inquiries into goodness, presence in things, and eternity). Thus, with the quasi-definition filled out, Aquinas came to the first distinctive state, oneness. That this was in fact his thinking can be gathered from the text introducing q. 3 above, where these five topic areas are announced.

* inductivè

The objection just raised is no problem because I deny that oneness is prior to these attributes. Against the support given, I say that a non-converting term is prior [if it is more extensive] *because of itself*[†] but not if [it is so] *because of another*.[‡] Thus ‘has a color’ is non-converting *vis-à-vis* ‘man’ and yet is not prior [in the order of explanation] to being man even though it is a more extensive predicate. Why not? Because the reason ‘has a color’ is non-converting is not because of itself but because of its subject. Because of the subject, ‘if x is a man, x is has a color’ holds true, but the converse does not. The upshot is that the non-converting term is prior or includes something prior because of which it is non-converting. The latter is the case here: ‘one’ is not prior form-wise but includes ‘a being’, and it is because of this that ‘if x is unchangeable, then x is one’ holds true, while ‘if x is one, then x is unchangeable’ does not hold true.³

† rationale sui
‡ rationale alterius

¹ If ‘all As are Bs’ was true but ‘all Bs are As’ was not, B was called non-converting *vis-à-vis* A; the non-converting term was the more extensive of the two and was presumed to be “prior” in the sense explained above in footnote 1 on p. 102.

² A *passio* was a trait which (*inter alia*) required in its definition a mention of the kind of subject to which it applied. Thus calling “one” a *passio* of being carried the important consequences that (a) its subject, a being, appeared in its definition, (b) and that the latter changed as the subject shifted from one kind of being to another, and that (c) the uses of ‘one’ were analogous.

³ Why was the alleged priority of oneness bogus? Cajetan gave part of the obvious answer: ‘one’ had wider extension only because it contained ‘a being’ in its definition. The rest of the answer was that mere analogy held the several uses of ‘a being’ together. So the extension of ‘one’ was wide only thanks to that analogy. For the same reason ‘x is one’ was uninformative until you had said *what x is*. Unfortunately, the Scottists denied the analogy of being, and this fact may be the reason why Cajetan omitted this part and instead distinguished terms whose extension is wider *ratione sui* from terms wider-extending *ratione alterius*.

Analysis of the article

iii. The title is clear. — In the body of the article two conclusions are reached. The *first* is directly responsive to the question: what being-one adds to a being is not some *thing* but a mere negation of division. — This is supported on the ground that ‘one’ does not mean anything but ‘an undivided being’. Ergo [it adds no positive factor.]

The *second* conclusion is a corollary to the first: ‘one’ is coextensive with ‘a being’. Still, it is given its own support. [*Antecedent:*] The existing of anything is a matter of its not being divided; [*inference:*] so [being “a being” is coextensive with being “one.”] — The antecedent is supported in two ways: (1) by induction over the being of simples and the being of composites; (2) by a symptom, to the effect that each thing keeps its oneness as it keeps its status as a being.* All points emerge clearly enough in the text.

* *entitas*

Defending the conclusion against Scotus

iv. As regards the first conclusion, doubt arises from two sources:

- Avicenna holds that being-one adds some *thing* to a being, and
- Scotus holds that it adds some sort of reality status [*realitas*].

Since Avicenna’s view was ruled out by Aristotle in *Metaphysics IV* [c.2] and is attacked here in the text, [I can pass him by. But] I must touch upon Scotus’ remarks on *Metaphysics IV*.

1003b 23ff

Cf. Capreolus on
1 *Sen.* d.24, q.1

[Scotus has his own theory about distinctive states.] Thinking that ‘one’ means a distinctive state [*passio*] of a being, he says that it formally indicates a positive status, thing-wise identical to the being itself. This is how he handles distinctive states across the board. He holds that such a state is identical with its distinctive subject. He tries to support this view with several arguments.

• (1) [*Antecedent:*] If *x*’s being one is taken formally, *i.e.* as [form-wise] distinguished from being *x*, it is thing-wise identical with *x*; [*inference:*] so it is something positive. The inference holds because a negation cannot be identified with a real being.⁴

• (2) Taken form-wise, being one is outside of nothingness, since it is a distinctive state of a being; therefore it is positive.

• (3) Taken form-wise, being one has what it takes to be the first measure and the generator of number; therefore again [it is positive].

• (4) [*Antecedent:*] Calling something one is giving it a straightforwardly complete trait, hence [*inference:*], a positive trait. The antecedent rests on the grounds that (a) in each thing, being one is better than not being it, and (b) cases of being one are traced back to what is supremely one, as goods are traced back to a supreme good, a supreme justice, *etc.*, and we only do that with

⁴ On form-wise vs. thing-wise distinctions and identities, see footnote 1 on p. 82.

straightforwardly complete traits.

v. The SHORT ANSWERS are as follows. In argument (1), I distinguish the antecedent, because the state of affairs that *x* is identical with *y* turns up in two ways: *positively* and *negatively*. Taken form-wise, *x*’s being one is negatively identical to *x*, that is, it does not indicate another nature, but the same nature in another way, as it says in *Metaphysics IV*. Thus the consequent that Scotus tries to infer is worthless.

• Against (2) I say that being one, taken form-wise, is no further outside nothingness than other traits that are privative or negative in their kind. It is outside nothingness *like them*; and so I deny Scotus’ inference.

• Against (3), I again deny the inference, because serving as a measure is common to positive things and negative ones. Yes, in each of the kinds of beings, the simplest thing measures the rest, but that is also true in each of the kinds of sicknesses, and in each of the kinds of sins, as one sees in moral theory; the least among the vices of greediness serves as a measure of the rest. And what amounts to being “least” without further specification, * *i.e.*, being one, serves to measure “multitude” without further specification. Yet both multitude and one are negative, as it says in the text of this inquiry [see next article]. I take the same to hold for transcendental “number” as for “multitude without further specification”; hence [in my view] the negative which is “number” [*i.e.* multitude] is generated by a negative starting point [which is “one”].⁵

* *absoluti*

• Against (4), I deny its antecedent. ‘One’ does not mean a complete trait, unless the division removed happens to be an incompleteness. Thus, just as ‘relation’ (taken form-wise) does not mean a complete trait straightforwardly, neither does ‘one relation’ (otherwise Fatherhood and Sonship in God would be incomplete together because they are not “one” together), and just as ‘substantial being’ does mean a complete trait, so does ‘one substantial being’. In short, ‘one’ abstracts from completion and incompleteness. — Against Scotus’ first supportive ground, taken from Anselm’s definition [of ‘one’], the word ‘better’ is misplaced in it; what is not “good” cannot be “better.” — Against his second support, I say that this tracing-back [*reductio*] is not limited to straightforwardly complete traits but is also done with general negatives. One traces immutables back to

⁵ Since all the words coextensive with ‘a being’ applied in all the categories, they were called transcendental terms (*i.e.* words not limited to a single category). Thus the use of ‘one’ in which it meant an undivided being was called transcendental oneness, whereas the use of ‘one’ in which it meant a unit of extent (something positive) was called quantitative oneness. How the latter was a measure and generated multi-unit extents was mentioned above. But since we can count anything at all, including sizeless entities, the transcendental one was also recognized as a “measure,” the start and unit of counting; and the number reached by a count was called a transcendental multitude. Hence Cajetan’s claim that being-one does not have to be something positive in order to serve as a measure and generate “number.” Cf. § vi in his commentary on q.7, a.4.

cf. 1028a 10-14

a supreme immutable, immaterial things back to a supremely immaterial thing, *etc.* — It would also make sense to say, however, as Aristotle does in *Metaphysics IV* and *VII*, that when an analogical term is asked about without further specification, one is asking about the prime analogate. In that case, [we are asking here about] what is firstly “one,” namely, one substance, and that is a straightforward completeness, traced back to what is supremely one. But in that case, the support yields nothing against our position: “one substance” has completeness in it by reason of the substance involved.

Understanding the answer *ad* (1)

vi. In the answer to the first objection, you should be aware that the Scotists rail against an argument that Averroes made against Avicenna (see his comment 3 on *Metaphysics IV*) and that St. Thomas uses here. [It is the argument that, if each thing x were one thanks to some further factor f , then, since f is itself one, if it were one thanks to some still further factor f' , we should be going on *ad infinitum*.] The Scotists say that this argument is a part-of-speech fallacy, because it changes a whereby into a what: the factor f whereby x is one is itself one *as a whereby*, not as a *what* [*i.e.* not as another thing]. And so the reasoning does not go on to infinity, any more than it does in talking about a white thing and its whiteness.⁶

This criticism of the argument is very amateurish. — For one thing, everybody knows that, in the case of transcendental terms, the concrete version is truly predicated of the abstract (‘being is a being’, ‘oneness is one’); so there is no change here of a whereby into a what: the argument is just using the whereby in two ways (*as a whereby* and *as a what*). The argument proceeds quite soundly, then; and the case of a white thing and its whiteness is not similar, because whiteness is not white.⁷ — For another thing, if being one adds another

⁶ For critiques by Aquinas of similar arguments, see q.5, a.5, obj. (2) and *ad* (2); q.6, a.3, obj. (3) and *ad* (3).

⁷ Cajetan is appealing to what may become basic principles of higher order quantification. Take ‘there is some property that something has’, *i.e.* $\exists \phi \exists x (\phi x)$. The ϕ stands for a factor whereby (*i.e.* that whereby x is ϕ), and in that capacity it is used both *as a whereby* (namely, in the atomic subformula ϕx) and *as a what* (namely, as an unspecified value of a bound variable, hence as a case of what there is). Moreover, in higher order quantification one distinguishes predicates of individuals (order 1) from predicates of properties of individuals (order 2) from predicates of those properties (order 3), *etc.* ‘White’ is only a predicate of individuals, but a transcendental has to be a predicate of every item of every order quantified over. But then a transcendental trait that really “adds something,” like Avicenna’s oneness, has to be a predicate that not only attaches to every item of every order N quantified over but also posts a factor which is to be quantified over at order $N + 1$, and so on *ad infinitum*. This is why Aquinas fled Avicenna’s example and never allowed a transcendental term to “add” anything but the information in its definition. He never allowed it to add *secundum rem*.

nature to being-a-man (or a lion), thanks to which ‘the nature of man is one’ comes out true, then for the same reason ‘the nature of oneness is one’ will come out true, because *every* nature is one. The add-on character of the nature, *i.e.* the fact that the nature of oneness is always in something else, so that it is the nature of a whereby, does not matter, because being one is common to every nature, be it subsistent or inherent, as one sees with the accidents. Therefore the argument stands in its full rigor.

The “one” that generates [quantitative] number, however, what sort of accident it is, *etc.*, is quite another story and is not our present concern. It will be a topic for special inquiry.

Understanding the answer *ad* (2)

vii. In the answer to the second objection, pay very careful attention. This argument makes even learned fellows hesitate, because they don’t get to the bottom of it. You should know that the answer which the text is giving lies in these words: “This is how [what counts as] being is partitioned into one and many; a being is one simply speaking and is many in a certain respect.” The phrases ‘simply speaking’ and ‘in a certain respect’ are not modifying ‘one’ nor ‘many’; they are modifying ‘is partitioned’. The sense is that “being” is partitioned straightforwardly by “one” and is partitioned in a certain respect by “many.” That is to say, [what is] one is included straightforwardly among the beings, while [what is] many is included only in a way. The text confirms this reading immediately: “For the many,” it says, “are not included under being except as they participate in one.” And since it is well known what the nature of such a partition is — namely, that its straightforward member is what has the trait partitioned [*i.e.* is a being] straightforwardly (and rightly so, since what is only “in a way” a member savors only “in a way” of the trait partitioned) — the answer stands up perfectly well. It tells us that [what is] one is coextensive with what there is, even though it is a partition of it. You get an example of this [sort of partitioning] if you divide “man” into man-in-act and man-in-potency; ditto [if you divide] houses into actual houses and potential houses, *etc.*⁸ — The rest of the material in this answer is inserted to round out the teaching and clarify its main point: what is one (straightforwardly or in a way) and what is many (straightforwardly or in a way) have a share in being one.

⁸ As Cajetan reads him, Aquinas is saying that sets are “beings” only to the extent they are “ones.” Even a set whose members co-exist in a natural kind, like the set of currently living humans, is not “a being” in the proper and straight-forward sense of ‘a being’. It is only called a being in the odd sense in which a subdivision still to be built is called housing. (The comparison will please the philosophers of mathematics who think that sets might be *possibilia* — possible ways to collect things.) But is this odd sense of “a being” strong enough to support the argument in q.7, a.4, where the universe was supposed to be enough of “a being” to have been intended? The answer is surely yes, if you plan to feed the Senate, you *intend* to have a set of plates.

Are one and many opposites?

1 *ST* q.30, a.3 *ad* 3; q.85, a.8 *ad* 2; 2/1 *ST* q.17, a.4; *In I Sent.* d.24, q.1, a.3;
De Potentia Dei q.3, a.16 *ad* 3; q.9, a.7 *ad* 7, *ad* 14, *ad* 15, *ad* 17; *In X Metaphys.* *lectiones* 4, 8

It seems that one and many are not, in fact, opposites.

(1) For if two terms are opposites, the one is not predicated of the other. But every "many" is in some way "one," as was said in the previous article. So being one is not opposed to being many.

(2) Besides, it is never the case that one opposite is made up of the other. But a "many" is made up of ones. So one is not opposed to many.

(3) In fact, the real opposite of one is one [other], while the real opposite of many is few. Hence many is not opposed to one.

(4) Also, if "one" is opposed to "many", it is opposed to it as 'undivided' is opposed to 'divided', hence as a lacking* is opposed to a having.¹ Well, this hardly seems right, because it would follow that one comes after many [in the order of explanation] and is defined by it.¹ While, at the same time, many is defined by one.² The definitions will go in a circle, which is hardly acceptable. So, one and many are not opposites.

ON THE OTHER HAND, things whose scientific accounts are opposed are themselves opposed. The right account of being one is a matter of not-being-divided, while the right account of being many contains being divided. Therefore, one and many are opposed.

ANSWER: being one is indeed opposed to being many, but in different ways [according to the two senses of 'one']. The "one" which [is a unit-extent and] generates the numbers [which are multi-unit extents] is opposed to the "many" which is plurality [of such units in extent] as the measure is opposed to the measured. For [what is] "one" has what it takes to be a first measure, and a "number" is a manyness measured by one, as it says in *Metaphysics X*. On the other hand, the "one" which is coextensive with "a being" is opposed to manyness in the manner of a privation: as undivided is opposed to divided.

TO MEET THE OBJECTIONS — *ad* (1): a lacking is never a complete privation of existence, because (according to Aristotle) a lacking is an absence *in a subject*. Still, a lacking deprives its subject of some being. So where the subject is just "a being," its generality brings it about that the lack of being modifies² "being." This does not happen when the lack is of more specific forms, such as

vision, whiteness, and the like.³ Now, as it goes with "a being," so it goes with "one" and "good," which are co-extensive with "a being." Privation of good modifies some good, and lack of oneness modifies some oneness. This is how it happens that a multitude is a certain sort of one, an evil is a certain sort of good, and a non-being is a certain sort of being. Yet even here, the one opposite is not being *predicated* of the other, because the subject is called the one straightforwardly* and is called the other only "in a way."[†] What is only "in a way" a being (as, in potency) is straightforwardly not-being (in act); what is straightforwardly a being (in the category of substance) is not-being "in a way" (as regards some accidental way of being). What is only good "in a way" is straight-forwardly bad, or *vice-versa*. And what is straightforwardly one is many "in a way," and *vice-versa*.

ad (2): there are two sorts of whole. One sort is homogeneous, composed of parts similar to itself. The other is heterogeneous, composed of parts dissimilar to itself. In any homogeneous whole, the whole is composed of parts having the same form as the whole (as any part of water is water), and this is how a continuum is composed of its parts. But in any heterogeneous whole, each part lacks the form of the whole (no part of a house is a house, and no part of a man is a man). Well, a multitude is a whole of the latter sort. Since each part does not have the form of manyness, the multitude is made up of units[‡] as a house is composed of non-houses. But the units do not compose the multitude in virtue of having what it takes to be undivided (as having which they are opposite to multitude) but in virtue of the status they are as beings[§] (as the parts of a house constitute the house in virtue of being certain bodies, not in virtue of being non-houses).

ad (3): 'many' is used two ways: (1) without further specification (and so used, it is opposed to 'one'); (2) as involving some excess beyond enough (and so used, its opposite is 'few'). Thus, if you use 'many' the first way, two are many; but not if you use it the second way.

ad (4): one is opposed privatively to many in that the account of "many" includes the point that they are divided. It must be the case, then, that division is prior to oneness [in the order of explanation] — but this is not absolute priority but only priority in explaining our grasp of the matter. For we grasp simples *via* grasping composites. This is why we define a point as "what has no parts" or as "the start of a line." [But division is one story and manyness is another.] Manyness comes after oneness even in the order of explanation, because we do

¹ What needs mention in the definition of a term is prior to that term in the order of explanation. The definition of a lacking (blindness) needs to mention what it is a lack of (sight). So if oneness is a lacking, the division or "many" which it is a lack of will be prior to it in the order of explanation.

² The idea was to define 'many' as 'one and another one and ...'

³ He means that what blindness modifies is the man, not his sight; we do not call blindness a kind of sight, *etc.*

* simpliciter
 † secundum quid

* privato
 † habitus

‡ unitates

§ entitas

c.6, 1057a 3

Metaphysics II,
 c.2, 1004a 15

‡ fundatur in

not understand divided stuff to meet the definition of 'many' except by attributing oneness to each of the divisions. So 'one' goes into the definition of 'many', but 'many' does not go into the definition of 'one'. [Thus there is no circularity.] Rather, what enters our understanding from the very negation of a being [*i.e.* from saying 'is not'] is division. What comes first into understanding is "a being"; next, that this being *is not* that one, and so we come to grasp division; third comes "one," and then fourth comes "many."⁴

⁴ In one respect, recent work on the conceptual foundations of number begins where Aquinas left off — with "many," the

relation "as many as," and its negation. In other respects, however, the modern work deepens and revises the medieval discussion. Like Aristotle, Aquinas thought of the counting numbers as arising by an operation (addition of one), and thus he mixed that operation into the very nature of the elements operated upon. This was a mistake, and as a result of it, Aquinas missed the relation "successor of," which is the real *essentiale* in the constitution of those elements. When this revision is accepted, Aquinas' two accounts of 'one' still make good sense as accounts of 'unit' (the real-quantity unit chosen in a scheme of measurement and the "transcendental" unit-of-anything used in counting); but they leave room for a third account — an account of the "one" which is not *what* is counted but is that *as which* something is counted (the successor of zero).

Cajetan's Commentary

The title is clear. — In the body of the article, there is one conclusion reached, answering the question in the affirmative: one *is* opposed to many, in different ways.

The support goes as follows. [*Part 1:*] The "one" which [is unit-extent and] generates number [which is a multi-unit extent] is opposed to such number as the measure is opposed to the measured; [*part 2:*] the "one" which is coextensive with "a being" is opposed to "many" as the undivided is opposed to the divided. Ergo ["one" in either sense is opposed to many.] — The antecedent for the first part is supported from *Metaphysics X*: being a measure belongs firstly to "one," and number is a multitude measured. — For the second part, everything is clear. — Inference to the conclusion [that they are opposites in different ways] is evident, because relative opposition is one thing, and privative opposition is another.

ii. Observe here that, although the text intends to speak about different uses of 'one' and 'many', you could still deduce very well from its teaching that one and the same unit* differently taken (*i.e.* as generating number and as undivided) is diversely opposed to one and the same multitude differently taken (*i.e.* as meeting the definition of 'number' and as meeting the definition of 'divided'). So this distinction [between relative and privative opposition] will sometimes be a distinction between real cases and sometimes a distinction between ways of defining the same real case. When it is a distinction between ways of defining the same real case, it [the duality of ways] applies to both uses of 'one' and to both uses of 'many'. For the "one" that is coextensive with "a being" generates transcendental number, and the "one" that is in the category of quantity is undivided.¹

¹ Let real case # 1 be that I am counting the apples in this bowl. According to Cajetan, I can contrast the apple I count first with the set in the bowl either privatively (the undivided vs. the divided) or relatively (the counting unit [the measure]

A problem with the answer *ad* (2)

iii. In the answer to the second objection, doubt arises about how it can be true that a multitude is composed of units "not in virtue of having what it takes to be undivided but in virtue of the status they have as being." If the topic is transcendental multitude (which *is* what the text is talking about), the claim is obviously impossible. For either the talk is about "multitude" as such, or else it is about "many things." That it is not about "many things" is clear from the force of the argument and the answer: it says that a multitude is a heterogeneous whole. But on the topic of multitude as such, it is quite clear that this is not composed of *things* that are [each] one but of onenesses [units]. Otherwise a transcendental multitude, *qua* a multitude, would be substance, composed of the substances of the things.²

vs. the total to be counted [the measured] Let real case # 2 be that I am measuring the length of this board by piling it off. According to Cajetan, I can contrast a pace with the whole length either relatively (the measure vs. the measured) or privatively (the undivided pace vs. the length divided into paces). Why does he suppose, then, that the two ways of contrast ever represent a distinction between real cases? Why doesn't every case of *quantitas* reduce to a (transcendental) case of counting, given a unit? My guess is: because a scientific realist insists that this-much and that-much are often in the real whether any one measures them or not.

² To see the problem, one needs to go back to the examples Aquinas used in *ad* (2). A "many" is a heterogeneous whole, he said, in that no member of it is a "many," as a house is a whole no part of which is a house. Then he said the parts compose the house not as non-houses but as bodies and, likewise, the members compose the many not as each non-many [*i.e.* one] but as being [whatever they are]. The 'likewise' is the problem. The whole house is in the *category* of substance, thanks to the corporeal-being status of its parts. Why, then, isn't a "many" in the category of its members, if they compose it thanks to their "being-status"? Why aren't 13 angels substance? How can a "many" remain transcendental?

iv. One reply to this is that transcendental one and many can both be taken two ways: (1) substance-wise, or (2) completely/formally.³ If they are taken the first way, it is quite true that a multitude is composed of *things* that are [each] one, and that the multitude is “substance” or “real being.” And this is how it seems the text just quoted should be interpreted. — If you object, “But then it isn’t talking about a multitude formally,” the answer would be that it *is* talking about a multitude formally, as far as *what it really is* is concerned.⁴

But it seems to me that there is a deeper and more formal way to reply. I think the text means to take oneness and manyness formally and universally, and I think the words “units ... in virtue of the status they have as being” are not intended to speak of the *thing* which is one [or the *physical nature* of the thing which is one] but are intended to speak of the very nature of oneness, insofar as it exercises the act of a being. To see this more clearly, let us begin with the “one” that is [a unit extent] in the category of quantity. A unit in the category of quantity can be taken two ways:

- (1) *as it is non-number* [non-multi-unit extent] (which is being non-divided in itself, whereas “number” is divided into multiple units), and so taken it obviously does not compose a number [does not compose a bigger extent], just as non-house does not compose a house;
- (2) *as it is such-and-such an entity in itself*, say, an accident, and so taken it does compose a number [a bigger extent].

The transcendental unit can also be taken two ways:

- (1) *as it is undivided* (which is being a non-multiplicity), and so taken it cannot compose a multiplicity for the reason given;
- (2) *as what it is* (I mean: as the very absence* of division, not insofar as it exercises an act of privation but insofar as it has what it takes to be a being), and so taken it composes a “multiplicity” formally and completely taken.

* *negatio*

³ These two ways to be taken were applied to terms whose reference was thought to be partly real and partly mind-dependent. To take the term *substantialiter* was to ignore the mind-contributed part; to take it *completive* or *formaliter* was to include that part. Here the terms are ‘one’ and ‘many’. The “one thing” just is whatever it is (substance-wise) in the real, but its oneness is a mind-contributed property (an *ens rationis*) based on denying or thinking away division. Likewise, the “many things” just are whatever they are (substance-wise), and their manyness is mind-contributed.

⁴ If one accepts this reply, one concedes that, when Aquinas said the units compose the many “in virtue of the status they have as being,” he meant that they compose it substance-wise; and then he is just saying that, substance-wise, the many *is* in the category of its members: as a structure of bodies is a body (a house); a flock of 100 sheep is sheep; a collection of 13 whitenesses is color. So read, the answer *ad* (2) says nothing interesting about the foundations of mathematics, except that the transcendental of ‘many’ is fictive. Hence Cajetan prefers a different reply, to which he now proceeds.

[It composes the multitude] in such a way that this distinction, applied to transcendental one and many, is not the distinction between the privation and its positive subject but is the distinction between a privative act and a positive act — such that the very induction, as it exercises an act of privation, does not compose [the many], but the very same induction, as it meets the definition of some beingness, does compose the many (the which “many,” in truth, is formally a negative being [a not-one] rather than a “one”).⁵

That this was the thinking intended by the text is clear not only from its formal drift but also from the answer *ad* (4), where it says that divided stuff does not meet the definition of “many” unless each of the divisions meets the definition of *oneness*. Here it has come out in all clarity that “multiplicity” formally taken arises from “onenesses” formally taken — hence from negations (because he taught in the previous article that being one only adds a negation, formally speaking).

A problem with the answer *ad* (4)

v. In the answer *ad* (4), doubt arises over how it can be true that the priority of division over oneness is “not ab-

⁵ A “many” taken formally is a set. A “many” of apples, taken substance-wise, is fruit; but taken formally *as a many*, it is a set. Cajetan’s problem was this: if you say with Aquinas that the apples compose the set “not in virtue of their induction but in virtue of the status they have as being,” and you don’t mean their *being* apples, what “being” do you mean?

The right answer is *being a member*. A set is a heterogeneous whole composed of its members (none of which *qua* member is a subset), and these apples compose a set not precisely *qua* apples but *qua* members. What is it, then, to be a member? Alas, the formalizers of set theory do not tell us. They take the relation “x is a member of S” ($x \in S$) as a primitive notion, leaving both the *relata* (member, set) undefined. If we choose to venture where they did not tread, we might say that “being a member” is a matter of “meeting the criteria for some possible selection or collection.” The property of doing this is transcendental enough: what is anything in any way will meet the criteria for some possible selection (compare ‘good’, where the criteria are evaluative). So membership is transcendental. But then we face a problem. Isn’t it also true that a whole set is what “meets the criteria” for a possible selection? Can we split how the *member* meets the criteria from how the *set* does? A writer not furnished with exotica like free and cap-bound variables will have to say that the member meets the criteria as *among* the things that do — as *one of the things* that do. This, unwittingly, is what Cajetan was trying to articulate here. Each member-apple helps to make up this set as *one of the apples* selected. I say unwittingly, because Cajetan did not know that this one-of-the-many problem is pre-numerical. He thought he was addressing the one that generates transcendental number. He did not know that a “one of them” and a “many” are pre-numerical until one is prepared to talk about the cardinality of sets. I say unwittingly, too, because he was trying to conceive membership as a way of taking the privative oneness that Aristotle defined. This was a mistake, because he needed a relational concept, but one more primitive than measure-of. Still, for a man missing these pieces, he did well to see the puzzle at all. Especially since he only did see it, I think, because he missed a far simpler way to read Aquinas’ text in the answer *ad* (2).

solute priority but only priority in explaining our grasp of the matter.” For it seems that division is unqualifiedly prior to oneness. After all, a having is *naturally* prior to a lacking; division stands to oneness as a having to a lacking; ergo [division is naturally prior]. — And you can’t say that division is not really the having that oneness takes away of itself, but only the “having” in our way of understanding, because you have still got to specify (at least round-aboutly) what it is that oneness of itself takes away — what that having is — and that is hard to imagine. For that mysterious having is either something positive in itself or else something negative. If it is positive, then something positive *above and beyond* being itself comes ahead of oneness, and that is impossible.⁶ If it is negative, then some negation comes ahead of oneness; and if this is no problem, then why is it a problem for division to come ahead? Division is a negation, too.

vi. The ANSWER is that the trouble is caused by an ambiguity. Both of the following propositions are true.

(1) Division is prior to oneness unqualifiedly, *i.e.*

* *in esse intelligibili*
† *ens rationis*

in itself, but *in mental existence*⁶ (because division is a negation, of course, which is a mind-dependent entity,[†]) and

(2) Division comes after oneness unqualifiedly, *i.e.* in unqualified existence, which is existence in the real[‡] (as mental existence is only existence “in a way.”)

‡ *in rerum natura*

Proposition (1) is supported by the points already stated. One can make no sense of the idea that affirmation might fail to come ahead of negation. Well, being one is being this and not being not-this. Thus one sees that, hidden in the definition of ‘one’, is the negation of one side of a contradiction. So the two sides of the contradiction [‘is this’, ‘is not this’] between which lies division itself, naturally comes ahead of oneness. For first in being understood is (say) “a man,” and in the same priority comes “a not man”, and so there is division. Then comes “The man is a man and is not a not man,” which is being one, *i.e.* undivided. For he is not *divided* in himself so as to be a man and a not-man. By privation of such division, each thing is (and is called) one — assuming that ‘one’ really is a privative term,

⁶ The reason this is impossible is that it would trigger a progression-to-infinity parallel to the one that Averroes spotted in Avicenna’s position: if everything is one by lacking a further positive having, then x is one by lacking a further positive having (call it f); but f is itself one, so it must lack a further positive factor f' . . .

as we [Thomists] think. And the further point that the negation which is division should be prior to the negation which is oneness is no problem, even though it is impossible for division to be posited in the real before a oneness is posited.⁷

Proposition (2) is obvious of itself. For in order for there to be a man, and for him to be understood as one, it is not necessary that a negation of man be found in some nature (bovine, say, or celestial). If a man existed all alone, he would still be one — just as God was one, and not-God was found in nothing before creation. But when other things were created, division was posited in the real between God and not-God. This is the division which the text is talking about when it says that division is not prior absolutely. The point becomes clear at the end of the answer, where it says, “next [we apprehend] that this being is *not* that one, and so we come to grasp division.” What could be clearer? Saying “this being is not that one” expresses division *in the real*. On account of the same division, Aquinas said we define simples by way of composites. Therefore he put both real and positive division *after* oneness formally taken, but not the contradictory division [that emerges] in mental existence.

⁷ At first blush, it seems that Cajetan is departing unnecessarily from Aquinas by fetching in the sides of a contradiction to explain division. Aquinas said we apprehend division just in grasping “this being is not that one.” Well, grasping this is grasping a disidentity. Disidentity is a negative trait, an *ens rationis*. Why shouldn’t disidentity just *be* the “division” which transcendental oneness is the lack of? You may say, lack of disidentity is just identity, and so on this hypothesis transcendental oneness will collapse into mere identity. But why shouldn’t it? Every being is one? Well, every being is identical (to itself). Being one adds no real factor to a being? Neither does self-identity. It is just here, however, that Aristotle and his heirs have something crucial to say. It *does* seem that “one” adds negative information (that the thing is not or is not treated as, well, divided), whereas self-identity adds no negative information. Moreover, self-identity has no opposite (self-disidentity being logically impossible), while oneness has the opposite manyness (and even membership has a relative opposite, set-hood). So the mind-dependent “having” which is division really does seem to have a complexity about it that sheer disidentity seems to lack. Perhaps, as Cajetan suggests, thinking ‘ x is one’ is like thinking an affirmation in the mental presence of a denial. The idea works for the being “one” which is being a member of a set. Take the set whose only member is x . I understand that $x \in \{x\}$ not just by understanding that $x = x$ but by simultaneously understanding that $x \neq \{x\}$.

article 3

Is God one?

1 *ST* q.103, a.3, *In I Sent.* d.2, a.1; *In II Sent.* d.1, q.1, a.1; 1 *CG* c.42, *De Potentia Dei* q.3, a.6;
Compend. Theol. c.15; *In De div. nom.* 13, *lectio* 2-3; *In VII Phys.*, *lect.* 12; *In XII Metaphys.*, *lectio* 12

It would seem that God is not one.¹

(1) Scripture says in I Corinthians 8:5, “there are gods many and lords many.”

(2) Besides, ‘one’ in the sense that generates multi-unit extent cannot be said of God, because no quantity is predicated of God. And ‘one’ in the sense coextensive with ‘a being’ cannot be said of Him either, because it involves privation. Every privation is an incompleteness, and that does not characterize God. [But there are no other senses of ‘one’.] So, we should not say that God is one.

ON THE OTHER HAND, there is Deuteronomy 6:4, “Hear, O Israel, the Lord thy God is one Lord.”

ANSWER: the fact that God is [what it takes to be counted as] one is demonstrated on three grounds.

The first is drawn from simplicity. Consider the factor thanks to which a particular thing of any kind ϕ is *this ϕ -thing*; quite clearly, there is no way in which this factor can be held in common by many. The factor thanks to which Socrates, for example, is a man can be held by many, but the one by which he is *this man* cannot be held by more than one. So, if Socrates were a man by the same factor by which he is *this man*, there could not be many men, just as there cannot be many Socrateses. Well, this is the situation in a god. A god is identically His nature, as was shown above. By the same factor, then, He is a god and is this god. It is therefore impossible for there to be many gods.

q.3, a3

¹ There is a seeming tension between the title of this article and the force of the arguments in the body of it. If one goes by the title, one expects to see arguments showing that God is “one” in the sense coextensive with “a being” and thus undivided in Himself. Such arguments would need to do little more than repeat the results from q.3 above (showing that God is uncomposed) and then overcome the objection listed here as (2). But such arguments are postponed in fact until the next article (Is God supremely one?), and the arguments given here have a quite different force. They are about *counting*. When we count gods, does the count stop at one, or are there two gods, many gods? The arguments seek to show that there are not countably more than one god and thus to answer the objection listed as (1). Yes, Aquinas thought the oneness of indivision generated the counting numbers. But he can hardly have missed the fact that things counted as one do not have to be undivided *simpliciter*. They just have to be treated as one; and for that, a stuff only needs to be undivided “in a way.” (A forest is only undivided in a way, yet it makes sense to ask, “Are there many forests left around Aix?” and to answer, “No, only one.”) So the question in this article is whether whatever there be of divinity is undivided enough to be *counted* as one. Thus a.3 logically precedes a.4 and is subtler than it seems.

The second ground is drawn from the infiniteness of divine completeness. For it was shown above that a god contains within himself the whole completeness of being. Now if there were many gods, they would have to be different. There would be some trait ψ that belonged to one and did not belong to another.² If the latter’s not having ψ were a privation, the alleged god would not be unqualifiedly complete [and hence would not be a god]; on the other hand, if his not having ψ counted as a complete trait, the other alleged god would be lacking [and hence would not be a god]. So it is impossible for there to be many gods. This is why the ancient philosophers, too, who posited an infinite first source,^{*} posited just one of them. They were compelled, as it were, by this truth.

q.4, a.2

* principium

The third ground is drawn from the unity of the world. All the things there are turned out to be ordered, such that certain things promote the good of certain others. Well, things that are diverse do not come together into one ordered system[†] unless they are put in order by some one factor. The state of affairs that many things are brought into one system comes about better *via* one than *via* many, because one effect has only one thing that causes it *of itself*, and it is only by coincidence that many things cause a single effect (namely, by the coincidence that they are somehow one [e.g. collocated, acting at once, etc.]). Therefore, since that which is first [in causal order] is most complete and [causes] of itself and not by coincidence, it must be the case that the first cause bringing all things into one order is just one thing. And this is God.³

† unus ordo

² The premise that distinct gods would have to differ in at least one trait (so that those not differing in some trait would be identical) is not an appeal to the “identity of indiscernibles” (made famous centuries later by Leibniz) but to the previous argument. The case drawn from divine infinity is meant to build cumulatively upon the case just made from simplicity, namely, that there cannot be gods differing only individually. It follows that two gods would have to differ in the one factor whereby each is a god and this god. They would have to differ by an *essential* trait ψ , in other words, and yet both be by nature an infinite completeness of being. This is now being attacked. If you say one god could be ϕ , another $\neg\phi$ but ψ , these traits being incompatible but both complete, the problem is that any *complete* trait pertains to the fullness of being and hence is such that any god would have it at least virtually. In that case, being- ϕ and being- ψ are not incompatible; every god has both. So, if they *are* incompatible, one or the other is not complete.

³ This argument has to do with scientific rationality: we have no rational reason to posit more than one god. That there is at least one is posited rationally; one needs it to explain certain effects (1 *ST* q.2, a.3). He is posited as a “first” cause, meaning that (a) He depends on no outside factors in order to cause, and (b)

TO MEET THE OBJECTIONS — *ad* (1): there are said to be many gods in the erroneous belief of the people who used to worship many gods, thinking the planets and other stars to be divine, or even particular parts of the earth. Hence the apostle hastens to add, “For us, however, there is one God,” *etc.*

all posterior causes depend on his causality to produce their effects. To posit another god, therefore, is either idle (in case this other has no effects in our universe, no causes in our universe depending on him, *etc.*) or otherwise groundless unless our universe shows baffling conflict: a pandemic interference that justifies positing a second (and fully independent) creative hand, so to speak. Well, our universe shows no such conflict. Hence, we have no rational reason to posit another god.

ad (2): in the sense in which it generates multi-unit extent, ‘one’ is not predicated of God but only of the things that have existence in matter. For the “one” that generates multi-unit extents is in the category of mathematical entities, and these have their existence in matter but are abstracted from matter in how they are defined.* By contrast, ‘one’ in the sense co-extensive with ‘a being’ is a metaphysical affair, which does not depend upon matter existentially. And while there is no such thing as a privation in God, still, in our way of grasping Him, He is not known by us except in privative and negative language. Thus nothing prevents privative expressions from being applied to God, as when we say that He is *incorporeal*, *infinite*. In the same way, it is said of God that He is “one.”

* *secundum
rationalem*

Cajetan’s Commentary

The title is asking about numerical oneness. — In the body of the article there is one conclusion, answering in the affirmative: God is one.

This is supported on three grounds. (1) [*Antecedent*:] Form-wise, a god is in the same way a god and this god; [*inference*:] therefore he is one. — The antecedent is clear from q.3 [a.3], on the ground that this god is altogether identical to the divine nature. The inference is supported thus: it is impossible to make “this god” many; ergo [given the identity just mentioned] it is impossible to make “a god” many, too.

(2) [*Antecedent*:] A god is all-comprehensively* complete; [*consequence*:] so, he is one. — The inference is supported by a *reductio* of the alternative consequent [that he is not one], showing that it leads to the opposite of the antecedent, as is quite clear in the text.

(3) [*Antecedent*:] A god, of himself, brings all the things in the universe into one ordered system; [*inference*:] therefore god is one. — As to the first part of the antecedent [that a god brings all into order], it is supported on the ground that diverse things do not come together into one system [spontaneously but] only if they are brought together by something. As to the second part of the antecedent [that a god does this of himself], it is supported thus. A god is a first and most perfect origin; therefore he originates of himself and not by coincidence. — The inference [that there is not another god] is supported on two grounds: (a) because things are better disposed by one causal source than by many; (b) because only one thing is of itself the cause of one effect; many things are only coincidentally the cause of a given, single effect.

* *universaliter*

article 4

Is God supremely one?

1 ST q 76, a.7, In 1 Sent. d.24, q.1, a.1; In Dionysii de divinis nominibus 13, lectio 3

It seems that God is not supremely one.

(1) After all, 'one' is used to say that a thing lacks division. But lacking [as opposed to lessening] is not a matter of degree. Therefore, God is not called "more one" than the other things that are one.

(2) Besides, nothing seems to be more indivisible than what is indivisible both actually and potentially, such as a point and a *quantum*.^{*} Well, a thing is the more "one" the more indivisible it is. Therefore, God is no more one than a *quantum* and a point.

(3) Furthermore, what is good by its essence is supremely good; so what is one by its essence is supremely one. Well, every being is one by its essence, as Aristotle makes clear in *Metaphysics IV*. So every being is supremely one, and God is not more so than the rest.

^{*} *unitas*; cf. note 2 on p. 182

c.2,
1003b 32

f. c.8;
PL 182, 799

ON THE OTHER HAND, there is what Bernard says [in *De consideratione*]: "of all things that are said to be one, the oneness of the divine Trinity holds highest place."

ANSWER: since a "one" is an undivided being, in order for a thing to be supremely one it has to be both supremely a being and supremely undivided. God passes both tests. He is supremely a being in that He does not

have an existence hemmed in by some nature receiving it, but is existence itself standing on its own [*subsistens*], untrammelled in all ways. He is supremely one in that He is neither actually nor potentially divided in any respect, since He is simple in every respect, as was shown above. It is an open and shut case, then, that God is supremely one.

q.3, a.7

TO MEET THE OBJECTIONS — *ad* (1): although lacking is not itself a matter of degree, in proportion as there is degree in the trait being lacked, we speak of more and less in connection with the word for lacking it. So in proportion as something is more divided or divisible, less divisible, or no-wise divisible, it is called less, more, or supremely one.

ad (2): a point and a *quantum* are not supremely beings, since they have existence only in some subject. Hence [they fail the first test and] neither of them is supremely one. As the subject is not supremely one, because of the diversity between accident and subject, neither is the accident.

ad (3): even though every being is one by its substance, the substances are not all on an equal footing when it comes to oneness: in some, the substance is composed of many factors, and in some, it is not.

Cajetan's Commentary

The title is clear from what has been said. — In the body of the article there is one conclusion, answering with a yes: God is supremely one.

The support is this. [*Antecedent*:] God is supremely a being and supremely undivided; [*inference*:] therefore [He is supremely one]. — The first part of the antecedent is supported on the ground that He is existence itself: the second part rests on the ground that what is entirely simple lacks every divisibility. All the points are clear in the text.

ii. In the answer *ad* (1) there is doubt about how the lack [of dividedness] becomes a matter of degree on account of the dividedness [lacked]. The dividedness itself is a negation, and so the same question arises about it: how is it a matter of degree?

The short answer is that dividedness gets its degree on the basis of what is divided.* A rational being is further divided [*i.e.* removed] from a rock than from a cow; so the division between a man and a rock is "greater." So the oneness of genus between a man and a rock is "less."

* *ratione fundamenti*

Inquiry Twelve: Into how God is known by us

In the previous inquiries, we have considered how God is in Himself; thus it remains to ponder how He is within our ken, *i.e.* how He can be known by created knowers.¹ Thirteen questions are asked about this:

- | | |
|--|--|
| <p>(1) could a created intellect possibly see God's essence? (2) could it do so through a created species? (3) could one see God's essence with the bodily eye? (4) does any created knower manage to see God's essence by its natural powers? (5) does a created intellect need any created light in order to see God's essence? (6) of those seeing His essence, does one do so better than another? (7) can any created intellect comprehend His essence?</p> | <p>(8) when a created intellect sees God's essence, does it therein know everything? (9) does it know what it does know therein by likenesses of some sort? (10) does a created intellect know all at once what it sees in God? (11) can any human see God's essence in this life? (12) can He be known by natural reason in this life? (13) beyond knowledge by natural reason, is there any knowledge of God by grace in this life?</p> |
|--|--|

¹ In the philosophical parts of the previous inquiries, God has been posited as a theoretical entity, shown to satisfy certain constraints (to be not-composed, not-lacking, *etc.*). But the nature of such an entity is a guess. Like the nature of any other theoretical entity posited in a science, it remains a conjecture unless there is some experimental access to it. Hence the new topic: for inquirers, can there be experiential access to what God is? There is a parallel topic in theology: when revelation provides a description of God, can we ever "see" that it is true?

article 1

Is it possible that a created intellect see God through His essence?

infra, a.4 ad 3; 2/1 ST q.3, a.8; q.5, a.1, *In IV Sent* d.49, q.2, a.1; 3 CG cc 51, 54, 57, *De Veritate* q.8, a.1.
Quodl. X, q.8, *Compend. Theol.* c.104 and p.2 cc 9-10; *In Matt.* c.5, *In Ioan* c.1, *lectio* 11

It seems that no created intellect can possibly see God through His essence.¹

- PG 59, 98 (1) In Chrysostom's homilies on John, where he expounds John 1:18 ("No man hath seen God at any time") he says: "The prophets do not see that very thing which is God, nor the angels, nor even the arch-angels. For how can the creatable in nature see the un-creatable?" Denis, too, says of God in c. 1 of *De divinis nominibus*, "There is no sensing of Him, no imagining, no opining, no reasoning, no knowing."
- PG 3, 593 (2) Besides, every infinite thing, as such, is unknown. God is infinite, as shown above. He is therefore unknown even in Himself.
- q 7, a.1 (3) A created intellect only gets to know things in

being, because what falls first under an intellect's apprehension is "a being." God is not something in being: rather, He is "above being," as Denis says. So He is not an object for understanding but stands above every intellect.

PG 3, 697

(4) Between knower and known, there has to be a kind of proportion, as the known serves to complete the knower. There is no proportion between a created intellect and God: they stand infinitely far apart. So, it is impossible for a created intellect to see His essence.

ON THE OTHER HAND, there is 1 John 3: 2, "We shall see Him as He is."

ANSWER: since each thing is open to being known insofar as it is in act, a God who is pure act without any trace of potency is (in Himself) maximally open to being known. But what is maximally knowable in itself may fail to be accessible to a given intellect because, as an object for understanding, it surpasses that intellect — much as the sun, which is maximally visible, cannot be seen by a bat because its luminosity surpasses [the bat's capacity]. In giving weight to this point, then, some writers have maintained that no created intellect can come to see God's essence.²

¹ 'See' meant 'know optimally'. 'See x through its essence' meant 'understand x by knowing what x is', as I understand iron by knowing its atomic structure. For Aquinas, finding a thing's essence was crucial to knowing it. Recent philosophers of science (especially Popper) have denied this, but their case confuses the genuine essence-search with a linguistic counterfeit. For example, "What is water?" is counterfeited by "What do we mean by 'water'?", a question which (be it after usage or a Husserlian *Wesen*) fails to motivate empirical work for the genuine answer, H₂O. But the "essence" which Aquinas thought it crucial to know was the genuine answer: it was picked out by a scientific account (*ratio*): it was the nature of a thing, not the rôle of its name in ordinary language, nor of its *Idee* among the "givens" of consciousness.

² Hugh of St. Cher was censured for this view at the University of Paris in 1241. Scotus Erigena had held it in *De divisione naturae III*, c. 23 (*PL* 122, 689), and Abelard was accused of holding it.

But this opinion can hardly be right. After all, ultimate human fulfillment* lies in our highest activity, which is that of understanding.³ So if a created mind can never come to see what God is, then *either* we will never reach fulfillment, *or else* our fulfillment will be found in [understanding] something other than God. But that idea is foreign to the faith.⁴ For since each thing is complete insofar as it reaches the source[†] of its being, the ultimate completeness of a rational creature is in Him who is the source of its being.⁵ — The opin-

* beatitudo

³ Aquinas distinguished what our fulfillment *is* from where it *lies* or is found [*consistit*]. Our fulfillment is a state made complete by comprehension of all the goods we naturally seek (as everybody understands). Where it is to be found, however, is quite a problem, since the popular answers (in riches, in fame, in pleasures) are quite wrong. Aquinas inherited and sought to unify two good answers, including a revealed one (fulfillment lies in the Kingdom of Heaven, in which one can begin to participate now by living in the state of grace) and a philosophical one developed by Aristotle. The Stoic philosopher reasoned that each species is present in nature for a purpose, and its members find their fulfillment in achieving that purpose. To discover what the purpose is, one looked at the highest activity distinctive of the species (the best exercise of their best faculty). Our highest distinctive faculty is understanding, and its best exercise is understanding the deepest things (primordial causes and ultimate purposes), and these Aristotle called “divine things.” Of course, no one can devote himself to such topics without a well-regulated private life, supported by health, friends, social order, and economic sufficiency: so a person pursuing the intellectual life is in a state where all those goods are present. Aquinas saw the apologetic potential in Aristotle’s answer: if human fulfillment is found in contemplating “divine things” in this world’s favorable conditions, how much more must it lie in seeing those things directly in Heaven’s favorable conditions, as the Gospel promises? Hence he appealed here to Aristotle’s idea that *beatitudo* lies in understanding certain things.

Critics have called this appeal “intellectualist,” but neither Aristotle nor Aquinas said that understanding was man’s only good, nor did they say that all the goods we seek are found in that act alone, apart from its environing conditions, which (for both thinkers) include moral virtues. What they said was that, in a fulfilling human life, social and economic blessings support intellectual seriousness. There is no denying that a life devoid of interest in the ultimate questions is a shallow life.

⁴ What is foreign to Christian faith is the idea that fulfillment might be centered elsewhere than on God. “Where your treasure is, there will your heart be also,” so you must “lay up treasure in Heaven” by loving the Lord your God “with all your heart, mind, and strength.” Aquinas might have appealed to these teachings and said: given the importance to us of understanding, we cannot fully love someone whom we are not invited to understand; but he took instead a different path.

⁵ This sentence is a hyper-compact summary of an argument which Aquinas presented in larger pieces elsewhere. With the pieces put together, it seems to have gone as follows.

- (1) Each thing is complete when it attains its distinctive strength (*virtus*): *In IV Sent.* d.8, q.1. a.1, q.1 *ad 1*, citing *Physics VII*, text 19.
- (2) A thing’s strength is its utmost; *ibid.*, citing *De Caelo et Mundo I*, text 116.

ion is also unreasonable. For there is in man a natural desire, when he sees an effect, to know the cause of it; and

- (3) So the complete state of a thing is a matter of its being brought to its utmost; *ibid.*
- (4) The “utmost” of a thing is twofold: there is the *interior* utmost (a strength for action *within* the thing), and there is the *exterior* utmost (the end or goal it seeks); *ibid.*
- (5) The distinctive strength by reaching which a thing is called complete is found in the type of action for whose sake the thing exists; *ibid.*, citing the beginning of *Ethics II*.
- (6) So the interior utmost of any thing is found in the type of action for whose sake the thing exists; *ibid.*
- (7) It is through their interior utmost that things attain their exterior utmost (their end/goal).
- (8) So things attain their end through the type of action for whose sake they exist; *In II Sent.* d.18, q.2, a.2 *ad 4*.
- (9) In intellectual creatures, this type of action is their understanding; so such creatures attain their end/goal through an act or acts of understanding; 2/1 *ST* q.3, a.2; 3 *CG* c.25, arg. 2; *Compendium theologiae* c.103.
- (10) The exterior utmost of anything is the goal/state in which it has all it naturally seeks for its completeness; *In IV Sent.* d. 8, *loc. cit.*; 2/1 *ST* 1.
- (11) So the exterior utmost of anything is the state in which it rests in its completeness.
- (12) Resting in completeness and corrupting are opposites.
- (13) So the state in which a thing rests in its completeness and the state in which it corrupts are opposites.
- (14) Corruptibles corrupt because of their wide removal from the First Cause; *In IV Sent.* d. 8, *loc. cit.*, citing Aristotle’s *De generatione II*, c.10; 336b 30.
- (15) So the state in which a thing rests in its completeness is the opposite from removal from the First Cause.
- (16) The opposite of removal from a thing is conjunction to it.
- (17) So the state in which a thing rests in its completeness is conjunction to the First Cause; hence all things seek this in some way in seeking their own completeness or “good”; 1 *ST* 6, 1, esp. *ad* (2).
- (18) The First Cause is the Source of being for all; 1 *ST* q.45.
- (19) So the state in which a thing rests in its completeness is conjunction to the First Cause. “The exterior utmost of a thing is the Source from which the thing has being, because, by conjunction to It, a thing is completed and strengthened, while, by removal from It, things fail.” *In IV Sent.* d. 8, *loc. cit.*
- (20) And thus [by (10) above] the First Agent also meets the definition of an ultimate end/goal to be reached; *ibid.*
- (21) If the First Cause cannot be seen for what it is by rational creatures, it cannot be understood by them (as their characteristic act of understanding is understanding what something is); *In De causis*, lectio 6, citing *De anima III*
- (22) But [from (9) above] rational creatures attain their end/goal through an act or acts of understanding.
- (23) So [by (19) above] they would attain conjunction with the First Cause by an act or acts of understanding.
- (24) Ergo, if the First Cause cannot be seen for what He is by rational creatures, they *either* cannot attain their goal at all (which is contrary to the Gospel promise of future blessedness) *or else* their goal is to be conjoined-by-understanding to something other than what-God-is and hence (?) to something other than God.

The last step is unclear to the present translator; see below, p.197, footnote 5.

so wonder wells up in human beings. If, then, a rational creature's understanding cannot cope with the first cause of things, a desire rooted in his nature will be left pointless.⁶ The thing to do then is to concede without cavil that the truly fulfilled* do see God's essence.

* beat

PG 3, 593

PG 59, 99

TO MEET THE OBJECTIONS — *ad* (1): both of those authorities are talking about a seeing that would amount to comprehension. Thus right before the words quoted from Denis, he prefaces them by saying, "He is universally incomprehensible to all, and there is no sensing of Him," etc. Chrysostom, too, a little after the words quoted, adds these: "By seeing, he [St. John] means here an utterly certain grasp and comprehension of the Father, such as the Father has of the Son."

ad (2): what is matter-infinite, i.e. matter not completed by a form, is unknown in itself, because every success of cognition is achieved thanks to a form. But what is form-infinite, i.e. form not limited by matter, is maximally clear-cut in itself.[†] It is in this way that

† notum in se

⁶ This argument, made not from the faith but from natural reason, is an appeal to Aristotle's work on natural tendency. Aristotle thought that scientific knowledge of a natural kind *K* could be obtained from two sources: (1) how, necessarily, all *K*-things are (their essence), and (2) how, necessarily, all *K*-things, given what they are, strive to be. This last was natural tendency (*orexis*), about which Aristotle further thought two things: (a) how all *K*-things strive to be is how most of them are at any given time or how many of them are most of the time, and (b) how all *K*-things strive to be is how a *K*-thing necessarily can be. In other words, he thought that a natural tendency was generally satisfied (and so could be read-off from statistical evidence) and that no natural tendency could be unsatisfiable. Aristotle took it for granted that man is a natural kind and that his cognitive doings are natural processes (a position known nowadays as naturalized epistemology). Aquinas agreed and so felt free (a) to appeal here to the fact that people are generally curious about why something is the case, and (b) to posit a natural tendency (here called a *desiderium naturae*) behind that statistical evidence. He gave the tendency both an object (to know the cause) and a natural trigger (when an effect is seen). He thought that the same natural tendency would be triggered again and again, as the human knower worked back from an initial effect to its caused causes to their caused causes. When a scientist sees that the deepest caused causes are effects (i.e., are active as causes

God is infinite, not the first way, as we have already seen above. q.7, a.1

ad (3): when God is called "not something in being," the sense is not to say that He in no wise exists but to say that He is "above" every existing thing, in that He is identically His own existence. Thus, the consequence that follows is not 'He is in no wise knowable' but 'He goes beyond every knowing', i.e. He cannot be comprehended.

ad (4): the term 'a proportion' is used in two ways: (1) In one way, it means a definite relation of one quantity to another; thus *x* is twice as big as *y*; *x* is three times bigger than *y*, and *x* equals *y*; are species of proportion. (2) In the other use, any relation of one thing to another is called a proportion. In this sense, there can be a proportion of creature to God, in that a creature is related to Him as effect to cause and as potency to act. Along this line, too, a created intellect can be proportioned to know God.

thanks to some unknown and still deeper factor), the natural tendency is triggered again: any scientist who got that far would "naturally desire" to know what this further factor (*alias*, the First Cause) is. If there is no possible way for a human being to know this, man has a natural tendency which is unsatisfiable (*mane*). Sound etymology does not accept such an hypothesis. Ergo there is a possible way to know.

On this argument, two comments are needed. First, natural desires were sharply distinguished from artificially induced or "elicited" ones, such as Mr. Hunt's desire to corner the world market in silver. Elicited desires are often unsatisfiable, and so the force of the present argument lies in its being about a "natural desire."

Second, Aquinas (like Aristotle) distinguished arguments that are conclusive (*demonstrativa*) from those that are plausible and suggestive (*dialectica*). Aquinas is correctly read as presenting the latter, unless he says otherwise. The argument here is no more than plausible, because its major premise ('No natural desire of a species is unsatisfiable') is readily distinguished by a procedure at which Aquinas was expert: none is unsatisfiable in every case (*simpliciter*). I admit, none is unsatisfiable in some cases (*secundum quid*). I deny, etc. Thus a natural tendency that brings man from abysmal ignorance to the bounds of physical science (and of Aquinas' own philosophical theology) will not be pointless *simpliciter* even if it has no achievable object beyond those bounds. If Aquinas had rejoinders to this sort of objection, he aired them elsewhere (cf. 2/1 37 q 3, aa.6-8).

Cajetan's Commentary

The title question asks about a *created* intellect, not just a *human* one; so pay heed. — 'Is it *possible*?' is asked without further qualification.* [leaving open] whether it be possible through a power in another or a power in the creature itself. 'See through the essence' means to understand quidditatively, so that one knows how to finish fully the what-is-it question about God.

* absolutè

For to know what-*x*-is is to see *x* through its essence. But when I say "finish fully" the what-is-it question, I am using 'finish fully' as it contrasts with 'finish incompletely'. (We say that one who knows only generic essential traits of *x* knows incompletely: one who knows the what-is of *x* has to have in hand all the essential traits of *x*, down to and including its ultimate specific difference.)

I am not using 'finish fully' in the sense in which it would mean *know comprehensively*. That is quite another matter. For 'know what x is' is used with a certain latitude as to the mode of knowing. Mode-of-knowing is divided into *comprehending* and *apprehending*, and apprehending is further subdivided into many levels, as will come out below. — The question, then, is whether it is possible for a created intellect to know, about God, what-He-is. If you doubt that this reading of the question is correct, you can check 1 *CG* c.3. and 3 *CG* cc.49-50.

q.12, a.6

Analysis of the article, I

ii. In the body of the article, he does four jobs: he (1) says why there is doubt, (2) states the negative opinion, (3) argues against it, and (4) answers the question.

iii. As to job (1), a single claim is made: God is maximally knowable in Himself; yet because of His "excess" *vis-à-vis* another. He is unknowable *to* that other. — The first part of this is supported on the ground that God is pure act. The second part is illustrated with an example about the sun and sight.

Note in this connexion that, from *Metaphysics II*, we have it that difficulty in knowing can come from two places, from the object or from the faculty. The question here is about difficulty or ease in knowing; so, rightly enough, Aquinas did not omit to say that the reason for doubt here is not coming from the object [as if it were vague] but from its highness above the faculty — which is to say: the difficulty comes from the faculty.

iv. As to job (2), the opinion of some writers is that a created intellect cannot possibly see God's essence. Their reason is the same highness of God above a created intellect, as it says in the text at the words, "In giving weight to this point," etc.

Note here that this opinion, in my judgment, is not Avicenna's thinking, nor that of other philosophers (since at least the first created Intelligence knows what God is, according to Avicenna, as He is its proximate source). Rather, this was the opinion of some Christian writers, I think.¹ That is why Aquinas disputes it with points pertaining to the faith, as we shall see.

v. As to job (3), the opinion just mentioned is undermined in two ways. The first goes as follows. If no created intellect can possibly see God, [inference:] then either [1st alternative:] it will never attain its fulfillment, or [2nd alternative:] its fulfillment is found elsewhere than in God. Drawing this inference is sup-

¹ Since the opinion is taken to deny any possibility of seeing God's essence (not only of comprehending it but even of apprehending it in any way), it is indeed hard to find writers who may have been known to Aquinas and who held it. I suggested Hugh of St. Cher as a possibility. Cajetan seems to have been unaware that this opinion came into its own in the century after Aquinas, in the Byzantine East, where it was advanced by Gregory Palamas and eventually imposed as "orthodoxy" on the eastern believers. Cf. Martin Jugie, *Theologia dogmatica christianorum orientaliun* (Paris: Letouzey et Ané, 1926 ff.), vol. II, pp.47-183.

ported on the ground that man's fulfillment lies in his highest activity, which is understanding. — As to the point inferred, the first alternative in it is obviously impossible;² the second is foreign to the faith. Lest Aquinas seem to be saying this arbitrarily, he supports it thus. [Antecedent:] God is a rational creature's source of being; [inference:] so the happiness of a rational creature lies in conjunction to God. The inference rests on the ground that each thing is complete in proportion as it is conjoined to its source. This last is a proposition from the *Liber de causis*.³

About this undermining argument

vi. On the support for the inference, a doubt could be raised to the effect that it is arguing affirmatively from a higher [more general] notion to a case falling under it, i.e., from "highest activity, which is understanding," to such-and-such exercise of understanding.⁴

But the answer is easy. By the talk of a highest activity, we do not mean just a generic kind of doing (say, understanding), as a surface reading of the text suggests, but the *highest* of that kind (i.e. understanding the deepest things), etc. Hence no fallacy crops up. — Granted, Aquinas did specify a genus of doing here, but he did so because he was talking about man, in whom there are other genera of activity, such as sensations. The reason he took the case of man in this support, even though the argument concerns "created intellect" in general, was to teach from things better known, to show that the same reasoning would apply to any created intellect. Indeed, he was making an argument *from the least case*. For if man [the least intellectual being] is such that his fulfillment lies in understanding the deepest things, *a fortiori* the happiness of the other intellectual beings [which are pure intellects] will be their deepest contemplations, too.

² That there is no fulfillment at all for us may have been "obviously impossible" in the still Christian 15th century, but it was no longer obvious to Schopenhauer or Thomas Hardy.

³ The proposition does not appear in the *Liber de causis* in so many words but can be inferred from statements in it with which Aquinas agrees in his commentary. *Proposito 9* in that text, for example, is about how God's action of ruling extends to all creatures. In his comments, Aquinas says: "Each thing is ruled and conserved through a strength of its own by which it achieves something towards its end and resists hindrances thereto; but the strength of a caused thing depends upon the strength of its cause, and not vice-versa. For since strength is the source of operating [*principium operandi*] in each thing, it must be the case that the strength of the thing's strength is that whence it has what it takes to be a source of operating. But it was said in *Proposito 1* that a lower cause operates through the strength of a higher cause. Hence the strength of the higher cause is the strength of the strength of the lower cause." In that case, God's *virtus* is the strength with which an intellectual creature has the strength to understand. In that case, some sort of contact or "conjunction" with God's strength is part of any state in which said creature attains its own completeness, etc. These points are an alternate route from point (10) to point (17) in the reconstructed argument given above in note 5 on the text of the article.

⁴ An inference from "Jones enjoys solving problems" to "Jones enjoys solving math problems" is fallacious in this way.

vii. As to how Aquinas breaks down the second alternative in the point inferred ["or else his fulfillment will be found in [understanding] something other than God"], notice that Aquinas wanted to convince his adversaries that their opinion went against the Faith. So he brought in a proposition which Christians have to believe explicitly, *i.e.*, that God is the creator of every rational creature; and from this he argued to "Therefore such a creature comes to rest in God [and not elsewhere]." The reasoning takes a premise believed and deduces a consequence by reason. So taken, it concludes quite appropriately, for an audience of believers. The interpreters who construe this argument from St. Thomas as being aimed at Avicenna [who did not accept direct divine creation of anything past the first Intelligence] are off the track, therefore.⁵

Analysis of the article, II

viii. The second way in which the opinion is undermined goes as follows. If a created intellect cannot possibly see God, then [1st inference:] it cannot see the very cause of things. And then [2nd inference:] a desire rooted in its nature will be pointless. — The first inference is left as evident. The second is supported: there is a natural desire in man to see the cause of seen effects, as his wonderment attests: so [if a Cause can cannot possibly see causes effects he does see, this desire will be in vain. But such a desire cannot be in vain. Ergo a created intellect can see God].

On the argument from natural desire ⁶

ix. Concerning this argument, two doubts occur to one. The first is about both its merit [simpliciter] and

⁵ Let the story be as Cajetan says: the argument Aquinas hyper-compacted is making appeal to the dogma of creation, trying to show that the rejected opinion conflicts with where man's happiness must lie, given that dogma. What the reader wants to know is why Aquinas put this argument forward at all, rather than something more direct and persuasive, such as an exegesis of St. John's "we shall see Him as He is" or St. Paul's "I shall know as I am known." When one uncompresses the argument (as attempted in note 5 on the article), the puzzle remains. For even spelled out according to the best clues left to us, the argument never makes it clear why "we can grasp God's essence" must follow. A Palamite may grant that (a) an intellectual creature finds its fulfillment in understanding the deepest things it has the strength to understand, and (b) every such creature is created by God, and so (c) every such creature needs to be conjoined to God by understanding Him the best it can. How does it follow that no such creature will be blessed except in understanding precisely *what God is*? Why couldn't we attain our blessed conjunction to the First Cause by or in an act of understanding something lesser about Him, if that is the deepest truth we have the strength for? Aquinas' answer will be, because we have a natural desire to know the *what* — *what* that Cause is. This answer is coming next. He will lay it out in 2/1 ST q.3, a.8. He had published a much longer version of it in 3 CG cc.27-50.

⁶ This section is probably the most controversial passage in all of Cajetan's commentaries on the *Prima Pars*.

its consistency with the author's other views [*ad hominem*]. For it does not seem true that a created intellect would *naturally* desire to see God, because a nature does not bestow an inclination to something that the whole strength of the nature cannot reach.⁷ A sign of this is the fact that [a living thing's] nature has given [it] the organs required for any power the nature has put within its soul. In *De caelo II*, it says that if the fixed stars had a strength for moving, [their] nature would have given them suitable organs. [But Aquinas will admit in a.4, below, that no created intellect can see God by its natural powers.] So his argument seems to imply [irreconcilable points:] that our nature gives us a desire for the sight of God and yet cannot give us the requirements for that sight, such as the light of glory, *etc.* — Plus, in St. Thomas' teaching, as I said in commenting on q.1, a.1, man is not ordered on a natural basis to the happiness of seeing God, but on an *obediential* basis.⁸ Ergo [the desire in question cannot count as natural, and the argument collapses.]⁹

⁷ This first doubt comes from *De veritate* q.27, a.2, plus 1 ST q.62, a.2, where Aquinas says that natural tending, even in intellectual creatures, is bounded by the creature's natural ability [*facultas*]. Those texts are about tendencies that are natural *in mode*. There is no mode-natural tendency to what the powers of a nature cannot achieve, because mode-natural tendencies are posited in natural sciences. A mode-natural tendency for x to be ϕ is based on statistical evidence that x is often ϕ . If being- ϕ is beyond the power of x in its naturally observable environs, x is never observed to be ϕ in a natural science; no such tendency could be posited. But tendencies can also be natural in another way, *in residence*, as Cajetan said on q.1, a.1 and as he will repeat on 2/1 ST q.3, a.8.

⁸ The discussion on q.1, a.1, was sparked by the supernaturalism of the goal to which we have been called, the Vision of God in Heaven. Given that man is in potency of *some kind* to any goal he can be brought to *in some way*; the question was whether man's potency to the Vision in Heaven should be called a *natural* potency (like the potency of a yew hedge to be noursed) or an *obediential* potency (like the potency of the hedge to be shaped like a turreted wall, *i.e.* to receive whatever shape the gardener chooses to give it). Scotus defended the view that our potency to the Vision is natural; Cajetan, the view that it is obediential. Tending (which is the issue here) came into that earlier quarrel only by way of a premise in Scotus' case. It said that a thing's potency-to-be- ϕ is *natural* in case it naturally tends to be ϕ . Cajetan not only rejected this theory of what makes a potency natural but also rejected the premise that we tend to the Vision naturally in the relevant sense of "naturally," *i.e.* mode-naturally. See the commentary on q.1, a.1, with its Appendix.

⁹ This first doubt will not get a full solution in the present commentary; it will be settled only in Cajetan's remarks on 2/1 ST q.3, a.8. There it will become clear that he thought our "natural desire" to see what God is escapes these objections because it is not natural in the sense they address — mode-natural — but in two other senses. One of these is *residence-natural*: this desire resides in the intellect, a part of human nature, and so affects the whole human race. The other sense is *theological*: a thing tends "naturally" to do what it was *made* to do, and theology knows that we were *made* to see God.

The second doubt is that, even if one grants all the premisses, the intended conclusion still does not follow. For all that follows [from “this desire cannot be pointless”] is just “therefore the First Cause can be seen,” not “therefore God can be seen.” For I may say that what is desired to be seen is just God *qua* cause of things, and not God in His very substance in Himself. Then what will be known [in the desire’s fulfillment] is not what-God-is independently but what-He-is *as* creator, *as* governing things, *etc.*¹⁰ We have clear examples of this in our experience. From [the seen effect which is] the first motion, we desire to know what the substance causing it is *as first mover*; when its conditions *as that* are known to us, the desire rests content, as one sees in the development of the sciences.¹¹

✚ TO CLEAR THESE DOUBTS UP, you have to realize that a rational creature can be considered in two ways: (1) independently,* or (2) as ordered to its happiness.[†] If the creature is considered the first way, then no, its natural desire does not extend beyond its nature’s ability;[‡] and if the topic is taken that way, I concede that a creature does not naturally desire to see God in Himself independently. But if the creature is considered the second way, then it does desire naturally to see God, because, as so taken, the creature knows special effects (of grace, say, and of glory) whose cause is God as He is in Himself independently, not as He is

* *absolutè*
† *ut ordinata ad felicitatem*

‡ *facultas*

* *ut subsunt illae scientie*

¹⁰ The second doubt points out that (as Quine often complained) intensional objects can be distinct even when they bear upon the same extensional entity (*res*). Thus even though extensionally the First Cause = the Trinity, a thought of the First Cause need not be a thought of the Trinity. Ask the Jewish and Islamic philosophers! And so a wonder about the First Cause need not be a wonder about the Trinity (which is what God is in Himself independently, *i.e.* independently of created effects); and so a wonder about the First Cause can be satisfied where no wonder about the Trinity has been felt. In this article, a certain tendency in man to wonder is alleged to be *natural* to intellectual creatures *as such*, and hence to be rooted in what makes them intellectual. This last can only be the intellect itself, which takes *intensional* objects and is put by those objects into *intensional* states (such as understanding that *p*, desiring that *q*, wondering whether *r*). But a capital difference between the “naturalized epistemology” of Aquinas and the “naturalized epistemology” of Quine is that Aquinas allows intensional states to be natural, while Quine does not. If Aquinas is correct against Quine, even a *natural* desire in the intellect will bear upon an intensional object. Ergo a “natural desire” to know what the First Cause is can be felt and satisfied apart from any desire to know what God is “in Himself.”

On the strong contrast which Cajetan drew between God *as God* (in Himself) and God as related to creatures on any basis that makes Him naturally knowable, see the commentaries on q.1, a.3 (§ *iv*), q.1, a.5 (§ *iii*), q.1, a.6 (§§ *iv-v*), q.1, a.7 (§§ *i, v*), q.2, a.3 (§ *iii*), and q.10, a.5 (§§ *xvi-xvii*).

¹¹ In Aristotelian “physics,” God was studied as first cause of change/motion; in metaphysics, as the first necessary Being. Cajetan is now suggesting that the natural desire to explain could be content to know what-God-is for purposes of

agent-cause of everything.¹² For as soon as effects are seen, it is natural for any intellectual being to desire a grasp of their cause. Hence a desire for the Vision of God, even if it is not “natural” to a created intellect when the latter is taken independently, is nevertheless quite “natural” to it when revelation of the special effects has taken place.¹³ This is the sense in which the arguments given both here and in 3 *CG* c.50 conclude as they do, *i.e.*, that a desire belonging to a created intellectual nature would be pointless, if God could not possibly be seen.

It was not incumbent upon Aquinas to say in so many words that he was talking here about intellectual creatures as ordered to their happiness, rather than independently. For it is a common trait of every science that the terms used in it are understood formally in the sense they have as falling under that science* — as one sees with ‘quantity’ in physics. Well, one learns from 2 *CG* c. 4 that the only way creatures come under consideration in *theology* is as they are ordered, governed, predestinated by God unto God, as unto the ultimate End

either science. In the context of the present article, this can only mean that God has as many essences to be “seen through” as there are distinct sciences in which the what-is-He question comes up. (By the comments on q.1, aa.3 and 7, there are three such sciences: physics, metaphysics, and sacred theology.) There is nothing odd about this for the following reason. (1) An “essence seen through” is an intensional object; so (2) knowing it is not a matter of accusative knowing (as in ‘I know Jones’) but one of knowing *that* a scientific definition is sound; and so (3) “seeing a thing through its essence” is a matter of grasping it under a scientific definition (as in ‘I know Jones to be a rational animal’); but (4) even things finite-in-essence have as many such definitions (*rationes*) as there are distinct sciences in which they are appropriately studied; and (5) God, who is infinite-in-essence, satisfies limitlessly many such definitions. This is the reason why God can be *apprehended* for what He is (even in Himself as Trinity) but not *comprehended* by a creature, even in the Vision (see below in q.12, aa.6-7).

¹² Note Cajetan’s conviction that the effects we call supernatural (namely, those which God brings about through a saving grace, for the glory of “those who love Him and are called according to His purpose”) have a very different explanation from anything we are naturally in a position to know; for they have their explanation only in what God is in Himself: an uncreated, inter-personal Love.

¹³ In short, the residence-natural desire of an intellectual creature is elastic in a way that its mode-natural ability (*facultas*) is not: the desire expands with the informational richness of the environment. If the environment shows effects knowable only by revelation (explainable only on the basis of what God is in Himself as Trinity), the natural desire *extends to objects beyond* the creature’s natural ken or ability: we naturally desire to know what we cannot know by our natural powers.

Notice that Cajetan has said nothing about how far our natural desire *would have reached*, if we had been created in the “state of pure nature” about which later theology speculated. He does not say that natural desire is bounded by natural ability in any “state” we might have had. He says only that natural desire is so bounded *when considered in a certain way*, which will become clearer in the next paragraph.

of them all; if this were not so, theology would not be treating its topics in the light of that cause which is at once highest and unique to the theologian. That much is obvious.¹⁴

¹⁴ This ends Cajetan's explanation of the two ways of considering a rational creature, and it becomes clear that the first way ("independently") is that of natural science, while the second ("as related to its happiness") is theological. For the happiness in question is not knowable in any science or wisdom lower than the highest — in our case, the sacred learning. Hence this happiness is neither the fulfillment that a rational creature spontaneously understands (a set of goods it naturally seeks), nor the distinctive activity in which that fulfillment lies, which a sound philosophy of nature figures out. Rather, this happiness is the ultimate purpose *assigned* to that creature in the total world-plan in which God creates it (along with everything else). It is not an end-of-nature, in short, but an end-of-Providence. In our case, the end of nature is merely that we should come to understand the deepest reasons. Only Providence determines what shall be *there* to have a reason. Only free divine decision determines what depth of love, out of the infinite depth hidden in God, shall express itself in created or redemptive effects and so be "there" to be seen and wondered at by the creature; so only the same decision determines the level of *happiness* to which the rational creature is called, *i.e.*, the level of seeing what-

Analysis of the article, III

xi. As to job (4), the conclusion answering the question is: the fulfilled do see God's essence. It is supported on no other basis than the undermining of its contradictory: after all, one side of a contradiction has to be true.

God-is on which the creature will be seeing the explanation of *those* very effects. In the actual world-plan, man's end-of-Providence is a very high happiness indeed, revealed as a "spiritual society" with God personally, in which God is seen by the saints face-to-face as Trinity. To reach this, man's natural powers fall radically short; he needs supernatural gifts (grace in this life and the light of glory in the next); hence man's potency to this happiness is obediencial, and his desire for it can be called "natural" only in a science that profits from revealed information.

Given all the world-plans God could have chosen to create, there is no reason to believe that every possible happiness would have been this high. But this only means that the intensional object satisfying man's natural desire to understand might have been a less sublime object, such as God purely as First Cause. It does not mean that man might have been created for no end-of-Providence beyond his end-of-nature (a merely philosophical understanding of first causes). That is the famous "hypothesis of pure nature," and (*pace* Lubac) Cajetan has said nothing in this commentary about it.

article 2

Is God's essence seen by a created intellect through any likeness?

In III Sent. d.14, a.1, q.3; *In IV Sent.* d.49, q.2, a.1; *De Veritate* q.8, a.1; q.10, a.11; 3 *CG* cc.49, 51; 4 *CG* c.7; *Quodl. VII.* q.1, a.2. *Compend. Theol.* c.105 and p.2, c.9; *In Joan.* c.1, *lectio* 11; c.14, *lectio* 2; *In I Cor.* c.13, *lectio* 4; *In Dionysii De div. nom.* c.1, *lectio* 1; *In Boethii De Trm.* q.1, a.2

It seems that God's essence, when seen by a created intellect, is seen through some likeness or other.

(1) After all, 1 John 3:2 says, "we know that, when He shall appear, we shall be like Him, and we shall see Him as He is."

c.11, PL 42, 969 (2) Augustine says in *De Trinitate IX*, "when we know God, some likeness of God comes to be in us."

(3) Besides, the intellect in act is the intelligible object in act, much as a sense in act is the sense-object in act. Well, a sense is only in act insofar as it is informed by a likeness of the thing sensed, and the intellect [is only in act insofar as it is informed] by a likeness of the thing understood. Therefore, if God is seen in act by a created intellect, it must be the case that He is seen through some likeness.

c.9, PL 42, 1069 ON THE OTHER HAND, Augustine says in *De Trinitate XV* that when the Apostle says, "we see now through a glass darkly," the words "glass" and "darkly" can be understood as meaning likenesses of any kind used for grasping God. Well, seeing God through His essence is no such dark or problematic seeing but the very opposite of such a thing. Ergo God's essence is not seen through likenesses.

ANSWER: in order for "seeing" to take place, be it sensory seeing or intellectual, two items are required: (1) the power to see, and (2) a union between that power and the thing seen.¹ For seeing only occurs in act thanks to the fact that the thing seen is somehow "in" the seer. In the case of bodily things, one sees that a bodily thing-seen cannot be in the seer through its essence; it can be there only through a likeness. Take a stone: that which is *in* the eye and *via* which the actual seeing takes place is just an image of the stone, not its very substance. But if there were some one thing *x* that was both the source of the power-to-see and the thing seen, anyone seeing *x* would have to be getting from *x* both the power to see and the form through which he saw *x*.

Well, God is like that: He is clearly the author of the intellectual power, and He can be seen by it. Since God is the First Intellect, and a creature's intellectual power is not God's essence, it must be some participated likeness of Him. This is why a creature's intellectual power

¹ This union was held to take place through a form or likeness. Seeing *x* took place when a form of *x* came to in-form the faculty in which the seeing was to occur; once there as information, this form "united" the faculty-in-act to the object *x*. If the faculty was eyesight, this form was called *species visibils*; it was a "likeness" of *x* in the sense in which how *x* looks (from here, in this light) is a likeness of *x*. If the faculty was intellect, an analogous likeness called a *species intelligibils* was posited. It was a "form" of the thing understood — a form giving the intellect an intensional *esse*.

(whether we mean its natural power or an enhancement added in grace or glory) is called an intellectual "light," as if derived from the First Light. So as regards the very power to see, what is required to see God is this: that the power by which the intellect is strong enough* to see Him be a likeness of Him.

* *efficax*

But as regards the thing seen, which has to be united in some way to the seer, there is no created likeness of God, by the intake of which His essence can be seen.

• One reason is that, as Denis says in c. 1 of *De divinis nominibus*, there is no way things of a higher order can be known *via* likenesses of things of a lower order — e.g., the essence of an incorporeal thing cannot be learned from the species of a body. Much less can God's essence be seen from the species of a created thing.²

PG 3, 588

• A second reason is that God's essence is His very existing, as shown above. No created form can be its own existing, and so no such form can be a likeness representing God's essence to the seer.

q 3, a.4

• A third reason is that God's essence is something that defies all boundaries, containing within itself in a vastly higher manner³ everything that can be meant or understood by a created intellect. In no way can this boundless content be represented *via* a created species, because every created form is restricted along the lines of some defining content, be it that of wisdom, of power, of existence itself, or the like. Thus, to say that God is seen *by taking in* a likeness is to say that His essence is not seen — which is erroneous.

† *supereminenter*

The thing to say, then, is that in order for God's essence to be seen, the power to see has to be a likeness of God — a "light of glory" invigorating the intellect to see Him (and this is what the Psalmist means by "in thy light shall we see light"). But God's essence cannot be seen by taking in any created likeness that would represent His essence as it is in itself.

Ps 35 10

TO MEET THE OBJECTIONS — *ad* (1): that authoritative text is talking about the likeness that arises out of participation in the light of glory.

ad (2): Augustine is talking there about the knowledge of God which we have in this life.

ad (3): the divine essence is existence itself. As the other intelligible forms which are not their own existing are united to the intellect *through* an existing with which they inform it and put the intellect into act, so the divine essence puts the created intellect into act *through* itself and becomes united to it as the thing understood in act.

CF § 14 in the commentary

² Aquinas starts using '*species*' because the likeness of *x* by the intake of which *x* was seen was called its *species* in Latin, which carried not only the meaning of a likeness but also that of an appearance. In talk of intellect, '*species*' became an indispensable technical term.

Cajetan's Commentary

In the title, observe that what is being asked is one thing, and what occasions the asking of it is another. What is being asked here is a vague question: whether any "likeness" plays a rôle in seeing God — any sort of rôle at all. But what occasions the asking is the fact that there is doubt about whether God can be seen through a likeness whose rôle would be to serve the thing seen, to *represent* God, in other words, and so explain His being seen, as a visual appearance represents to our sight a colored body.¹

Analysis of the article, I

ii. In the body of the article he does three jobs: (1) he lays out the nature of seeing, as far as its requiring a likeness is concerned; (2) he answers the question, beginning at "Well, God is like that"; (3) he appends an epilogue making certain points more explicit.

iii. As to job (1), he states three points, from which a fourth follows appropriately. (a) The first point is how many things are required for seeing to occur, and he says they are two: a power to see, and a union of thing-seen with seer. He gives a supporting ground: seeing does not actually occur unless the thing seen is somehow *in* the seer; ergo [a union is required]. (b) The second point is about the way this union arises; he says there are two ways: through the essence of the thing seen, or through a likeness of it. This is illustrated with a bodily example: the stone is not in the eye, but its likeness. Both ways are indicated; even though the one is ruled out in bodily cases, he implicitly suggests it would not be impossible in spiritual cases. (c) The third point is about where likeness can come in; he says it can come in two places: in connection with the thing seen, and in connection with the power to see. The latter is illustrated *via* a true conditional:

if the power to see had its being from the thing seen, the power to see would not be just that but would also be a likeness of the thing seen, which is true because an effect is *like* its cause, of course.

(d) From these points you also have a fourth, *i.e.*, that "seeing" occurs on three bases: (α) what the thing seen is, (β) what the power to see is, (γ) a mediating likeness representing the thing seen to the power to see. For as is clear from the points stated, these are the three ways in which the union between the seer and the seen can vary. To be fully in tune with the text, however, you should mean by this (β) ('what the power to see is') not just the power or faculty itself but anything that helps it to play its rôle, *i.e.* everything that invigorates or elevates the

¹ Scholastic talk of representing did not mean what the "representative realists" meant. For Descartes *et al.*, the representative likeness of *x* was the very thing seen, and the *x* represented was not seen; it was inferred. For the scholastics, the representative image of *x* was whereby *x* was seen, just as one sees how-*x*-looks-from-here and *thereby* sees *x*. The scholastic account of understanding was built on analogy with this.

power to see, be it a light of grace or of glory. For all this falls under the talk of "likeness as regards the power to see," as is clear from the remarks in the text.

iv. As to job (2): two conclusions are put down in answer to the question. The first is affirmative: in order to see God, there has to be a likeness [to Him] on the part of the power to see. The second is negative: in order to see God, it is impossible for a likeness to play the rôle of [representing] the thing seen.

The first conclusion is supported thus. [*Antecedent:*] God is the author of the created intellect able to see Him; [*1st consequence:*] so the created intellect is a participated likeness of the divine essence itself; [*2nd consequence:*] ergo, in order to see God, *etc.* [the power to see Him has to be a likeness of Him]. The antecedent is obvious, as is the first consequence, which is nevertheless supported by a process of elimination: the created intellect is not the divine substance [so it is a participated likeness]. The first consequence is also confirmed semantically: the power to understand is called a "light," *etc.* All points are clear.

v. The second conclusion is supported by three arguments. (1) The first is like this. [*Antecedent:*] A higher thing is not seen through a likeness of a lower order; [*consequence:*] so God is not seen through any created likeness. The antecedent is supported by the authority of Denis and is illustrated with an example of bodily likeness. The consequence is obvious as a case of argument *a fortiori*. (2) The second argument goes thus. [*Antecedent:*] No created thing is its own existing; [*consequence:*] so God cannot be seen through any created thing. The antecedent is assumed. Drawing the consequence is supported on the ground that God is His own existing. (3) The third argument is as follows. [*Antecedent:*] every created thing is limited to some genus or category; [*1st consequence:*] so no created thing is boundless [as to what it is]; [*2nd consequence:*] so through none of them can God be seen. This last consequence is supported: because God is boundless along every line of being and understanding.

Aureol disputes these arguments

vi. Although Aureol challenges these arguments in many ways (as you can see from Capreolus' reports at *II Sent.* d. 49, q. 5*), the whole force of his criticism boils down to the claim that these arguments go wrong by failing to distinguish the species as a *being*[†] from the species as a *representation*.[‡] Aquinas' arguments treat these the same, when in fact there is a huge difference between them. Thus, says Aureol, a species of lower order as a *being*, having an existence distinct from its essence and bounded in being, is as a *representation* a likeness of the highest order, where it has an existence the same as its essence and is boundless. The latter traits are in it object-wise, while the former traits are in it

* *contra 1^{am} conclusionem*
[†] *species in essendo*
[‡] *species in representando*

form-wise. This is no more of a problem than for the species of a stone to be an accident form-wise and yet a substance object-wise.²

vii. TO CLEAR THESE MATTERS UP, you need to know that Aureol's problem comes from failing to distinguish *as such* [per se] from *incidentally*. The likenesses of things under discussion here, [intelligible] species, do not have *as such* what it takes to be substances or accidents; being either is incidental to them. Rather, what the species requires *as such* is that it be representative of another thing — not after the fashion of a sign (because anything can be a sign of anything else), but after the fashion of a likeness. Thus philosophers have come to agree on the point that cognition of *x* comes about through a becoming-like-*x*,* as it says in *De Anima I* [c. 2: 405 b 15].³ And if the cognition of *x* is supposed to be definitive,[†] then the intelligible species of *x* has to be similar to *x* not only generically but also specifically (and maximally so), whether formally or eminently. For example, our mind never manages to know a house definitively unless it has within itself an intelligible likeness of a house which is a what-it-is of a house. So the intelligible species by which the thing *x* is to be seen has to be a what-it-is of *x*, existing not with the mode of being natural to *x* but with its mode of being-in-another [as intensional form].⁴ This mode of being, formally taken, obviously abstracts from being-a-substance and from being-an-accident, and it has to be as noble or nobler than the mode of existing natural to *x* (as is clear case-by-case and is supported on the ground that the knower-of-*x* as such has a nobler mode of being than the *x*-known has in him, as it terminates his knowing.⁵

viii. Applying these general points to the argument in the text, I will now say that the sentence,

(S) The species is of lower order,

² As the seer was united to the seen by a visual species, so the knower was thought to be united to the known by an intelligible species. The intelligible species of *x* was so strange that it needed to be viewed in two capacities. (a) As an entity in its own right, the species of *x* was an acquired accident in man; but in the angels and in God, it was their very substance. (b) As representing *x*, the species of *x* gave the mind *x* as the object it was understanding; the species was a likeness-in-essence to *x* through which the mind knew that *x* was thus-and-such. To this duality Aureol is appealing.

³ To know *x*, said Aristotle, the mind must acquire within itself some sort of isomorphism to *x*. This was the species of *x*, and it could not be a mere sign, because a sign does not have to be in any way isomorphic to what it signifies.

⁴ The essence of *x* could be composed either with the natural *esse* found in *x* itself or with the intensional *esse* found in a knower. The latter *esse* was at once (a) *x*'s being-understood and (b) the knower's understanding *x*. Since acts of understanding were real occurrences, intentional *esse* was a real mode of being (unlike being signified by a conventional sign).

⁵ The mode of being which *x* has in another is its being-known. When Cajetan says that this mode of being "formally

can be taken two ways, to mean of lower order *as such* or *incidentally*. (S) means that the species is of lower order *incidentally* when it is taken as talking about what the species happens to be as an entity; (S) means of lower order *as such* when it is taken as talking about whether the species is more or less disengaged* [from matter] or lofty. In this sense we find species in the external senses to be "of lower order" than the species in the imagination, and these in turn are "of lower order" than our intellect's species. Quite clearly, the imagination's objects [*imaginabilia*] cannot be seen through sense species, and the intellect's objects [*intelligibilia*] cannot be seen through imaginative images. This is the sense in which Aquinas' first argument is making its case, as is clear from the example in the text. God is of such an exalted nature that no matter how disengaged a species of Him was — so long as it was disengaged as a created one would have to be — it would be of lower order *as such*, that is, [insufficiently abstract] *as a species*. The distinction between the species "as a being" and "as a representation" is neither here nor there, because, as I showed already, this distinction has no place when one is talking about the species' formally being a species, of itself and as such. After all, the [intelligible] species, according to the being it has precisely as a species, has to be a what-it-is of the thing seen, and so it has to be of the same order as the thing seen; but according to the being it has as an entity, the species stands indifferently towards being a substance or being an accident (since in one knower it is substance; and in another, an accident). So if a species is of lower order *as such*, its being quidditatively similar to a thing of higher order is impossible. — And please note: the text does not say "a lower" species cannot bring about vision of a higher thing (perhaps a lower angel naturally sees a higher one); it says that a species "of lower order" cannot do this. For the fact is that God is not only "higher" than any created intellect but "of a higher order." Even philosophers admit this much, as you can see from the discussion of *Metaphysics XII* in [Averroes'] comment 44.⁶

taken, abstracts," etc., he means that being-known applies differently to substances and to accidents. When he says that *x*'s being known is at least as noble as *x*'s natural being, etc., what he means by nobility is removal from matter, and he is appealing to the identity between *x*'s being known and the knower's act of knowing *x*. This act is the knower's being a knower (of *x*), which in turn was thought to be an immaterial mode of being. The knower was a knower through an immaterial act in which the known was possessed in an immaterial fashion (freed from matter by abstraction). Thus, *x*'s being known was an immaterial mode of being, nobler than *x*'s natural mode of being in case *x* was a material entity.

⁶ If *x* is merely a higher angel than *y*, many predicates apply to both univocally. They both "understand" in the same sense of "understand", though the higher angel does it better. But between God and an angel there is no predicate that applies univocally, no action that both "do" in the same sense. Hence God is not merely higher but of a higher order.

* *disarticulata*

* *assimilatio*

† *quidditative*

ix. The second argument in the text assumes, and rightly so, that just as the species of a house in the mind has to be a form of the house, so also a species of God, whose form is existence itself, would have to be existence itself, and that such a species would be similar to God on this basis. The argument is not claiming that a species of God would be existence itself in its natural mode of being, as God is, but that it would be existence itself *in some mode of being*; otherwise, the species would not be similar to the divine essence. Well, there is an insurmountable problem about anything's being, in real terms, existence itself in any mode of being, created or creatable; because in whatever real mode the thing is posited to be, it is always a being by participation in that mode of being. Ergo [it is not existence itself in that mode of being].

x. The third argument proceeds from the same root. A definitive* species of God could not be this or that but would have to be a boundless being (whether in natural existence or in some other real existence); otherwise there would be no real and adequate similarity between it and God, such as knowing Him requires. But it is impossible for there to be, in any created existence, some one thing that is adequately similar to boundless perfections. Ergo [there is no such species].

xi Thus it is clear that the distinction between *being* and *representing*, when applied to the case of representing by way of likeness, can only be a distinction between different conditions of *existing*. Hence what is false across the board about things' existing is sufficiently shown to be false about the existence involved in representing by way of similarity. And so the genius of St. Thomas did not stoop to this distinction: he thought it puerile to (a) take what he had clearly proved did not hold of any created-to-be but then (b) allow it hold of such-and-such a created condition of being. Others, alas, have been deceived, as I said, thanks to their failure to distinguish 'as such' from 'incidentally'.

Analysis of the article, II

xii. As to job (3), by way of an epilogue, he concludes with two points: (a) that the elevated power-to-see has to be a likeness of the thing seen [God], and (b) that God has no representative likeness. Point (a) is confirmed by a verse from Scripture.

Notice, please, that to someone considering the matter superficially, it may seem that the likeness in the power to see, insofar as it is a likeness, contributes only incidentally to seeing God. After all, it is not posited to "assimilate" the intellect to God but rather to "invigorate" and "elevate" it. But to one who looks deeper, it will become clear that the likeness is needed intrinsically as such — not to represent anything, but to make the *seer* similar to God (as the very reason why the seer is similar). For it has to be the case that a person seeing God is *God* in some way and is partaking of God's nature. Well, what puts a created intellect into the divine existence is the light of glory. Hence this likeness is rightly lauded by

the saints and stressed repeatedly.⁷

xiii. Notice also what you have as a consequence of this text: the blessed cannot form an inner word* about God, even though He is clearly seen by them, and even though they can form such a word about matters they see *in* Him. For since the inner word is an expressed likeness, presenting the thing understood more clearly than the impressed species does,⁸ if it is impossible for there to be an impressed species of *x* (because of the loftiness of *x*), it is all the more impossible for there to be an expressed species of *x*. All arguments against the one are arguments against the other, and against any species. Therefore, the blessed will see all things not in any created word but in God's own Word, who was in the beginning with God. Otherwise, they would not be seeing God at all, as it says in the text.

Understanding the answer ad (3)

xiv. In the answer ad (3), notice that what is being posited here is the divine essence rendering-in-act the beatified intellect, in place of an intelligible species. How this might be possible can be explained two ways:

First, according to the common run of those who teach about the intellect and the intelligible species, the explanation is along the lines of two partial agents. If one takes this view, one says that the intelligible species can be regarded in two rôles — (1) as an inhering form, and (2) as standing-in for the intelligible thing — and that in the first rôle it contributes incidentally to the act of understanding, while in the second it contributes intrinsically, since in this rôle it has what it takes to co-originate actual understanding.⁹ Hence, if an object is

⁷ Since God is of higher order than any creatable thing. He is intellectually "visible" to Himself alone. Hence a creature can come to see God only by *becoming God*, i.e. by coming to have the same nature as God. Impossible as this sounds. Scripture says that God has given us His promises in Christ "that by these ye may be made partakers of the divine nature" (2 Peter 1:4). To this passage Cajetan is alluding here. He means to say that God's process of sanctifying man, which begins with gifts of grace in this life and ends with the light of glory in the next, is a process of divinizing man (θεϊοσις), as the Fathers of the Eastern Church often said.

⁸ Behind the spoken word (*vax*), which was a mere conventional sign of *x*, Aquinas posited an inner word (*verbum*), an emergent concept of *x* which was a genuine likeness of *x*. This *verbum* was also called the *species expressa* and the *conceptus*, in contrast to the intelligible species (or *species impressa*) discussed above. The relation between them can be summarized like this: when the intellect is put into act by the impressed species, it yields an operation which is the act of understanding (*intelligere*), and within this operation there emerges an expression of what is being understood. The knower understands precisely by and in expressing to himself what he understands, and this "expression" is the concept or *verbum*. The matter will get more discussion in 1 ST q.27.

⁹ The act of understanding (*intelligere* or *intellecno*) was said to originate both from the intellect itself (as the faculty going into act) and from the intelligible species (as supplying the

* *verbum*

* *quiddativa*

found which is strong enough of itself to co-originate an understanding with such-and-such an intellect, it will be said to be united *of itself* to that intellect, without contributing form-wise any being [*esse*] to that intellect.¹⁰

While I have at times followed and taught this approach (and perhaps put it in writing), my mental sights have been raised since then, and I now think that one is debasing cognitive nature if one thinks of it along the same lines as one would think of natural agents. After all, if the soul is superior to nature, as even the lowest soul, the vegetative, shows, when it shifts all differences of position at once, how much more superior must the intellect be!¹¹

xv. The thing to say, then, is that while the intellect and the intelligible species do stand as two partial agents (the one giving to the act of understanding its substance, and the other supplying its kind), this standing is not primary. Ahead of it comes the fact that these factors stand to each other as matter to form, and intrinsically so.* Thus, while the approach just sketched salvages their secondary standing, it leaves out their primary one — and what is worse, it leaves out the fact that what emerges from intellect-and-species is a deeper unity than what emerges from matter-and-form, as Averroes rightly maintained in his comments on *De Anima III*.¹² What a better approach has to salvage, therefore, is the fact that, in natural [*i.e.* causal] order, an intellect seeing God (1) *is God*, and yet no intention is understood in it, and then (2) *sees God*.

Well, as Aquinas says in 3 *CG* c.51, although the divine essence *is* a being,[†] *i.e.* in [natural] existing, cannot be the form of anything [created], nevertheless, as an in-

object specifying the act into which it was going, specifying it to be an understanding of this rather than that). Hence the two factors, the intellect itself and the intelligible species, were said to co-originate (*comprincipiare*) the act.

¹⁰ The difficulty was to explain how God's essence could be "united" to a human intellect in such a way as to co-originate with that intellect the very act of seeing God "as He is" without at the same time being united to it as an inhering form. If any inherence took place, the creaturely intellect would "receive" the divine existence in its natural mode (*formaliter*). Such a situation would violate the principle that God does not enter into form/matter composition with creatures (see q.3, a.8 and 3 *CG* c. 51). Even in Christ, the creaturely nature does not "receive" the divine existence in that way (3 *ST* q.17, a.2); the hypostatic union is not a case of form/matter composition.

¹¹ *Positto* was the spatial relation of part-to-part within a complex whole — here, a plant. The plant was thought to grow thanks to its vegetative soul (*anima*). When a plant grew, all the relative positions of its parts were shifted at once.

The next § begins Cajetan's personal account of the Vision.

¹² A faculty open to receive diverse species was compared to any one such species as matter to form. The "composition" of the intellect plus a species of *x* was the act of understanding that *x* is such-and-such; it was a deeper unity than an ordinary matter/form composite because this act was spiritual.

tensional object,* it can be the form of a created intellect. The reason for this, as he gives it in that passage, is because the divine essence is *actuality itself* as an intentional object, because it is truth/reality itself, which, as an intentional form, is the distinctive form of the intellect (as you can read at length in that passage).¹³ In our text, the reason he gives is because the divine essence is existence itself. What he means to say (in my judgment) is this: from the fact that a given nature *N* is not existence itself, it follows that *N* is not *all* its existing; and *vice-versa*, from the fact that another nature *M* is existence itself, it follows that *M* is *all* its existing — and by 'its' I mean *of its order*.¹⁴ For from these points (together with a very general principle illustrated in this article, *i.e.*, that definitive knowledge only comes about through an existence of at least as high an order as that of the known), it follows clearly enough that the divine essence has the following unique status: it *is* the intentional existence[†] which it would be thought to *give* our intellect, if it were united to our intellect through a species. Thus, from the fact that the divine essence is existence itself, there results the fact that it both *exists* and *is of itself* the intentional form[‡] for any intellect seeing it.

The mind is still not at rest, however. One still has to make sense of the point that the divine essence as an object understood "puts the intellect into act" as a form would do [*formaliter*].

xvi. To reach clarity on this, one needs to know that, generally speaking, this state of affairs,

(A) an intelligible species is completely united to the intellect,
is different from this one:

(B) the intelligible species inheres in the intellect.

They are different because (B) gives the intellect the equipment to understand[§] but doesn't throw it into the act of understanding. Rather, it is the state of affairs (A)

¹³ As the divine essence is *esse* itself, as a natural being, so also, as an intentional object, it is being-known (*esse cognitum*) itself. Since the *esse* with which the object *is* known = the *esse* with which the mind *is* knowing it = the knowing's *being true/real*, the divine essence as an object of understanding is Truth/Reality itself.

¹⁴ The sense seems to be that, if a nature *N* is not existence itself, then *N* is not its own existence in any mode thereof. So if *N* is not its own natural existence, it is not its own intentional being-in a knower; it has to acquire this being-in from the inherence of a species in the knower and from the latter's own *intelligere*. But if another nature *M* is existence itself, *M* is existence itself in every mode. Thus, if *M* is its own natural existence, *M* is its own intentional being-in a knower who knows it; far from having to acquire being-in, *M* supplies this to the knower without the imperfection of needing an inherence in the knower. The divine essence has the status of such a nature *M*. Then, since knowing-in-act is a matter of *being* in intentional *esse* what the known is, the divine essence makes the actual knower of God to *be* God in that mode of being.

* *in genere*
Intelligibilium

† *esse*
intelligibile

‡ *forma*
intelligibilis

§ *habitus*

* *per se*
loquendo

comment 5,
solution to q. 2

† *in genere*
ensuum

that is identical to:

(C) the intelligible species puts the intellect into second act [*i.e.* into operation].

This is why the intelligible species is posited in the first place as a *species*: so that the knower may *be* the known in *complete act*. Now, to put the intellect into second act is not to *be* its second act but to *stand* to its second act as form stands to existence. For just as a form *f* is a source-of-being-*f* to matter, so that one and the same being-*f* is (in different regards) the matter's being and the form's being (as one sees in the case of light in a transparent medium, heat in water, *etc.*), so also an intelligible species of *x*, if it is in act as an object of understanding, is a source-of-understanding-*x* [to intellect], so that the act of understanding stands as its existing [*i.e.* so that one and the same existence is (in different regards) the intellect's act of understanding and the species' intensional existing]. For this reason, although the species through which understanding occurs is in some way "active," still its form-wise relationship [to the intellect] is better and stronger than its active one. The state of affairs which is the species being actually united to the intellect, then, is its putting the intellect into the state which is its being-

actually-understanding. Well, the intellect's being-actually-understanding is nothing other than the intellect's being-the-thing-known completely (for, as will come out below, knowing *x* is nothing other than *being x* in complete act).

q 14, aa. 1-2

Now, stammering our way up from these things to divine things, we say that the state of affairs that

(D) the divine essence is united to our intellect through itself and formally puts our intellect into act as an object of understanding
is the state of affairs that

(E) the divine essence formally makes our intellect to be — with intensional being in ultimate act — God Himself

minus all matters of imperfection. This state of affairs sufficiently obtains when the divine substance itself contributes directly to the beatific seeing as the object and formal source of that seeing. — I say "minus imperfections," because the beatific seeing is not the act and existence of the divine substance as it would be [the act and existence] of a created intelligible species if there were one (since this would be a matter of imperfection).

Can God's essence be seen with bodily eyes?

1 *ST* q. 12, a.4 *ad* 3; 2/2 *ST* q. 175, a.4; *In IV Sent.* d.49, q.2, a.2; *In Matt.* c.5

It appears that God's essence can be seen with the bodily eye.

(1) Job 19:26 says, "In my flesh I shall see God," etc., and Job 42:5 says, "with the hearing of the ear have I heard thee, but now mine eye seeth thee."

(2) Augustine, too, at the end of chapter 29 [of book 22] of *The City of God*, says "The power of their eyes [those of the blessed] will be more sweeping — not that they may see more sharply than serpents or eagles (as people say), because sharp-eyed animals can still see nothing but bodies — but that they may see things with no bodies at all." Well, anyone who can see things without bodies can be raised up to see God. So the glorified eye can see God.

(3) Besides, one can see God in a vision with images, as it says in Isaiah 6:1, "I saw the Lord sitting upon a throne." etc. But a vision with images has its origin in our senses: a mental image is "a change brought about by one or another sense in accordance with its act," as Aristotle says in *De Anima III*. Therefore, God can be seen in a vision of the senses.

c.3;
429 a.1
Epistle 147;
PL 33, 609

ON THE OTHER HAND, there is what Augustine says in his book *On Seeing God* addressed to Paulinus: "In the sense in which visible things are perceived by bodily vision, no one has ever 'seen' God as He is, either in this life or in that of the angels."

ANSWER: it is impossible for God to be seen by the sense of sight — or by any other sense or faculty belonging to our sensory part. For every such faculty is the activity of a bodily organ, as we shall discuss below, and an activity takes its limits* from the thing whose activity it is. Hence no such faculty can reach beyond bodily things. God, however, is bodiless, as was shown above. Neither by a sense, therefore, nor by the imagination can He be seen, but only by the intellect.

q. 78, a.1
* *proportionatur*

q. 3, a.1

TO MEET THE OBJECTIONS — *ad* (1): "In my flesh I shall

shall see God, my Savior" does not mean that Job will see God with the eye of his flesh; it means he will see God when he is in his flesh, after the resurrection. — Likewise, "now mine eye seeth thee" means the eye of the mind, of which the Apostle speaks in Ephesians 1:17-18, "that [God] may give unto you the spirit of wisdom . . . in the knowledge of him: the eyes of your heart being enlightened . . ."

ad (2): Augustine is posing questions in this passage and considering provisional answers. This is clear from the fact that he says, "They [the glorified eyes] will be of a far different power then, if that incorporeal nature is going to be seen with them." Later he reaches a definite solution: "It is very plausible that we shall see the bodies belonging to the new heavens and the new earth in such a way that we shall see God present in them all, governing all things and even bodily things with utter clarity. It will not be as we now see 'the invisible things of God from the things that have been made' but as we now see that people are alive — the bustling people among whom we live. The minute we see them, we don't just believe they are alive; we see it." Clearly, Augustine understands the glorified eyes' seeing God to be as our eyes now see someone's life. Well, life is seen by the bodily eye not as a sense datum* but as something sensed incidentally,[†] i.e. it is not known by sense but is known at once by another cognitive faculty working with the sense. An [enhanced] state of affairs (that, by seeing bodies we would know God's presence at once by our intellect) depends upon two factors: the intellect's own [enhanced] penetration, and the radiance of divine brightness in our renewed bodies.

* *visibile per se*
† *per accidens*

ad (3): in a vision with images, what is seen is not God's essence but a form shaped in the imagination, representing God in some figurative way, as the Scriptures describe divine things metaphorically, through things of the senses.

Cajetan's Commentary

The title is clear. — In the body of the article, there is one conclusion, answering the question in the negative: it is impossible that God be seen by the sense of sight and impossible that He be seen by any other power of the sensory part.

The support goes thus. [*Antecedent:*] A sense faculty is an activity of the body; [*1st inference:*] so its

measure is set by the body; [*2nd inference:*] so it does not reach beyond bodily things; [*3rd:*] so it does not reach God. — The antecedent is obvious. The first inference is supported on the ground that an activity takes its limits from the thing whose activity it is. The second is self evident, as is the third, since God is wholly incorporeal. All points are clear.

By its natural powers, can any created intellect see God's essence?

1 *ST* q.64, a.1 *ad* 2, 2/1 *ST* q.5, a.5, *In II Sent.* d.4, a.1; d.23, q.2, a.1, *In IV Sent.* d.49, q.2, a.6
1 *CG* e.3, 3 *CG* cc.49, 52, *De Veritate* q.8, a.3, *De Anima* a.17 *ad* 10, *In I Tim.* e.6, *lectio* 3

It would seem that some created intellect can see God's essence by exercising its own natural powers.

PG 3, 724 (1) After all, Denis says in chapter 4 of *De divinis nominibus* that an angel is "a pure mirror, perfectly clear, catching God's beauty in its entirety (if one may say such a thing)." Well, any object is seen when a thing mirroring it is seen. So, since an angel understands itself by its natural powers, it seems that it also understands God's essence by its natural powers.

(2) Besides, what is maximally visible [in itself] turns out to be hardly visible at all to us, because of the deficiencies of our sight (in eye or intellect). But an angel's intellect suffers no deficiency. Therefore, since God in Himself is maximally available as an object of understanding, it seems He must be maximally so for an angel. So, if the angel is able to understand other intelligible objects by its natural powers, it is all the more able to understand God.

q.12, a.1 (3) Furthermore, the reason why a bodily sense cannot be elevated to the point where it would take in an incorporeal substance is because such an object is simply "beyond its nature." Therefore, if seeing God through His essence is "beyond the nature" of a created intellect, it seems that no such intellect can possibly arrive at seeing God's essence — which, as emerged above, is false. It would seem therefore to be *natural* for a created intellect to see God's essence.

ON THE OTHER HAND, there is the statement in Romans 6:23, "the grace of God [is] everlasting life." Everlasting life is a matter of seeing God's essence, according to John 17:3, "Now this is eternal life: that they may know thee, the only true God," etc. Therefore, the way a created intellect gets to see God's essence is *by grace*, not by its nature.

* *secundum modum cognoscens* I ANSWER: it is impossible for any created intellect to see God's essence by its own natural powers. After all, knowledge arises because the known is "in" the knower. In turn, the known is in the knower in a fashion set by the knower.* [The key determinant of a knower, of course, is his nature.] Thus for any knower *K*: *K*'s knowledge arises in the fashion set by *K*'s own nature. As a result, [this conditional holds] necessarily: if there is a thing known, but it exists in a fashion that exceeds the fashion set by *K*'s nature, then *K*'s knowing that thing is [occurring on a basis] beyond *K*'s nature.

Well, there are many fashions in which a thing may exist. There are some things whose nature has no existence except in this individual matter — and such is the case with all bodily things. Next, there are things whose natures subsist on their own, not in any matter, but they are not their own existence (they just *have* their existence) — and such is the case with the bodiless substan-

ces whom we call angels. Finally, there is a distinctive fashion of existing that belongs to God alone: He is His own existence, subsisting.

* *connaturale* Now, what is set-by-nature* for us humans is getting to know the things that have no existence except in individual matter.¹ The reason for this is that our soul, by which we achieve our knowing, is a form joined to certain matter. However, our soul has two cognitive faculties. One is the activity of a bodily organ, and what is nature-set for it is knowing things precisely as they are in individual matter (and so this power, a sense, knows only singulars). The soul's other cognitive faculty is the intellect, which is not the activity of any bodily organ, so that what is nature-set for us *via* the intellect is knowing natures — not insofar as they are in individual matter (though these natures have no existence but there), but insofar as they are abstracted from it through the intellect's consideration of them. With our intellect, then, we can know such things as universals, a feat beyond the ability of a sense.

What is nature-set for an angel's intellect, however, is knowing natures that do not exist in matter — a feat beyond the natural ability of the human soul's intellect in the state it has in our present life, where it is united to a body.

By elimination, then, knowing existence itself subsisting is nature-set for the divine intellect alone and is beyond the natural ability of any created intellect, because no creature is its own existence (they all exist by participation). No created intellect, then, can see God through His essence — except to the extent that God, through His grace, joins Himself to that created intellect, so as to become an object understandable by it.

TO MEET THE OBJECTIONS — *ad* (1): this way of knowing God is the nature-set way for an angel, *i.e.* the angel knows God through the likeness of Him that glows within the angel itself. But knowing God through a created likeness is not knowing His essence, as was shown above. Hence it does not follow that the angel knows God's *essence* by its natural powers.

ad (2): an angel's intellect has no deficiency, if 'deficiency' is taken in its privative sense (to mean that it lacks what it ought to have). But if the word is taken in its negative sense, any creature is found to be "deficient" compared to God, so long as it does not have the excellence that is found in God.

ad (3): because the sense of sight is wholly material, it cannot be raised to a non-material object by any

¹ 'Nature-set' translates '*connaturalis*', which translated Aristotle's '*κατὰ φύσιν*', an important technical phrase. What was nature-set for things of the kind *K* emerged in the natural science of *K*-things.

means. Our intellect, however, or an angel's, because in its nature it is raised above matter to some extent, can be lifted up beyond its nature, to something higher, by grace. A sign of this is the following. The sense of sight cannot know, by any means, in abstraction what it knows in concreteness: by no means can it perceive a nature except as a *this*. By contrast, our intellect can consider in abstraction what it knows in concreteness. It knows things having form-in-matter, but it dissolves the composed thing into those parts and considers the form on its own.

So, too, an angel's intellect, though what is nature-set for it is knowing existence-composed-with-a-nature, can still isolate existence itself intellectually, by knowing that it (the angel) is one thing, and its existence, another. So, since a created intellect is naturally apt to apprehend a composed form and a composed existence in abstraction, in the mode of dissolving its composition, such an intellect can be raised up by grace, so as to know a substance subsisting apart and an existence subsisting apart.

Cajetan's Commentary

There is nothing obscure in the title question, to those who are aware of the fact that the phrase, 'by its natural powers', is meant to refer to a sufficient cause.

Analysis of the article

In the body of the article there is one conclusion, answering the question in the negative: it is impossible for any created intellect to see God's essence by its own natural powers.

This is supported by a single argument as follows. [*Antecedent:*] Knowledge arises insofar as the known is in the knower; [*1st inference:*] so it arises according to the knower's own fashion; [*2nd inference:*] so it arises according to the knower's nature. [*3rd inference:*] So if a thing known has a fashion of existing that exceeds the fashion set by the knower's nature, his knowing that thing is [occurring on a basis] beyond his nature. [*4th inference:*] So knowing existence itself subsisting is beyond the natural ability of any created intellect, and is natural to God's intellect alone. [*5th inference:*] Hence a created intellect cannot see God through His essence, unless it be by grace.

The first inference is supported on the ground that the known is in the knower according to the fashion set by the knower. The second is left as well known. The third obviously follows from the preceding ones; and yet it is unpacked in the text and supported inductively, *a posteriori*. The fashions in which knowable things exist as knowables are distinguished into three; then he shows that three fashions of being-a-cognitive-nature correspond proportionately to these, as one sees clearly enough in the text. The fourth inference is then supported on the ground that no creature is its own existing, but each has a participated being. Then the last inference is obvious of itself.

Two points to note

ii. Concerning the unpacking and support of the third inference, note two points.

First: although, for the thing known, just three fashions of existing are posited in the text (namely, existing

in this matter, existing without matter, and being subsistent existence itself, *i.e.* without any potency at all), still, the first fashion is sub-distinguished (not into further fashions of existing, of which there are just the three, but) into a real mode* and a mind-dependent one,** *viz.*, being in this matter and abstracting from it, or "as a particular" and "as a universal." [The sub-distinction is introduced] because particulars as such correspond to the cognitive nature whose mark is being an activity of the body, because they correspond to sensation; universals, on the other hand, correspond to the cognitive nature which in a way is in a body and in a way is not, because they correspond to the human intellect, which is partly separate from matter and partly joined to it, as it says in *Physics II*, text 26. Thus the count of classes^c of knowers (classed according to their manner of being) can rise higher than the count of classes of knowns [classified in the same way] [*i.e.* there are four of the former, three of the latter]. This is why the text says that in man, where two [cognitive] natures are joined, the intellect is in a higher class than the senses. But none of this undercuts the force of the argument. One reason is that, just as universal and particular pertain to a single fashion of existing (existing in matter), so also sensitive soul and human soul pertain to a single fashion of being [a cognitive nature] — namely, being the form (the what-it-is) and completion of a physical body, as Aristotle showed in *De Anima II*. Another reason [the argument holds up] is because, from these points, you still get perfectly well the conclusion that a [naturally] known nature's fashion-of-existing never exceeds the fashion set by the knower's nature, and that was the whole point of the argument.

Second, observe that the inductive reasoning process in the text (going from particulars and the senses, universals and the human intellect, immaterial substances and angelic intellects) supports perfectly well the inference that a [naturally] known nature's fashion of existing does not exceed the fashion set by the knower's nature. Which in turn is a good indication that if such excess does occur, it is *why* knowing does *not* occur

* *modus rei*

** *modus rationis*

c 2, 194b 10

† *ordines*

c 1,
412a 20

[naturally], which is what was assumed in the *a priori* argument supporting this [third] inference.¹ So the next inferences are perfectly well drawn, *i.e.*, that knowing existence itself subsisting is natural to the divine intellect alone and lies beyond other intellects, *etc.*

Scotus disputes the third inference

iii. Doubt arises as to the third inference itself. Scotus disputes it at *IV Sent.* d.49, q.11, at *I Sent.* d.3, q.3, and in his *Quodlibetis* q.14, a.2. But he does so for different purposes: in *I Sent.* and the *Quodlibetis* he is disputing what it says about our intellect as regards its natural object; in *IV Sent.* the dispute is about the divine essence and a created intellect.

He disputes, at any rate, on several grounds, and here they are.

(1) [*Antecedent.*] The conditional sentence in question [namely: ‘if there is a thing known but it exists in a fashion that exceeds the fashion set by the knower’s nature, then his knowing that thing is occurring on a basis beyond his nature’] does not follow from the premisses given: [*inference.*] ergo [it is baseless]. — The antecedent is supported as follows: from the fact that the known is in the knower in a fashion set by the knower’s nature, nothing follows except that knowing is a perfection proportioned to the knower, as is the object of cognition. Nothing follows about the equation that Aquinas wants, namely, that the knower’s nature has to equal or exceed [that of] the object. — This is confirmed as follows. What follows from the “relation” between object and faculty is rather a dissimilarity and inequality [between their natures], as [dissimilarity is what follows from the relation] between moving-cause and thing-moved, and as [dissimilarity is what follows from the relation] between matter and form. And yet such is the “proportion” between a faculty and its object. Thus the eye sees both a heavenly body and the earth, and yet it does not have a fashion of existing like theirs, since a heavenly body is incorruptible. And more to the point: the idea of a stone is not similar to a stone in its fashion of existing.

(2) If that same conditional sentence were true, it would follow that a lower angel does not know a higher one; after all, the higher one’s fashion of existing exceeds the lower one’s fashion.

(3) From that conditional sentence, it follows that a created intellect could not see God even if it were lit up with the light of glory. Why not? Because God’s fashion of existing exceeds the fashion of all of it (of the

¹ The *a priori* argument for the third inference consists of the antecedent and the first two inferences; these premisses are called *a priori* because they are moving from cause to effect, stating causes why the conditional sentence reached as a third inference holds true. The rest of the article, inductively lining up fashions of being with fashions of knowing, is called an argument *a posteriori* because it is moving from effects back to a plausible cause, showing that human, angelic, and divine knowers will have just the natural scopes of knowledge they do have in case the same conditional sentence holds true.

intellect plus its extra lights, habituations, *etc.*).

(4) Scotus has a special axe to grind against this conditional as it applies to our intellect and the object assigned thereto in the text. He says: if this conditional is true on the basis of the nature of the knowing faculty, it follows that the blessed will never see God. — Drawing this consequence is supported as follows. No faculty can be raised above its own equivalent* object.² The eye cannot be raised above seeing appearances, and no habituation or added strength can raise a faculty above its [equivalent] object; it has to leave it within the range of that object, because a faculty already stands related to this object of itself, of course, before any habituation comes to it.

(5) Lastly, Scotus adds that the text is arguing from non-syllogistic propositions.

iv. TO CLEAR THIS MUDDLE UP, you have to know (what will be said at greater length in 1 ST 14, namely) that the root source of cognition comes from the fact that a [cognitive] nature is not just itself but *others*. And since being-*others* arises in more than one way, different classes of knowers arise from different fashions of being-*others*. In turn, the different fashions of being-*others* arise from the different levels³ of these natures that are not just themselves but *others*. Hence it is in keeping with the different classes of cognitive natures that one must posit different ways in which the knower is the known. And from this it obviously follows that being-known gets modified according to the fashion set by the knower’s nature, and *vice-versa* [*i.e.* it is not the case that the knower’s nature is modified by the different fashions of being-known]. And because what cognition is natural to a knower is a consequence of the fashion in which that knower naturally is the known, it must be the case that the standard⁴ determining whether cognition is natural is precisely the *nature* of the knower. The human soul, for example, is the lowest among the intellectual substances, and so what naturally falls to its lot is being the things it is to know in the lowest intentional fashion. It has to be these knowns by disengaging them,⁵ according to their several natures. So it has to get its known from phantasms, and its natural capacity does not stretch to the point where our soul would be the knowables which exist separate from matter. An angel, however, since it is of a higher essence not requiring matter in any way to have the full completeness of existing in its own fashion, gets to be other things in a more excellent way than our soul does. An angel gets to be material things and lower things in a higher manner⁶ and gets to be higher things participa-

² The equivalent object [*objectum adaequatum*] for a faculty *F* was the class of things having a predicate ϕ such that x is an object of $F \approx x$ is ϕ came out true for every x . For example, x is an object of sight if, and only if, x reflects light (as we say) or shows color in the light (as the scholastics said). Scotus thought the right value of ϕ for an intellect was at stake in this article. But see note 5.

* *adaequatum*

³ *gradus*

⁴ *mensura*

⁵ *discarticular*

⁶ *commune*

tively.³

v. This is the root of the argument put together in the text of the article. It is based on the fact that the known is in the knower in the fashion set by the knower's nature, and that knowledge arises in the fashion in which the known is in the knower. When the root of it is clarified, it is already obvious what follows from these premisses: if the knower's nature *K* belongs to a lower class than the known's nature *N*, then *K* will not reach a vision of *N* by his own powers, because [by those powers] *K* is only *N* in *K*'s own fashion, which is to say: *K* is only a diminished participation of *N*, which does not suffice for "seeing."⁴

From this root, too, all the objections are easily solved for those who are paying attention in the first place to the terms on which the article proceeds:

- the topic here is not cognition in all its varieties, but "seeing," i.e. fully definitive [quidditative] cognition;
- the topic is not such cognition by any possible means, but by means of the knower's own natural resources;
- the fashions in which knower and known may exist are not being classified specifically but generically or quasi-generically.

Given these terms, it follows that the objects being assigned to the faculties are not their extensionally equivalent objects but their naturally-intensively equivalent objects. They are setting the scope beyond which a faculty cannot attain objects definitively [quidditatively] and by its natural resources, but within which it can [attain them in that way and by that means].⁵

Point-by-point replies

vi. To meet the first objection, then: that conditional sentence follows perfectly well from its premisses, if they are interpreted with subtlety, as expounded above. After all, from the fact that natural cognition has to have its limits set* by the knower's nature, it obviously follows

*proportional

³ This sentence is an allusion to a line in *Prop. 8 of the Liber de causis*, quoted by Aquinas in 2/1 ST q.5, a.5. It says that an angel knows both things above it (God) and things below it (bodies) in a fashion set by the angel's own substance.

⁴ Implicit here is a doctrine about the levels [gradus] of being, to the effect that any complete trait [perfectio] lying on a lower level is a diminished share of some complete trait lying on a higher level. In qq. 4 and 6 above, Aquinas used this doctrine in the context of real existence; here Cajetan is extending it to intentional existence (levels of being-the-other in in-tensional esse, thus levels of being-a-cognitive-nature).

⁵ The test given above in footnote 2 was the test for an extensionally equivalent object for a faculty *F*. Cajetan is saying that no such test is being proposed in this article. At stake rather is a much more restricted kind of object, the class of things having a trait ψ such that this narrower equivalence,

x is an object of *F* definitively and naturally $\Rightarrow x$ is ψ , comes out true for every *x*. The dispute is about the value of ψ when *F* = a created intellect.

that the knowing nature cannot belong to a lower class [in its fashion of existing] than the thing quidditatively known by it belongs to in its natural fashion of existing. For if cognition of such an object does occur, it exceeds the lower [nature's] powers.

The claim that Scotus attributes to our text — namely, that Aquinas wants an equation or similarity here, between the known and the cognitive nature in itself — is just not true. We never dreamed of such a thing! Rather, what the text has been teaching here is that, between the known and the cognitive nature in itself, there has to be *no excess on the part of the known*; and as I just said, the topic is non-excess in a generic fashion of being, and the "known" in question is a thing definitively and naturally known. Thus there is no need to respond to the objections in any other way. A divine or angelic intellect exceeds all these things generically, and more than generically, and yet knows them all definitively. — As for Scotus' point about the eye seeing a heavenly body: it is childish. For *as an object of eye-sight*,* a heavenly body has just the same fashion of existing as a mixed body [such as the earth]: each is a sense particular, etc. Corruptible and incorruptible are incidental differences to an object of sight *as such an object*, and so are the other differences that subdivide the category of substance; they are incidental to an object of sight, because being visible is incidental to that category. Thus, the sense of sight does not see any *object of sight* that exceeds it in its manner of existing, which was the point at stake.

*ut visibile

As to the second objection: I deny that the alleged consequence follows. One angel does not differ from another in their generic fashion of existing; they all agree in being forms wholly uninvolved in matter.

As to the third objection, I likewise deny the consequence alleged. In the text, excess of the object's fashion [of existing] over the knower's is not alleged to be why the object is not seen *any which way* but why it is not seen *by the natural powers* of the knower. Scotus' argument takes [the excess] to be the cause of not-seeing *in any way*,[†] and thus mistakes a non-cause for a cause.

†absolute

As for the fourth objection, I deny the consequence it draws, too. For as I have made clear already, the topic here is not an object knowable any-which-way but one *quidditatively knowable by [the knower's] natural powers*. I concede willingly that our intellect, by its natural power, cannot know quidditatively anything higher than our own soul's nature. But that is perfectly consistent with saying that it can be elevated by grace to know even God quidditatively. There is no problem about a faculty being elevated to know quidditatively something that is beyond the scope of what it can know by its own nature in that way (quidditatively). Scotus' argument proceeds as if the object being assigned here were the *extensionally equivalent* object — as sound is the object of hearing — and that is where he goes wrong. As I have already said, the topic here is the object which is

intensively equivalent given the faculty's nature according to its own resources. There is no discussion here of the extensionally equivalent object, the class beyond which no enhancement* can make a faculty reach, by any means whatsoever.

* *habitus*

[On the *last* objection:] although the propositions whence this article proceeds are not formally syllogistic, they are virtually so; as you can see above, I put them into order quite easily, without such a hash as Scotus made of them.

Does a created intellect need a created light to see God's essence?

In Ill Sent d.14, a.1, q.3; In II^a Sent d.49, q.2, a.6; 3 CG cc 53, 54, De Veritate q.8, a.3, q.18, a.1, q.20, a.2, Quodl. VII, q.1, a.1, Compend. Theol c.105

It seems that if a created intellect is going to see God's essence, it does not need any created light.

(1) Among the objects of sense, after all, what is luminous of itself does not need another light to be seen; the same should hold among objects of understanding. Well, God is the very light of understanding. Ergo, He is not seen with the help of any created light.

(2) Besides, when God is seen through a medium, He is not being seen through His essence. When He is seen through a created light, He is seen through a medium. Ergo, He is not being seen through His essence.

(3) Moreover, [the hypothesis that every creature needs an extra light to see God leads to its own contradictory; for] any created item could conceivably be natural to some creature; nothing precludes this possibility. So, if God's essence is seen through a created light, that light could be natural to some creature. But then that creature will not need any other light to see God, which is impossible [because the hypothesis contradicts it]. Therefore, it is not necessary that every creature get an additional light to see God's essence.

Ps 35:10 ON THE OTHER HAND, there is the verse in the Psalm, "in Thy light shall we see light."

ANSWER: everything that is elevated to something beyond its own nature has to be disposed [to it] by some preparation* that goes beyond its nature. For example, if air had to take on the form of fire, it would need to be made ready for that form by a disposition. Well, when a created intellect sees God through His essence, God's very essence becomes that intellect's form in intentional being.[†] Thus, the created intellect needs a supernatural disposition to be added to it, if it is to be elevated to so sublime a condition. And since the created intellect's

* *dispositio*

† *forma intelligibilis*

natural strength does not suffice for it to see God's essence, as shown above, its supernatural preparation will have to take the form of an increase in its strength to understand, added to it by God's grace. We call this boost in the power to understand an "illumination" of the intellect (much as the object of understanding is also called a "light"). This is the light spoken of in Revelation 21:23, where it says, "the glory of God did lighten it," *i.e.* the city of the blessed who see God. Moreover, it is by this light that the blessed are made deiform, that is, like God, as it says in 1 John 3:2, "when He shall appear, we shall be like Him, and we shall see Him as He is."

q.12, a.4

TO MEET THE OBJECTIONS — *ad* (1): the reason a created light is needed to see God's essence is not to render His essence intelligible (it is intelligible of itself) but to render the created intellect strong enough to understand it, in the manner in which a faculty is made stronger by an habilitation. In much the same way, bodily light is also needed in outward vision, to render the medium [air] actually transparent, so that it can be affected by the color [of the body to be seen].

ad (2): the light in question is not needed to see God's essence as a [representative] likeness in which God would be seen, but as a certain completing of the intellect, invigorating it to see God. One may say that this light is not a medium "in which" God is seen but one "under which" He is seen. And this does not take away the immediacy of the seeing.

ad (3): a disposition to the form of fire cannot be natural to anything but what has the form of fire. So, too, the light of glory cannot be natural to a creature unless it, the creature, has the divine nature — which is impossible. For by this light a rational creature is made deiform, as was just said.

Cajetan's Commentary

In the title, 'created intellect' means any that does exist or could exist. The sense of 'needs' is not 'needs it to see God better' but 'needs it to see Him at all'.

Analysis of the article

In the body of the article, there is one conclusion, answering the question with yes: a created intellect does need a created light to see God. — The support goes thus. [*Antecedent:*] A created intellect seeing God has the divine essence as its form in intentional being; [*1st inference:*] hence it needs a supernatural preparation, elevating it to so sublime a state; [*2nd inference:*]

therefore it needs a grace-given* boost to its strength to understand; [*3rd inference:*] therefore it needs a created light.

* *gratuitus*

The antecedent was made clear in article 2. — The first inference is supported by the very broad principle that everything elevated to a thing exceeding its nature has to be prepared therefor by a disposition that lies above its nature. This is illustrated with the nature of air and fire. — The second inference is supported on the ground that a created thing's natural strength to understand does not suffice for seeing God's essence. The third is supported on the ground that an increase in the

strength to understand is called an illumination. This is clarified by the point that an intelligible object as such is called light, and it is confirmed by the authority of Revelation 21.

Finally, the formal effect of such a light is mentioned: it is said to make its receivers deiform, and this is supported by the authority of I John 3. Thus the two [basic Aristotelian] questions are cleared up about this light: whether it exists, and what it is.

On the broad principle

ii. Concerning the broad principle [that anything raised to a thing above its nature has to be prepared for it], note that 'A is above B's nature' can be true in two ways: (1) One is in terms of dignity: A is above the level of essence on which B's nature lies, as fire is above air. (2) The other way is in terms of power or efficacy: A goes beyond the ability of B, as light is beyond [what] air [can produce within itself], even though air is a substance, and light is an accident.¹ In the case at hand, 'above' is taken the second way. If 'above its nature' is taken the first way, then what is unqualifiedly supernatural is God alone. But if 'above its nature' is taken the second way, charity, grace, the light of glory, and other such things are supernatural. For both actively and passively they go beyond the ability* of any natures that have been or could have been created. They go beyond any such natures actively, since they can yield effects that no such natures can yield; they go beyond them passively, since they cannot be brought into being or reproduced by any such natures. This is how 'supernatural preparation' is being used here.

* *facultas*

On the support for the first inference

iii. As to the support given for the first inference, there is doubt about it.

(1) There is doubt first because, if that broad principle is true, it follows [one might say] that the count of needed preparations rises to infinity. This follows because the supernatural disposition is itself a kind of form, so that its reception has to be preceded by another supernatural preparation, and that one by a still prior one (for the same reason), and so on and so on.

(2) A second doubt arises on another ground: given that the broad principle is true, still [one might say] it holds true only in cases of genuine "form" and matter. In the present case, however, the divine essence is not genuinely the form of the created intellect seeing it: it does not give being to that intellect form-wise. On all fronts, then, Aquinas' argument seems to collapse.

¹ Essences were so graded that an accident's essence was lower than any substance's essence. Light (or lightedness) was thought to be an accident of the element air and hence to have a lower essence than air's, even though air could not make itself lighted but needed the sun's causality to make it so. Cf. the soul, grace, and God's causality.

iv. The SHORT ANSWER to doubt (1) is given by Aquinas elsewhere: the broad principle is perfectly true for a form that is like the *end-point* of a process of becoming.* not for one that is like a transient stage[†] towards such an end-point. For we see in natural cases that

(a) matter's being disposed to S, the substantial form that will terminate its process of becoming,

and

(b) matter's being disposed to accidental traits *A₁*, *A₂* preparatory to S's arrival are [not distinct affairs but] one and the same state of affairs, as with water, fire, and heat. Hence no going-on to infinity follows. The count stops with the form that stands as a disposition. No disposition to a disposition is needed, only to a [terminal] form.

To answer doubt (2), we eliminate its premise totally. The divine essence is not [the created intellect's] natural form but is *genuinely* its intensional form; so it does not have to give [that intellect] *being*[‡] form-wise: it has to give it *understanding*[§] form-wise. For the to-be-of the intelligible species in completed act is identically the act-of-understanding. — Moreover, the divine essence is not only genuinely the form, in intensional being, of the intellect seeing it but is also that form as the ultimate end-point of [that intellect's] process of becoming [operative]. It does not stand [to that intellect] as its intensional form in habit, but in act. So standing, that form and the act of understanding do not count as *two* end-points [but as *one*], as existence and the form whose existence it is do not make two end-points (after all, there are not two termini to a given generation, a form and its existence, but one), and, by analogy, intensional existence works the same way.

q 62, a 2 ad 3

• ut terminum generationis

† ut via ad terminum

‡ esse

§ intelligere

On the support for the second inference

v. In the support given to the second inference, notice that the text does two things at once: it supports the inference and suggests, as it were, another means to the conclusion. The support is given with the implicit understanding that this state of affairs

(a) the divine essence is the intellect's form and this one

(b) the intellect sees God

are the same state of affairs. That way, the disposition raising [the intellect] to the divine essence = the one raising [it] to the seeing. In consequence, since the created intellect is not strong enough of itself, the same disposition = the raising or boosting of the strength to understand, making it strong enough to see. — But the text in a way insinuates another means of proof, in that this boost is posited for two purposes: (a) to dispose the intellect to so high an intelligible form, and (b) to provide it with enough strength for it to elicit the act of seeing. This latter is touched upon when mention is made of the *inadequacy* of the intellect to see, and when a boost to *its strength* is mentioned.

The consequent of the second inference

vi. In the wording of the consequent [that the creaturely intellect therefore needs a grace-given boost to its strength to understand], pay attention [to two terms].

(1) Pay attention to the word 'boost'. From 3 *CG* c.53, we learn that an agent's strength can be boosted in two ways: (a) The first is by simple intensification, as hot water is made hotter. (b) The second way is by acquisition of another form, as when air's strength is boosted by the addition of light. In the text at hand, the talk is of a boost in the second way, not the first, because the merely intensive boosting [of a strength-to-operate] yields only an operation of the same kind* but better done, whereas the second way of boosting raises [the strength] to an operation of another species and genus — and sometimes of another order, as emerges here.²

* *etiam
rationis*

(2) Pay attention to the term 'grace-given'. Since the question is about not only a created intellect but also any creatable one, it must be the case that, if a boost is needed, that boost is above the nature of any created or creatable intellect, and so is outside the whole order of nature-set things;[†] so it must belong to an order of grace-given things, not only by virtue of how it is acquired (as life is grace-given when acquired by resurrection) but also by virtue of its very substance or quiddity (like [the infused love of God,] charity).

† *connaturalia*

Defending the conclusion against Scotus and Durandus

vii. Many writers argue against this conclusion. First of all, there is Scotus. In his remarks on *III Sent.* d.14, q.1, and on *IV Sent.* d.49, q.2, Scotus argues along four lines.

(1) [*Major:*] An object which, of itself, is intelligible light and is strong enough to move the intellect to see it does not need a light working with it to cause the seeing. [*Minor:*] God is such an object. Ergo.

(2) If the light of glory were introduced as a form by which an intellect becomes and stays adequate to see God, it would be possible to see God *naturally* through a created form. The reason this follows is because [the following comparison holds good:] as a blind man miraculously illuminated sees [what he now sees] *naturally*; so also a blessed man supernaturally illuminated sees God *naturally*: for a "light of glory," like any other complete trait put into an intellect, completes it naturally, even if it is put there supernaturally.³

² If the act of seeing God fit the definition of a human (or angelic) act-of-understanding, the creaturely intellect would need only an intensifying boost-in-strength in order to do it. So, since the intellect needs a stronger kind of boost, the act of seeing God does not fit such definitions. By implication: seeing God is only *analogous* to what we do in understanding.

³ Question: how does whiteness enhance a shirt, once it is in it? Answer: according to its nature. It whitens it. Question: how does life enhance a body, once in the body? Answer: according to its nature. It enlivens it. So if one asks in general, "How does a complete form enhance the subject having it?"

(3) Whatever God can do by means of an effective secondary cause, He can do without that means. Well, the light of glory is posited to effect the seeing. Ergo [God can produce the seeing without it].

(4) [*Premise:* If seeing God requires anything to be introduced] it seems more necessary to posit an intelligible species of God than to posit a light of glory. But the former is not posited; ergo [neither should the latter be]. The premise is supported on the ground that an intelligible species would be introduced to enhance the intellect-as-memory,⁴ whereas the light only enhances it in actual operation. For that, an object present within it suffices, as one sees from Aquinas' own words.

viii. Durandus weighs in with two more attacks.

(1) If the light of glory is introduced because the [divine] object surpasses the created intellect, as is clearly the case in this article, it is introduced for nothing. The reason this follows is because the [divine] object infinitely surpasses not only the created intellect in itself but also the same intellect with any such light. Hence such a light does not raise the intellect from being out-of-proportion to make it in-proportion.

(2) In any case, Friar Thomas himself holds that the vision of God can be granted to a person in the disposing conditions of this life alone [Aquinas holds this in remarks on *IV Sent.* d.49]. Hence a light of glory is not needed, because it is a disposing condition unique to the heavenly Homeland.

Many other objections are reported by Capreolus in his comments on *IV Sent.* d.49, q.4, but I omit them on purpose, either because they assume that the intellect concurs purely passively towards seeing God [so that its strength-to-operate would need no boost], or because they are easily solved, given the points made here, or because they are solved by their own authors.

ix. TO ANSWER SCOTUS:

— *ad* (1): the short answer is: one can concede the whole argument and say that the need does not arise on

the answer is always "according to its nature" — *naturaliter*. From this piece of evidence, Scotus concluded that the adverb '*supernaturaliter*' had no application to the issue of how a good trait affects its subject; the adverb only applied to how the trait came to be there in the first place. It could have been acquired in the natural course of things (*naturaliter*) or from a divine intervention (*supernaturaliter*). Here Scotus is applying the same argument to the alleged form which would be a created light of glory. He is saying that, if there is such a form, then it enhances the blessed intellect "according to its nature," so that the said intellect will see *naturaliter*, even though it acquired this form by a divine intervention. So, if one wishes to deny that God can be seen by any creature "naturally," one must not posit a created light. (This aspect of Scotus' theology came to have much appeal among the Byzantines, who eventually followed Gregory Palamas in saying that the blessed in heaven enjoy an *uncreated* light wherewith to see God's uncreated "energies" but never His essence.)

⁴ Augustine used '*memoria*' to mean the mind in habitual possession of its knowledge, and Scotus continued this usage.

God's side (the object's side) but on the side of the created intellect. But if both sides are considered, one denies his major.

— *ad* (2): here we have occasion to obey the maxim, "Keep the thought, but correct the language." Simply speaking, there is nothing awkward about admitting that, through a created form (but not as through a species) a created intellect sees God "naturally." After all, any habilitation and every form is the source of its distinctive act "out of its own nature." A person who has charity, taken *as* having it, "naturally" loves God and loves Him meritoriously, *etc.*, because charity is every bit as effective at inclining [its subject] towards its distinctive act as the other habitations are [at inclining their subjects towards their acts]. The sign of this "naturalness" is delight. We experience that we do with delight all the acts for which we have the relevant habitations, be they natural ones or supernatural ones. However, if people are not to find our language misleading, a distinction needs to be drawn:

'see God *naturally* through a created form' can be taken in two senses. One would mean through a created form that *is* natural or nature-set;

the other would mean

through a created form that *is* supernatural (and not just supernaturally created).

The first sense is something impossible and has been refuted here. The second sense is the only possibility. And such is the light of glory [it *is* supernatural and not just supernaturally given]. Once one is illuminated by it, one sees God perfectly naturally; indeed, it is impossible not to see Him with that light present. — Thus it is clear that the case of the blind man illuminated is not like the case of the [blessed] intellect illuminated. In the blind man's case, the strength-to-see that is given *is* natural, even though it is supernaturally given; in the latter case, the strength given is both supernaturally given and *is* a supernatural strength.⁵

⁵ Cajetan concedes Scotus' piece of evidence — that how a complicative form enhances its subject is always *naturaliter* — but denies the conclusion Scotus drew from it. The adverb '*supernaturaliter*' remains applicable to this issue because it can be taken in another sense. Suppose *x* has the form *F*; the statement that *x* acts *F*-wise *naturaliter* need not mean that *x* acts *F*-wise with or according to the nature of *F*; it could rather mean that *x* acts *F*-wise with *x*'s own nature, or with a form of a type that flows from *x*'s own nature, and in this sense the statement is not always true. It is false every time *F* is above *x*'s nature (see § *ii* of this commentary), and it is most especially false when *x* acts *F*-wise with a form of a type that flows only from God's nature. In such cases, it is correct to say that *x* acts *F*-wise *supernaturaliter*, and the use of the opposite adverb would be highly misleading.

Cajetan is certainly right about one thing: the adverb 'naturally' is multiply ambiguous because it can be used to abbreviate virtually any propositional phrase in which the noun 'nature' appears. Hence it can be used in more than one sense as an alternative to 'supernaturally'.

— *ad* (3): I deny the entire argument. It is a fallacy of part-of-speech, going from a *what* [God can do] to a *how* or a *relation*. The effect is described with 'a created seeing of God'. That does not signify a thing in a non-relative way* but signifies an act in relation to a created agent. So Scotus' argument is like saying: "God produces Peter's meritorious act by means of Peter's will and charity; so He can produce it without them."⁶

— *ad* (4): I deny the premise, and the support for it is worthless, too. The intellect as memory is irrelevant to fulfillment, because fulfillment is found in an *act*, not in a habit.

Also, make a note of the fact that Scotus and his followers can no longer maintain their position on this topic, because Pope Clement's Constitution *Ad Nostrum*, [in the section] *de haeretico*, explicitly condemns as erroneous those who say that the soul does not need a light of glory elevating it to see God.⁷ There you have a case where the Church has embraced St. Thomas' doctrine; she has determined not only the need' for the light but also the reason it is needed, namely, so that the soul might be lifted up to such a Vision, just as it says in this article.

x. TO ANSWER DURANDUS:

— *ad* (1): I concede the antecedent [the light is introduced because the object surpasses the intellect] but deny the consequent [it is introduced for nothing]. To the alleged reason why this follows, I respond that it comes from a wrong-headed interpretation. Take the fact that a light *L* is introduced because an object *O* surpasses a faculty *F*.

[This can be the case in two ways:]

(1) One way, it is introduced to so pump up the faculty *F* as to *equalize* *O* and *F*. This is the sense advanced in Durandus' supporting ground, and it is advanced against nobody.

(2) The other way, *L* is introduced lest *O*'s excess prevent *F* from attaining so high an object. This is the

⁶ Scotus' major premise, 'for all effects *e*, if God produces *e* through secondary causes, He can produce *e* without them', is far too sweeping. Many effects involve *constitutively* the secondary causes which are *how* they are produced or which are *relata* in the state of affairs produced. Thus the idea that God can produce the fact that a man has herpes, without the virus through which he has it, is absurd.

No less absurd is the claim (launched by this same major of Scotus) that was to flourish among the Nominalists and inspire in time the Evil Genius of Descartes, namely, that God can produce the state of affairs that a man sees a rock without there being any rock. Thus Cajetan's answer to this argument is of world-historical importance: it gives the Thomist school a response to this pernicious source of late Medieval and early Modern skepticism.

⁷ In 1312, Clement V promulgated the *Ad Nostrum* *qui* of the Council of Vienne (the 15th Ecumenical Council), dealing with the errors of the Beguardi and Beguinae, of which #5 was "quaelibet intellectualis natura in se ipsa naturaliter est beata ... [et] anima non indiget lumine gloriae, ipsam elevante ad Deum videndum et eo beate fruendum." See *Denz.* n. 895.

sense in which the light of glory is “introduced because the object surpasses the faculty.” Against this sense, Durandus’ supporting ground obviously goes nowhere. — If the force of his argument is supposed to lie in the fact that [with the light] the faculty is said to become “proportioned” after having been “not proportioned,” the answer has already been given in the text of article 1 [in q.12], in the answer to the last objection, where Aquinas explains how the word ‘proportion’ is to be understood in this context.

— *ad* (2): the answer is that Durandus just didn’t try to understand what Aquinas was saying in [IV’ *Sent.* d.49] q.2, a.7. The light of glory can be “had” in two ways:

- * *passio*
† *habitus*
- (a) as a transient modification*
- (b) as a steady habilitation.*

Had the first way, it does not put a person outside the conditions of this life. Had the second way, it is a disposition unique to Heaven. When Aquinas says “in the disposing conditions of this life alone,” he means in conditions not placing a person entirely out of this life. That this is in fact his meaning becomes clear from *De Veritate*. In q.10, a.11 he repeats what he said in IV’ *Sent.*, but then in q.13, a.2, and in q.20, a.2, of *De Veritate*, he explains it as I have done here, and you find the same in 2/2 *ST* q.175, a.3. So there is no doubt about what interpretation to hold.

Understanding the answer *ad* (3)

xi. In the answer to the third objection, a very subtle teaching is being given. So pay attention to two topics:

- ‡ *connaturale*
- § *proportio*
- (1) what it means for ϕ to be nature-set² for x and what it means for ϕ to become nature-set for x ; (2) what the relation⁵ is between the light of glory and the divine substance.

[As to topic (1):] ‘ ϕ is nature-set for x ’ means that ϕ originates or spreads from sources intrinsic to x ’s nature. One reads this in *Physics II*, and one sees examples in the movements of the elements. But ‘ ϕ becomes nature-set for x ’ means that what does not flow from the sources belonging to x comes to flow from sources belonging to x . This is unimaginable in any way, unless one nature is transferred to another nature. Only thus can sources from which ϕ flows be made sources belonging to x , from whom ϕ does not flow.⁸

⁸ Cajetan has divided the talk of connaturality into two sorts — the static talk of what is or is not *connaturale* to a thing x , and the dynamic talk of what becomes so — because he uses the word ‘*natura*’ in a way that allows the derived word ‘*connaturale*’ to be used statically but not dynamically. Perhaps the best way to explain the matter is as follows. What is nature-set for a thing x is no more immutable than the nature of x . How immutable, then, was a thing’s nature understood to be? That depended on whether the word ‘nature’ was being used in the popular way, to mean what a thing was born with (birth-endowment, “nature” vs. nurture), or whether it was being used in the Aristotelian-scientific way, to mean the thing’s essence (the defining traits of its kind).

Nature as birth-endowment (for short, nature_b) was far less

[As to topic (2):] The relation — not in natural being but in intensional being — between the light of glory and the divine essence is the relation of a nature-set distinctive trait to the nature from which it flows. This is proved from points already said as follows. The light of glory is nothing but a strength* (taken as a distinctive disposition) to unite [to the intellect] the divine essence (taken as an intensional form) and to bring about seeing God; these are the purposes for which the light of glory is posited, as is obvious from what has been said. But having the divine essence as an intensional form and seeing God are nature-set for God alone. So, the light of glory is nature-set for the divine nature alone. Hence it follows that the divine essence and the light of glory belong to the same order, in the same way that [for any form F] an ultimate disposition to F and F itself belong to the same order, *i.e.* each is nature-set to the other, because what is natural to each thing is its own, and

immutable than nature as essence (for short, nature_e). One could say that Adam had a different nature_b from his fallen descendants, whose nature_b was a wreckage of Adam’s. It is possible for a human being to live through a change of his nature_b, and so one could say that Adam’s descendants acquire a new nature_b at baptism, which is a new birth, so that acts like loving God and seeing God, which were not *connaturale* to them as children of wrath become *connaturale* to them as children of light. In other words, so long as ‘*natura*’ meant nature_b, ‘*connaturale*’ was meaningful in both static and dynamic talk (it meant ‘arises from the thing’s nature_b’), and in dynamic talk the nature_b was looked at as changing.

Matters were quite different when one entered Aristotelian science (as Aquinas did) and used ‘*natura*’ to mean essence, nature_e. Adam had just the same essence as his descendants (since he and we belong to the same species). It was impossible for an individual to live through the loss of his essence or the acquisition of a new one (unless the individual was taken to be a species-less “self,” as in Hindu metempsychosis), and so one could not say that we acquire a new nature, at baptism. In short, nature_e could not be looked upon as changing. So when ‘ ϕ is *connaturale* to x ’ meant that ϕ arises from x ’s essence (as it did for Aquinas), ‘ ϕ becomes *connaturale* to x ’ could not mean that ϕ didn’t used to arise from x ’s essence but now does. (That would require x ’s essence to change.) It could only mean the unimaginable state of affairs that something else’s essence was being transferred into x ’s essence. The situation could not just be that the individual x was receiving from another nature_e (not its own) a source from which ϕ would flow (which is what really happens in cases of supernatural endowment), because that would not make ϕ or its source *connaturale* to x . No, x would have to be receiving that source in such a way as to make it x ’s own nature_e.

So, to return to the answer *ad* (3): to say that the vision of God becomes nature-set for a creature would mean that this creature was receiving by transfer and as its own essence the source in God’s essence from which the vision of Him flows. This would posit a kind of creature C whose created essence contained the source from which that vision flows, so that, if x is of the C kind, x sees God by its essence and not by participation. As Aquinas points out, this would mean that the created essence of C was or included God’s essence, which is impossible. God’s indivisible essence is to “be” precisely what no made thing can be, self-subsisting Existence. Cf. q.7, a.1 *ad* 1.

anything else (which is not its very own) is neither [natural to it nor its own]. This is why the text of the article says that the light of glory cannot be nature-set for anything, unless that thing be transferred to the divine nature.

xii. From these points, one comes to see the falsehood of the opinion that Scotus advanced (in q.1 of his prologue to *I Sent.*), to the effect that 'natural' and 'supernatural' do not divide *things* but *relations to active causes*. The light of glory, charity, the gifts of the Holy Spirit, and anything else of this kind — these things are all supernatural *ways of being*. They are not just supernatural because they can only be caused by an agent acting [outside the course of nature, *i.e.*] supernaturally; rather, they are supernatural because they cannot be nature-set for any creature that has been or could have been made. This is why they are called ways-of-being "of the supernatural order" — indeed, "of the divine order."

And if an objection is made to all this, based on the infinite distance between God and the light of glory — or based on the claim that what is light-of-glory by its essence is one topic, and what is light-of-glory by participation is another, and so even if the former is unique to God, the latter is not, but only the latter (the light by participation) is under discussion here — one can answer it quite easily. Thus:

- The "infinite distance" implies nothing except the fact that, between God and any created light of glory, there are infinitely many degrees. There is maximal "distance," after all, between a proper disposition and a substantial form — far more "distance" than there is between any two substances — and yet the form and the disposition to it belong to the same order as to being nature-set [for one another], while the two substances are not, even if they match better in nature (they could even be of the same species, like Socrates and Plato), *etc.* More or less "distance" is therefore irrelevant. And so "infinite distance" is irrelevant.⁹

⁹ The "distance" in question was metaphysical distance, which was extent of diversity in genus. Since no genus appeared in more than one category, items in different categories shared no common genus at all and hence were maximally "distant." Since any two substances share at least the genus substance, a substance (or its form) was inevitably more "distant" from an accident (or its form) than any two substances (or their forms) were from each other. Cajetan's point was that such maximum metaphysical "distance" posed no obstacle to

- And we are not deceived [as to the difference between that which is by essence the light of glory and that which is such by participation], as the other objection alleges. For just as the whole range of "seeing God's essence" is nature-set for God alone, but different degrees within the range are nature-set for Him alone in different ways — at its highest degree, seeing God's essence is nature-set for God alone in a way that is incommunicable to any being outside God; short of the highest, it is nature-set for Him in such a way as to be communicable to infinitely many extents, more and less — so it is also with the whole range of light-of-glory, the whole range of charity, *etc.* Likewise the whole range of "having the divine essence as one's intensional form" is nature-set for God alone, but incommunicably so at its highest degree while, at any limited degree, it is communicated to another without becoming nature-set for that other. In much the same way, if being lighted is taken as a quality unique to the sun, then the whole range of "being lighted" is nature-set for the sun alone, incommunicably so at light's highest degree, but communicably so at any degree short of the highest — not so as to become nature-set for other things, because light does not come to be theirs as flowing from them (assuming the stars are assigned a nature foreign to the sun's), but so as to be theirs from the diffusion of sunlight.¹⁰

things' being ordered to one another by their nature, as an accident *A* that terminally disposes its subject to the substantial form *S* is ordered by its very nature to *S*, and as *S* is required by its very nature to have *A* as its preparation. Thus metaphysical distance was quite irrelevant to the intimacy of nature-set correlations.

¹⁰ The obsolete astronomy is simply providing a comparison. The Medievals did not know to what extent the sun and the fixed stars were similar in nature. They identified light with the quality of being-lighted, which they knew to be accidental to the air, the moon, *etc.*, but which flowed distinctively, they thought, from the very essence of the sun. On that view, anything else's being lighted would be its having a trait *nature-set* for the sun alone, and thus anything else's being lighted would be its having to a lesser degree a trait whose highest degree could be found in the sun alone. Hence the present comparison. If one seeks to replace it with something still tenable in science, one might appeal to radioactivity. It is nature-set for only a handful of naturally occurring elements to be radioactive, and anything else found to be radioactive has (to some lesser degree) a trait which is nature-set for those elements alone.

Of those seeing God's essence, does one see it more completely than another?

1 ST q 62, a.9; In IV Sent. d.49, q 2, a.4; 3 CG cc 58

Among those who see God's essence, it would hardly seem that one of them could be seeing it more completely than another.

(1) It says in I John 3:2, after all, that we shall see Him "as He is." But there is just one way He "is." So there is just one way He will be seen, by all. He will not be seen more completely by one and less completely by another.

PL 40, 22 (2) Also, Augustine says [under question 32] in his book of 83 Questions that one person cannot understand the exact same thing better than another. But all who see God through His essence understand God's essence — they "see" God with their intellect, after all, not their senses, as we discussed above. So, of those who see the divine essence, it is not the case that one sees it more clearly than another.

q 12, a.3

(3) Furthermore, the state of affairs that someone sees more completely than someone else, can arise from two sources:

- from a source in the object to be seen, or
- from a source in the seer's power to see.

If it arises from a source in the object, it arises because the object is received more completely, *i.e.*, according to a more complete likeness, in one of the seers. There is no room for that in the present case, because God is present *through* His essence to an intellect seeing that essence, and not through any likeness. The remaining possibility, then, is that, if someone sees God more completely than someone else, it is because of a difference in their power to see. In that case, it follows that the creature whose intellective power is naturally higher will see God more clearly. But that is unacceptable, because human beings are promised that in their blessed state they will have equality with the angels.

ON THE OTHER HAND, eternal life lies in seeing God, as it says in John 17:3, "This is eternal life," *etc.* Thus if all see God's essence equally, they will all be equal in their eternal lives. But the Apostle Paul says the contrary in I Corinthians 15:41, "one star differeth from another star in glory."

ANSWER: of those seeing God through His essence, one will see Him more completely than another. It will

not be because of a more complete likeness of God in one than in another, since the seeing will not take place through any likeness (as shown above). It will rather be because one person's intellect has greater strength or ability to see God than another's has. Now ability to see God is not within the scope of* a created intellect by its nature, but thanks to the light of glory, which puts the intellect into a certain deiformity, as said above. Thus an intellect that participates more fully in the light of glory will see God more completely. But the one who will participate more fully in the light of glory is the one who has more love for God.[†] For where there is more such love, there is greater desire; and desire has its own way of rendering apt the one who desires, making that one ready to receive what he or she desires. The person who has more love, then, will see God more completely and will be more fulfilled.

q.12, a.2

* non competit

q.12, a.5

† caritas

TO MEET THE OBJECTIONS — *ad* (1): when Scripture says, "we shall see Him as He is," the force of the adverbial 'as'-clause is to pin down how the seeing will be as far as the thing seen is concerned, so that the meaning is: we shall see Him to be as He is (because we shall see His very being, which is His essence). The adverb is not pinning down how the seeing will be as far as the agent seeing is concerned. Thus the meaning is not that our manner of seeing will be as complete as God's manner of being.

ad (2): the same distinction meets the second objection. For when one says, "One person does not understand the very same thing better than another," the remark is true enough if it is talking about the how-it-is of the thing understood. For whoever understands a thing to be otherwise-than-it-is does not understand *it*. But the remark is not true, if it is talking about the how-it-is of the very act of understanding. One person's act *is* more complete than another's.

ad (3): the difference in seeing will not arise from the object — the same object will be presented to all (God's essence) — nor from different sharings in the object through different likenesses; it will arise from different abilities of intellect. The differing abilities will not be nature-based, however, but glory-based, as I just said.

Cajetan's Commentary

The title question is clear. — In the body of the article, three jobs are done. (1) A conclusion is put down answering with yes: of those who see God, one will see

Him more completely than another. (2) A false reason for this is excluded. (3) The conclusion is supported on the basis of the right reason for it.

ii. As to job (2), notice that the state of affairs that *x* sees the same object better than *y* can arise from two causes. (a) *x* sees it through a clearer species than *y* does. This we experience for ourselves: we see a thing better through a species in the air (or in better lenses*) than through one in water (or in weaker lenses). (b) *x* has sharper vision. — The point [that these are the causes, and the only ones] is obvious. Given sameness of the visible object plus equality of species and of power-to-see, it is impossible to imagine how one act of seeing could be better (since distance and medium and so forth all pertain to the quality of the species).¹ — So the text of the article says enough to exclude cause (a) by saying that the seeing will not occur through a species. Rather, cause (b) is embraced.

iii. As to job (3), the conclusion is supported as follows. [*Antecedent:*] Of those who see God, one has more love than another; [*1st inference:*] ergo one has more desire than another; [*2nd inference:*] so one is more apt and more ready to receive God than another;

¹ What the scholastics meant by a thing's visible *species* was how it looked. A thing looks different in water or from a distance, yet one sees *the thing* through seeing how it looks.

[*3rd inference:*] so one has a greater light of glory; [*4th inference:*] and so one will have a greater ability* to see God; [*5th inference:*] and so one will see Him more completely than another. — The antecedent is assumed. The first inference is obvious from the terms themselves, as are the second and third. Love for God, after all, is desire for Him, and desire is admittedly a great preparation for embracing the one desired. The light of glory, in turn, is nothing but a disposition to receive God, as was said above, and so it ought to correspond to the level of desire, as disposition [to a state *S*] corresponds to [level of] aptitude and readiness [for *S*]. The fourth inference rests on the ground that what puts the intellect into its deformity is not the light it has by nature but the light of glory; for the basis on which we can see God is the fact that we become participants of *His* nature. The last inference is obvious.²

* *facultas*

q.12, a.5

² The modern reader wants to know whether seeing God's essence is analogous to accusative knowing (so that 'I see God's essence' is like 'I know Jones') or analogous to knowing-that (so that 'I see God's essence' is like 'I know that Jones is a rational animal'). This article would have been a good place to settle the matter, because Aquinas' solution seems easier to accept if the knowing is supposed to be accusative. But see the discussion of "comprehending" in the next article.

Do those seeing God through His essence "comprehend" Him?

21. ST q. 4, a. 3; 3 ST q. 10, a. 1; In III Sent. d. 14, a. 2, qu. 1; d. 27, q. 3, a. 2; In IV Sent. d. 49, q. 2, a. 3; 3 CG c. 55; De Veritate q. 2, a. 1 ad 3; q. 8, a. 2; q. 20, a. 5; de Viribus q. 2, a. 10 ad 5; Compend. Theol. c. 106; In Joannem c. 1, lectio 6; In Ephes. c. 5, lectio 3

It would seem that those who see God through His essence "comprehend" Him [i.e. fully grasp Him].

(1) Paul says in Philippians 3:12, "I follow after if by any means I may lay hold" [Vulg. *ut comprehendam*]. He did not follow after for nothing, as he himself says in I Corinthians 9:26, "I therefore so run, not as after an uncertainty ..." Therefore, he lays hold; and so, for the same reason, do the others whom he exhorts [v. 24]. "So run, that ye may obtain" [Vulg. *ut comprehendatis*].

(2) Further, as Augustine says in [n.9 of] his letter to Paulina *On Seeing God*, "That is comprehended which is so wholly seen that nothing of it is hidden from the seer." If God is seen through His essence, He is seen as a whole, and nothing of Him is hidden from the seer, because He is simple. God is thus "comprehended" by whoever sees Him through His essence.

(3) The dodge that He is seen "as a whole" but not wholly, is countered as follows. 'Wholly' is meant to modify either the seer or the thing seen. If it is taken to modify the thing seen, a person who sees God through His essence sees Him "wholly," because he sees Him "as He is," as already stated. If it is taken to modify the seer, the person who sees God still sees Him "wholly," because his intellect will see God's essence with its whole strength. Anyone, therefore, who comes to see God through His essence will see Him "wholly," and so he will comprehend God.

ON THE OTHER HAND, Jeremiah 32:18-19 says, "O most mighty, great, and powerful, the Lord of hosts is thy name: great in counsel, incomprehensible in thought." So, He cannot be comprehended.

ANSWER: comprehending God is impossible for any created intellect, "but reaching God with one's mind in any way is a great blessedness," as Augustine says.

To get this clear, one needs to know that what is "comprehended" is known completely, and that what is "known completely" is known as thoroughly as it can be known. Thus, if a point knowable by scientific proof is held only as an opinion, thanks to understanding some probable reason for it, it is not "comprehended." Take the point that a triangle's three internal angles equal two right angles; if a person knows this through the proof of it, he comprehends it; if another person accepts this on probable grounds, because smart people say so, or because most people say so, he does not comprehend it, because he does not get the full "how" which is how the point is knowable.

Well, no created intellect can attain to the full "how" which is how the divine essence is knowable. This fact becomes clear as follows. Each thing is

knowable insofar as it is a being in act. God, then, whose existing is infinite, as shown above, is infinitely knowable. But no created intellect can know God infinitely. After all, a created intellect knows God's essence more or less completely in proportion as it is more or less imbued with the light of glory. Since the created light of glory, as received in any created intellect, cannot be infinite, it is not possible for any created intellect to know God infinitely. Hence it is not possible for any to comprehend God.¹

TO MEET THE OBJECTIONS — *ad* (1): the word 'laying hold' ['grasping' or 'comprehending'] is used in two ways: (1) One is the strict and proper way, according to which the thing grasped is "encompassed" by the mind comprehending it; and in this sense, God is not com-

¹ In ordinary language, it is plausible enough to suggest that a knower "comprehends" when he or she "knows completely." But Aquinas goes further. He turns "comprehends" into a technical term by providing two technical accounts of 'knows completely', one applicable when the object known is a proposition (as in 'I know that *p*'), the other applicable when the object is a thing (as in 'I know *x*'), which is nowadays called accusative knowing). If the object is a proposition *p*, then (says Aquinas) *p* is "known completely" by me just in case I know that *p* on optimal grounds, e.g. on grounds providing the true and scientific explanation of why *p* is true and could not be otherwise. But if the object is a thing, *x*, then (says he) *x* is "known completely" by me in case I know *x* in every aspect in which *x* is actual. Aquinas does not say what it is, exactly, for me to know *x* in any one such aspect, and so he leaves us in suspense as to what it is to know *x* in every such aspect. But if I am a human knower (and perhaps if I am any created knower), the following supposition accords with a hint he dropped in the *ad* (2) in q. 12, a. 6:

I know *x* in an aspect *A* = if *x* is actually *A*, I have enough acquaintance with *x* to know that *x* is *A*.

This makes good sense because it does justice to the propositional character of human (and perhaps of all created) knowing, and because it brings together the two senses of 'knows completely'. For with this supposition in place, we have

I know *x* completely = for every trait ϕ , if *x* is actually ϕ , I have enough acquaintance with *x* to know on optimal grounds that *x* is ϕ .

It now follows that I as a creature fail to know God completely (and thus fail to "comprehend" God) just in case there is even one aspect ϕ such that God is actually ϕ but I do not have enough acquaintance with God to know it or to know it on optimal grounds. The relevance of the point that God is "infinitely in act" can now be appreciated. It means that there are infinitely many aspects in which God is actual. A creature seeing God's essence sees optimal grounds for the truth of 'God is ϕ ' for each aspect of God's essence which the creature "takes in" as ϕ -ness. But since a creature can only take in so many aspects of a thing in any career of cognitive acts it can perform, it cannot "comprehend" God. See below, pp.226-227.

Epistle 147
PL 33, 606

q. 12, a. 6

Sermones ad
populum 117, 9,
PL 38, 663

prehended in any way, by an intellect or by anything else; for since He is infinite, He cannot be encompassed by any finite thing in such a manner that the finite thing would be understanding Him infinitely as He Himself is infinite. This is the sense of 'comprehending' which is now under discussion. — (2) But when used in the other way, 'laying hold' ['grasping' or 'comprehending'] is taken more loosely, so that it is merely the opposite of 'missing' [or 'not attaining']. If a person gets to someone, then, as soon as he is holding onto him, he is said to be "laying hold" of him. It is in this sense that God is said to be grasped by the blessed, as Song of Songs 3:4 says, "I held him, and I will not let him go." The Pauline passages about laying-hold are taken in the same sense. — So taken, comprehending is one of the three gifts to the soul; it satisfies hope, as seeing satisfies faith, and as enjoying satisfies love. In our human experience, after all, not everything seen is already held or possessed; sometimes we see distant things or things that are not in our power. Likewise, not everything possessed is being enjoyed, because we take no delight in them, perhaps, or because they are not the ultimate end of our desire so as to satisfy our desire and bring it to rest. But the blessed have all three of these gifts in God:

- they *see* Him, and
- in the seeing, they *hold* Him *present*, so that they always have it in their power to see Him, and
- in the holding on, they *enjoy* Him as the ultimate end satisfying their desire.

ad (2): the reason God is being called incomprehensible is not because there is something of His that is not being seen, but because He is not being seen as completely as He is *there* to be seen. In much the

same way, when a conclusively provable* proposition is being known by someone on a merely probable ground, there is not some part of it which is not being known. (as if its subject were not, or its predicate, or the attachment of the one to the other[†]); rather, the whole is not being known as completely as it is there to be known. So when Augustine defines 'comprehending', he says, "a whole 'comprehended' in being seen is one so seen that nothing of it is hidden to the seer; or else it is one whose limits can be seen on every side." Well, a thing's limits are seen on every side when one reaches the limit in how one is knowing that thing.

ad (3): 'wholly' is being used to modify the object — not in the sense that the object's whole manner [of being] is not under cognition, but in the sense that the object's manner is not the knower's manner. A person seeing God through His essence is seeing in Him that which exists infinitely and is there to be known infinitely; but this infinite manner is not within the seer's scope, as if he could know infinitely. In a similar way, a person can know on probable grounds that a proposition is provable conclusively, without himself knowing the proof.²

² Aquinas' example suggests a modern analogy. Take the propositional calculus, PC, and a formula (wff) *F* in the language of PC. Because I know that PC is a complete and decidable system, I know that there is an effective proof whether *F* is valid, and hence whether it has a proof in PC; and I know the same about the infinite set of wffs of PC. But until I actually know the proof of *F*, I do not know that wff as well as it can be known, and even if I knew countless wffs, I would not know that many proofs. By knowing finitely many axioms, rules, and meta-theorems, however, I apprehend the whole infinite system which is PC. But I do not comprehend it, if that means knowing every theorem as well as it can be known.

* *demonstrabilis*

† *compositio*

Cajetan's Commentary

The title question becomes clear in the body of the article. — There is one conclusion, answering the question in the negative: It is not possible for any created intellect to comprehend God.

The support goes as follows. [*Antecedent:*] It is impossible for the created light of glory to be infinite in any intellect; [*1st inference:*] so it is impossible for any created intellect to know God infinitely; [*2nd inference:*] so it is impossible for any to know Him as much as He is there to be known; [*3rd inference:*] so it is impossible for any to know Him completely; [*4th:*] so it is impossible for any to comprehend God.

The antecedent is obvious. The first inference is supported on the ground that the seeing of God occurs more or less fully, depending on whether more or less of the light of glory is present. The second inference is supported on the following ground: God is infinitely knowable [or *there* to be known], because He is of infinite status as a being* and infinite actuality. Then the third inference is supported by induction on a provable[†] proposition, namely: if it is held on opinion, it is not known completely. Then the fourth inference is supported by the very definition of 'comprehending', which is 'complete knowing'.

* *entitas*
† *scibilis*

Do those seeing God through His essence see everything in so doing?

1 *ST* q.57, a.5; 106, 1; 3 *ST* q.10, a.2; *In II Sent.* d.11, a.2, *In III Sent.* d.14, a.2, qu² 2;
In I Sent. d.45, q.3, a.1; d.49, q.2, a.5; 3 *CG* cc.56, 59, *De Veritate* q.8, a.4; q.20, aa.4, 5

Those who see God through His essence see in Him, it would seem, everything.

PL 75, 376

(1) Gregory says [in book II of his *Moralia*, c. 3], “What do they not see — they who see the One who sees everything?” God is the one who sees everything. So those who see Him see everything.

(2) Also, whoever sees a mirror sees everything reflected in the mirror. Well, everything that comes to pass or can come to pass is reflected in God as in a mirror, because He knows all these things in Himself. So whoever sees God sees everything that happens or can happen.

(3) Besides, he who understands a greater thing can understand lesser ones, as it says in *De Anima III*. But all the things that God makes or can make are less than His essence. So whoever understands God can understand all the things that God has made or can make.

c. 4;
 429b 3

(4) Furthermore, a rational creature naturally desires to know everything. Hence if one seeing God does not come to see everything, his natural desire does not come to rest, and so seeing God will not be fulfilling. That consequence is hardly acceptable. Therefore, in seeing God, one knows everything.

ON THE OTHER HAND, the angels see God through His essence but do not know everything. After all, “The lower angels are cleansed of their ignorance by the higher,” as Denis says [in *De caelesti hierarchia*, c.7]. Even the higher angels do not know future contingencies and the thoughts of our hearts, since this belongs to God alone. It is not the case, therefore, that all who see God’s essence see everything.

PG 3, 208

ANSWER: by seeing the divine essence, a created intellect does not see therein all that God can or does bring about. It is obvious, after all, that things are seen in God as they are present in Him. All things other than God are in Him as effects are power-wise* present in the cause of them. The way things are seen in God, then, is as effects are seen in their cause.¹ But it is also obvious

* *virtute*

that, the more completely a cause is seen, the more effects of it can be seen in it. Take a person of keen intellect: the minute an explanatory principle has been laid down, he grasps many conclusions from it; this does not happen for a person of weaker intellect; he needs to have each conclusion explained to him. So, too, the intellect that can grasp in a cause, *C*, all its effects and all the reasons for them is the intellect that comprehends *C* totally. Well, no created intellect can comprehend God totally, as just shown. So no created intellect, in its act of seeing God, can get to know everything that God is or could be bringing about; to do so would be to “comprehend” His power. Rather, the more completely an intellect sees God, the more it knows of the things God is or could be making.

q 12, a.7

TO MEET THE OBJECTIONS — *ad* (1): Gregory’s point is meant as far as the sufficiency of the object seen (God) is concerned: in Himself, He contains and explains all things. But it does not follow that each one seeing God knows all things, because the seer does not comprehend Him completely.

ad (2): it is not necessarily true that a person seeing a mirror sees everything reflected in it, unless his seeing covers the mirror “comprehensively.”

ad (3): while seeing God is greater than seeing anything else, it is still the case that seeing Him *this way* (where all things are known in Him) is greater than seeing Him *that way* (where not all, but more or fewer things are known in Him). It has been shown that how many things are known in God depends on how complete is the seeing of Him as to how it occurs.

in this article

ad (4): a rational creature’s natural desire is to know all that pertains to the completeness of understanding. This means to know how to classify* things and explain them scientifically. These matters will be seen by anyone seeing God’s essence. But knowing other things — particular agents and their thoughts and deeds — does not pertain to the completeness of created understanding, nor does its natural desire tend thereto. The same applies to knowing things which are not yet real but which can be brought about by God.² — And yet, if nothing but God

* *species et genera*

¹ The talk of an effect’s presence or pre-existence in its cause was explicated power-wise (*virtute* or *virtualiter*). Roughly, the cause of an effect *e* was one or more things in a certain state. The “presence” of *e* in its cause was just the ability of things in that state to produce *e*. Some true description of things in that state picked out or implied this ability. So knowledge of such a description counted as “seeing *e* in its cause.” By the same analysis, if one thing in a given state was the cause, for different reasons, of many effects *e*₁, *e*₂... *e*_n, seeing those effects in their cause would be “seeing” that many such descriptions, *D*₁, *D*₂... *D*_n, are true of that thing in that state — i.e. knowing that thing more thoroughly.

² Aristotle maintained that the aim of science was to classify existing things aright and to explain, for each respect in which they could not be otherwise, why they could not. Here Aquinas identifies this aim with the natural completeness of created understanding as a whole. That way, since a thing’s “natural desire” is just for its own completeness (1 *ST* q.5, a.1), it will follow that a created intellect has natural desire only for such knowledge as the sciences will give it. The sciences do not explain unrealities and contingencies (such as other people’s free choices); so a desire to know such things will not count as a natural desire and will not have to be satisfied

alone were to be seen, who is the fount and source of all being and truth. He would so satisfy one's natural desire to know that one would seek nothing else, and one would be fulfilled. This is why Augustine says in *Confessions V*, "Wretched is the man who knows all those things," i.e. creatures, "but knows not Thee; but blessed is the man who knows Thee, even if he knows those

c⁴,
PL 32, 708

things not. And a man who knows both Thee and them is not the happier for knowing them, but is happy for knowing Thee alone."³

³ This last bit of the *ad (4)* needs reconciling to the rest of it. Would a creature's natural desire for science-like understanding just fall away, at the Vision alone, or be fulfilled *emmenter*?

Cajetan's Commentary

In the title question, the word 'everything' ranges over all items, absolute and relative, real and thought-up, and all their scientific accounts — not just over those that "are" in some way, but also over those whose being would not imply a contradiction. In short, 'everything' ranges over all topics whatsoever. — The phrase 'in God' is meant object-wise, so that the sense is that, in seeing that object which is God, they would be seeing all items included in Him in any way whatsoever.

Analysis of the article

ii. In the body of the article, there is one conclusion, answering the question in the negative: No created intellect can see everything in God, but only more things or less things, depending on how well it sees God.

This is supported as follows. [*Antecedent:*] Whatever matters are seen in God are seen in such fashion as they are "there" in God; [*1st inference:*] ergo they are seen as effects power-wise contained in their cause; [*2nd inference:*] so more of them are seen, or fewer, according as God is seen more or less completely; [*3rd inference:*] so all of them are not seen, unless God is fully comprehended. [*4th inference:*] So by no created intellect can all the matters in God be seen; more or less are seen, depending on how well He is seen.

The antecedent is obvious. The first inference is supported on the ground that all matters are "there" in God as [effects are "there"] in their highest cause.

The second inference rests on the ground that the more completely a cause is known, the more effects are seen in it. This is illustrated by how one human mind differs from another, when it confronts a logically fertile principle.

The third follows obviously from the second.

The fourth inference is supported on the ground that no created intellect can comprehend God.

On the first inference: aren't things "in" God otherwise than in their cause?

iii. *Re* the first inference, doubt arises from Scotus* and others, who maintain that things are "there" in God as in a mirror with a will of its own. Their argument against the present article goes like this. [*Antecedent:*] Things are "there" in God not only as in a cause but also as in a mirror with a will; [*inference:*] so Aquinas commits a fallacy of the consequent when he infers so things are seen in God only as in a cause.

* *In Ill Sent.* d.14,
q 1;
Cf Capreolus at
IV Sent. d.49, q 6

(The word 'only' is implicit in the text; otherwise, Aquinas could not get the conclusion he was obviously after.) Then the antecedent is supported as follows.

• First, from the authority of St. Augustine, in his book *On Seeing God*: God is a mirror with a will of his own. "and if He wants [a thing to be seen], it is seen; and if He wants not, it is not seen."

• Then, from reason: God represents all things distinctly, like a mirror, and not just indistinctly, like a cause.¹

Hence, since the whole reasoning of this article rests on the claim that God represents [things] only indistinctly, like a cause, it is seen to collapse.

iv. TO CLEAR THIS UP, you need to learn from *De Veritate* q. 12, a. 6, that things are in God literally* as in a cause, metaphorically as in a mirror. God is truly and literally a cause, after all, but not truly and literally a mirror; only figuratively. He is called a mirror because He represents [things] distinctly, but that does not make Him literally a mirror, since He does not represent things impressed by another, as the definition of a mirror requires. Thanks to this condition, the title of 'mirror' is appropriated to the Word of God proceeding from the Father (*Wisdom 7:26*, "the brightness of eternal light, and the unspotted mirror"), since the Word is the Father's express image. But one learns from Denis² and from Augustine³ that symbolic talk of God does not support arguments. Nothing effective can be inferred, therefore, from this metaphorical term.

* *propri?*

v. I respond to the appeal to Augustine's authority by saying that his statement is figurative [in calling God a mirror] on account of the fact that [a mirror] reflects distinctly. But his point that God acts voluntarily [is literally true] because God voluntarily bestows the light of glory, and this-or-that-much of it. Let that suffice for the case of the Beatific Vision. As for the case of new revelations, however, God is not involved in them object-wise but causally. His involvement is entirely voluntary and is like an exemplar-mirror.

† Epistle 9
‡ Epistle 93,
c 8

¹ The claim that x represents or reflects y was made loosely whenever x displayed a likeness to y. A physical cause "displayed" a likeness to its effects power-wise, as potentialities of itself, not as actual things distinct from itself. In God, however, we shall see created things distinctly. So, they must be "there" in Him in another way, said Scotus *et al.* Cajetan will concede that the object, God, displays likeness to creatures distinctly but will deny that he does so as a mirror. He does so, as we shall see, as an ontologically eminent cause.

vi. In response to our opponents' argument from reason, I should say that *it* is the one that goes wrong by a fallacy of the consequent. [since it proceeds] as if representing "distinctly" happened in only one way, *i.e.* as in a mirror. The fact of the matter — and you should know this — is that representing distinctly happens in two ways:

(1) In one way, the distinctness comes *from the representer*: so it is with a mirror, in that any appearance* representing *x* remains distinct from an appearance representing *y* in the same mirror.²

* species

(2) In the other way, the distinctness comes *from the things represented*. So it is if we say, "The intellective soul represents distinctly the form which is bodiliness, and the form which is being-a-compound, and [the form which is] vegetative life,[†] and [the form which is] sensitive life." These [forms] do not have in the nature of the intellective soul distinct bases on which they resemble it; rather, on one and the same basis, the nature of the intellective soul stands to all these forms as "like them," no less than if it had a distinct basis of resemblance to each. For it represents the distinctive conditions of each just as well as if it were a species matching each alone.[‡] The reason is that a thing's *going beyond*[‡] another does not impede its *representing the other completely*. A species would represent a white thing just as well, after all, if [it somehow went beyond the white one so that] with the white, and on the same basis, it also represented a black thing.

† anima

‡ excedere

Their argument goes wrong in two ways, then: (1) it argues from a metaphorical sense; (2) it supposes that "representing distinctly" is only a case of distinctness coming from the representer, which is clearly false al-

² A mirror "represents" in the sense that it displays likenesses of things by reflecting them. Here the point is that a mirror is a medium in which distinct likenesses are displayed *by distinct displays*. Thus if I hang a mirror here, so that the library table and the leather chair are both reflected in it, what is going on is that the representative *species* which is how-the-table-looks-from-here and the representative *species* which is how-the-chair-looks-from-here are reflected by the mirror as two distinct visual representations (each representing an article of furniture). No matter how I turn or move the mirror, they remain distinct so long as they are both reflected.

³ Appealed to here is an idea about nested forms. A chemical compound has all the completeness of a body just by having the form f_1 of a chemical compound. A plant has all the completeness of a body and all that of a compound just by having the form f_2 of a plant. When the whole *perfecto* of a form f_1 is delivered by a form f_2 that "goes further" (*excedit illam*), f_2 was said to contain f_1 not just power-wise (*virtualiter*) but also form-wise (*formaliter*) or in a higher manner (*eminenter*), and f_2 was also said to display an eminent likeness to f_1 . Well, a human being's rational soul was thought to contain in this way all the other forms mentioned in this paragraph. To come to the point, it displayed likeness to distinct forms without distinct displays. Anyone grasping the nature of the human soul alone would grasp all that is involved in each of those forms, so as to "see" them in it.

ready, and especially false in this context. For the all-glorious God has His effects "there distinctly" in His nature — not [in such a way that their distinctness is coming] from Himself but [is coming] from themselves. For He is utterly complete Act, pre-possessing all things in His utter oneness. Out of this vastly higher completeness, He has what it takes to be just as much the distinctive exemplar of *this* as of *that* (*i.e.* to have all that is distinctive to this and all that is distinctive to that), as if He were a distinct exemplar of each.⁴

Cf. q.4, a.2

So the inference in the text *is* meant to be taken with the adverb 'only', as their argument says, and it is a perfectly good inference. For *in God* all things other than Himself are "there" only indistinctly and as utterly one, which is being power-wise in a cause.⁵ This point is in fact a truth of theology and of philosophy, as St. Thomas will say below in q. 14.

And please note: if you don't have this fundamental point firmly in hand, you will always be going wrong when you talk about God and the other things existing or seen "in Him," and you will always be falling into crude and juvenile remarks.

On the second inference: can't one see more effects without knowing the cause better?

vi. As to the second inference and its support [to the effect that the more completely a cause is known, the more effects are seen in it], doubt arises.

* Scotus, in his remarks on *III Sent.* d.14, q.2, says that this support contains a fallacy of the consequent. For even if one grants what the article says, *i.e.*

Cf. Capreolus ad loc.

one who knows a cause more completely sees more effects in it,

it does not therefore follow that the converse is true, so that,

one who sees more effects must be seeing the cause more completely.

And yet the article's whole reasoning is based on this covertly assumed converse, and not on the claim that it is explicit in the text.

That this converse is in fact false, in general, Scotus (same passage) undertakes to prove three ways:

(1) Insofar as a cause is a cause, it gets none of its completeness from the thing caused, because it is prior to

⁴ Cajetan's rebuttal is ending with an analogy. *As* the human soul "represents distinctly" the lower forms of completeness which it formally/eminently contains, *so also analogously* the divine nature "represents distinctly" every creaturely form of completeness, because it pre-contains them all. God pre-contains them both *virtute* and *eminenter*, because His power is identically His transcendence as *Pure Act*.

⁵ Notice the difference, then, between how other things "are in" God (as effects in their cause) and how those things "are represented" by God (as intentional objects grasped in Him as an object). They "are in" Him *indistinctē* and *ut unum*: they "are represented" by Him *distinctē*, in that he displays likeness to them each, though without distinct displays.

it. Therefore, knowledge of an explanatory principle *P* as a cause is not made more complete by knowing the conclusions [caused to be known by it].

(2) I take an explanatory principle *P* known to some degree *d*, and I ask whether or not, without *P*'s being known to a higher degree *d*+, a certain conclusion *C* can be known through it.

— If the answer is yes, [Scotus'] point is established [because one has seen an effect without enhancing the knowledge of the cause]. And if one conclusion can be known on these terms, others contained in *P* can be known on the same terms, absent the more complete knowledge of *P*.

— If the answer is no, then *P* known to degree *d* is not an explanatory principle, because it is not explanatory of anything.

(3) In [the section on distinctive attributes in] book I of the *Posterior Analytics*, WHAT the attribute [*passio*] IS is assumed, and THAT-IT-IS comes to be known. But knowledge of WHAT-IT-IS is not completed by knowing the posterior fact THAT-IT-IS. Therefore, knowledge of an explanatory principle does not become more complete by virtue of the fact that it causes one to know what it explains.

c 10,
76a 33

Reported by
Capreolus at IV
Sent d 49, q 6

viii. • Durandus and Godfrey [of Fontaines] also weigh in against this support, to whatever extent it rests on the illustration about the [logically fertile] premise and the conclusions,

— because [they say] the containment is not alike: conclusions are contained in the premise potentially and confusedly, whereas effects are contained in the First Cause actually and distinctly;

— and because [they say] the becoming-known is not alike: in [knowing] a premise, the conclusions are not actually known, unless a deduction is made, a subsumption, an application, *etc.*; but in [knowing] the First Cause, the effects are simply seen.

ix. TO CLEAR AWAY these objections, you need to know that something can be “seen” in two ways:

(1) in itself, object-wise, as a mirror placed in your line of sight is seen “in itself;”

(2) in another, object-wise, as things behind your back are seen in the same mirror; for they are not seen in themselves but in the appearances resembling them and shining back at you in the mirror.

And as these matters stand in corporeal cases, so they stand in spiritual cases. In the context at hand, then, we are not talking about “seeing all things” in themselves; we are talking about seeing them in another, *i.e.* in another object. And we are not talking about [seeing them in another object] as in a mirror but about [seeing all things in another object] as in a cause, as came out in earlier remarks [§§ *iv-vi*]. Now, we understand a thing *x* to be seen “in” or “from” its cause, not when the seen cause stands just any way you please to the seeing of *x*, but just in case the seen cause stands as an *intrinsic-*

* *per se* ly* *sufficient cause of seeing x*. Otherwise, *x* would

not be seen thanks to seeing this cause, but thanks to some other factor.

That much being the case, we can make the point Aquinas intended clear as follows. One and the same cause, staying exactly the same, keeps on yielding, as far as its own contribution is concerned, the same effect. Therefore a cause *C*, known to a degree *d*, staying exactly the same both in being and in being-known, keeps on yielding the same effect. Therefore it cannot be the case that this *C*, as just described, makes known some effect that it wasn't making known from the outset. Therefore it cannot yield knowledge of more effects unless it is altered. Well, it is not altered in being. Therefore [if *C* yields knowledge of more effects] it is altered in being-known. It does not become less known, obviously. Therefore it becomes more known. And that is Aquinas' point.

From there it is obvious that “sees more effects in the cause *C*” and “sees the cause *C* more completely” are equivalent, because we have both

if one sees *C* more completely, one sees more effects in it

and

if one sees more effects in it, one sees the cause *C* more completely.

Otherwise, the seeing of more effects in *C* would be an effect without a cause. For if the more complete way of seeing *C* is not the cause of this effect, some other new disposition of *C* will be its cause, and it won't be easy to imagine what that disposition (in being or in being-known) might be.

x. From these remarks our answer to Scotus is already obvious. In equivalences, no fallacy of the consequent occurs. Given the conditional going one way, the converse is understood to be given as well.

As to his two lines of objection against the truth just shown — which is true of a cause *vis-à-vis* its effects and of a premise (both in knowing and in being) *vis-à-vis* the conclusions from it — we reply quite easily that Scotus was either blind or pretending to be blind. The following proposition

(a) More knowledge of conclusions in (or from) an explanatory principle as a sufficient cause *presupposes* more complete knowledge of that principle

is one thing, and this one

(b) More knowledge of conclusions in (or from) such a principle *makes* the knowledge of that principle more complete

is quite another. They are farther apart than heaven and earth! Aquinas' text teaches (a), not (b). Scotus' case, in its first and third arguments, attacks only (b). So our short answer is to grant quite freely that knowledge of an explanatory principle *P* as a cause is not made more complete by knowing a conclusion, and that knowledge of WHAT-IT-IS is not made more complete by knowing the THAT-IT-IS which is an effect of demonstration. In both cases, rather, other things being equal, there is presup-

posed a greater knowledge of the principle and of the WHAT-IT-IS, if, from the knowing of them, those other points are now being known and were not known before.⁶

As to his second argument, however, where he is posing his dilemma, we can reply to both alternatives:

(1) first [to the *no* alternative] by saying that the explanatory principle *P* known to degree *d*, as so known, is not explanatory of anything in actual knowing, because of the incompleteness of the knowing, not because of *P*'s own nature; there is no problem about that;

(2) second [to the *yes* alternative:] given that *P* known to a given degree is the source of some conclusion's being [actually] known, too, I am saying that the alleged consequence

therefore *P* will be the source of knowing another conclusion, without itself being known to a higher degree

does not follow. Meanwhile, if one asks why it is that a low degree of seeing *P* suffices for knowing one conclusion but not for knowing another. St. Thomas gives an answer in the *Quaestiones disputatae de Veritate*, q.8. a.4 ad 12: once a cause is seen, the reason why some conclusions are perceived at once in it (or from it) is because they are in it rather manifestly, which is not the case with all, because many effects are rather latent, as experience testifies.⁷

xI. Going on now to the first objection lodged by the others [Durandus and Godfrey]: — the containment is in fact similar. A logically fertile explanatory premise, insofar as it has active power* *vis-à-vis* conclusions, contains them in act,[†] and hence not confusedly but distinctly [with the distinctness coming] from the things contained; but it contains them "in act" in its own order. It is a trait common to every active cause, after all, that that it contains its effects in act, be it form-wise or eminently.⁸

* *vis*
† *actu*

⁶ Cajetan is not forgetting the obvious: a thing *x* is not a cause in itself but only relatively to an effect *e*: hence it is impossible to know *x* better or worse as a cause without knowing more or fewer of the relations-to-the-*e*, in which *x* stands, and hence without knowing more or fewer of the *e*, which are the termini of such relations; and hence the equivalence holds (one knows a cause more as one knows more effects of it). Cajetan is just clarifying the epistemological order between the two sides of the equivalence. One learns more effects because one sees better what *x* can do, and not *vice-versa*. For one cannot see *e*₂ as an effect of *x* until one sees that *x* can bring about *e*₂.

⁷ To judge by Aquinas's remarks in the passage cited, the ability of a cause *x* to produce an effect *e*₂ will be more latent in case that ability is a more remote consequence of what *x* is seen to be, requiring a more complex reasoning process, if it is to be grasped.

⁸ The sense of this paragraph seems to be as follows. Active power (*vis*) is power to accomplish a transitive action, and an "active cause" is one whose causal contribution lies in just such an action (*in actu*, as opposed to some passive contribution of undergoing or receiving). Since the active cause is a cause in this action, it contains its effects in doing it. The relevance of this in the present context is that it remains true

— As to their second objection: yes, in general it matters a lot whether a point is known "from another" or "in another," *i.e.* through discursive reasoning or without it, *etc.*: but for purposes of knowing multiple effects on account of knowing a cause, where 'on account of' means a sufficient cause, it does not matter at all. Other things being equal, one judges the two cases just the same. And that is why this article mentions both cases: it speaks throughout of knowing "in another" and mentions knowing "from another" in the example brought in from a logically fertile explanatory premise.

One could also reply along another line: one could say that the text means to speak only of knowing "in another," and that conclusions, too, can be known "in the premise" and not just "from it." For one encounters this situation at the culmination of a science, when all the conclusions have been explained,* and all are seen in the premisses.

And if someone just starts out seeing more conclusions in a seen premise, then beyond doubt he penetrates that premise more completely without any discursive reasoning, and he is more like an angel in nature than a human being. After all, what angels do is just understand, while what we do is reason-things-out. Never mind that the article mentions knowledge "from a premise," because that illustration is drawn from an effect.[†] After all, because we experience the fact that knowing more [conclusions] from a premise comes from knowing the premise better, we have a good indication of the principle that knowing more [effects] in a cause comes only from knowing the cause better, because, if [the principle holds] of what is less seen and has less in it, then [it holds] of what is more [seen and has more in it]. In that case, the logically fertile explanatory principle is not being brought forward as similar to a cause in how conclusions are known from it, but as an indication drawn from an effect. So let the whippersnappers be quiet.

* *resolutae*

† *a posteriori*

On the third inference: can't one see all God's effects without comprehending Him?

xII. As to the third inference, doubt arises from the distinctive conditions under which God is knowable.

• A first doubt comes from Aureol and Godfrey, and it goes directly against the inference as follows. [*Antecedent:*] "Knows everything in God" covers a range of possibilities; [*inference:*] so it doesn't imply 'comprehends God', which admits of no such range. — The soundness of the inference is obvious, and the antecedent is supported thus. Knowing everything in God may happen two ways: (1) by having knowledge which is infinite in extent, and (2) by having knowledge infinite in quality.[‡]

‡ *intensivè*

when the cause is a premise. Godfrey and Durandus seem to think of a premise as passive, acted upon by the mind applying it, deducing from it, *etc.*, and so they think it cannot "contain conclusions" in anything like the sense in which an active cause contains effects. Cajetan disagrees, because he thinks of the premise (once understood) as triggering the mind to infer things. As a causal trigger, the understood premise is an intellectual content which displays likeness to each distinct point inferable (without distinct displays).

which alone amounts to comprehending, because completeness of knowing comes, intrinsically speaking, from the quality of the knowing. Thus, one may know everything in God clearly, and one may know it all more clearly, and one may know it all with the infinite clarity which is comprehension. And so 'seeing everything in God' has a certain range to it. — And here is a confirming argument. Suppose everything other than God that could exist did exist; it would still not be equal in being to the infinite existence of God; so if all those things were known, they would not equal His knowability. Therefore knowing all of them does not imply comprehending Him.

xiii. • Scotus also, in the place cited above, has two arguments against this.

In III Sent.
d 14, q.2

(1) The first goes as follows. [*Major:*] If B and C are both in A but in a certain order, such that B is the whole reason why C is in A, then if one seeing B-in-A does not comprehend A, *a fortiori* one seeing C-in-A will not comprehend A. Take for example a subject in which there are two attributes,* the second there *via* the first; if one seeing the first does not comprehend the subject, neither will one seeing the second. [*Minor:*] A qualitative [*intensiva*] infinity is in God, and all things are in God, and the qualitative infinity is the reason why all things are in Him; but seeing the qualitative infinity in Him does not imply comprehending God; and so neither does seeing all things in Him.

* *passiones*

(2) The second argument goes like this. He who knows just one effect in the Word does not comprehend that effect, nor does he comprehend the Word as its cause. [Ditto for one who knows just two, just three, etc.] So no matter how many effects he knows, he still does not comprehend any of them, nor the Word as their cause. Therefore one who knows all of them does not comprehend either them or God.

xiv. TO CLEAR THESE DOUBTS AWAY, you have to realize that "seeing everything" is not just seeing *so-and-so* many but seeing *as much as* divine power can do. The issue here is not just numerical extent but [qualitative] intensity of completeness; for it is not just the case that God can bring about another thing, no matter how many He has brought about; it is also the case that He can make things more perfect, no matter how well He has made them. So while it is impossible for "everything" to be brought about, either in being or in being-known, it is still the case that the following conditional is true:

if "everything" were brought about, the effect would exhaust God's power,

as is this one,

if "everything" were known, the effect exhausting His power would be known.

Now it is well established that, once the effect exhausting a power is known, the power itself is easily comprehended. If such is the case from knowing all things in themselves, it is all the more the case that knowing everything in the cause-of-everything presupposes comprehending the cause-of-everything. For the knowing

[of everything in the cause of everything] presupposes as much strength-to-cause as there is [in that cause]. Otherwise, from knowing the cause, one would still not know its exhaustive effect, *i.e.* the totality of possibles.

xv. With these points in place, I proceed to the first line of objection [the one from Aureol and Godfrey]. I deny its antecedent. Their argument assumes or supposes a false starting point, namely, the one can know *that many* things in God without knowing *as much as* He can do. I have just shown that this is false. Ergo

one sees everything in God, and
one sees God infinitely

imply each other.

— The confirming argument I can answer two ways: *First* by denying the final inference: even if knowing everything [in itself] does not imply comprehending God, still, knowing everything in God, *in the cause*, implies it, and that is the topic here. — It seems to me that I may also answer in a *second way*: the business about whether all things [if they all existed or were known] would "equal" God's existing or being-known can be understood in two ways:

- (1) taken one way, it would mean that their being, natural or intentional, equals God's, and in that sense they do not match.
- (2) Taken the other way, it would mean that knowing God or knowing His power as such does not involve knowing any more than knowing "everything" would involve knowing

(just as we say the act of understanding is the exhaustive effect of the intellectual soul and has as much being-status or knowability, not the first way but the second). In this sense "everything" would match God's being and knowability. — It is true, as I said, that for "everything" to be brought about in being or in being-known involves a contradiction: for it is always true that, no matter how many things have been brought about, God can do another and make them better; however much has been revealed, He can reveal something further. For God's power is, in fact, inexhaustible.⁹

xvi. I now move on to Scotus' arguments.

ad (1): the major premise is true provided the manner of being-in remains constant, but not if it varies. In cases where B and C are both form-wise in A but in a certain order, Scotus' proposition is true, and that is why his example holds good. But in cases where B is in A form-wise but C is in A cause-wise, the proposition is not true. For just as the seeing of a cause *x* entails *a priori* the seeing of what is form-wise existent in *x* but not the seeing of all that is power-wise contained in *x* (because the for-

⁹ Cajetan seems to be saying that "everything God could make" (*i.e.* the set of all possibilities) is an illegitimate totality, somewhat as Russell concluded that the "set of all sets" is an illegitimate totality. It involves a contradiction. Contrast this with the problem about there being an actual infinity of things (above, I 37 q.7, a.4): Cajetan denies an actual infinity, but he does not claim to see a contradiction in it. So the "set of all possibles" must pose, in his view, a different and deeper problem.

mer are manifest in x , while the latter are latent in x 's power), so also and conversely, seeing all the things contained power-wise in the cause x entails *a posteriori* the comprehending of x , while seeing all that is form-wise in x entails only the seeing of x itself (the former are in the class of things-latent-in- x , while the latter are in the class of things-manifest-in-it). So when B is form-wise in A, but C is power-wise in A, it turns out that seeing B-in-A does not amount to comprehending A, yet seeing C-in-A does amount to that. Well, so matters stand in the case at hand. The intensive infinity is in God form-wise, while "all things" are in Him not form-wise but power-wise; and so the former is patent when God is seen, and *vice-versa*; but the latter, because they are latently in Him, are seen only according to how thoroughly He is seen. Thus seeing them all, as members of the class of objects hidden in their cause, presupposes comprehending their cause, while seeing the infinity does not. — So when the manner of being-in varies, Scotus' major is false. In this case, they have been shown to vary. Ergo [his major is false, and his argument fails].

xvii. ad (2). To comprehend an effect, e , can be taken two ways: (1) Taken one way, it means that e is known in all respects, including all that is possible through the potential present in e . (2) Taken the other way, it means that e is known in all respects, including all that is possible on any basis, be it through the potential in e or the potential present in something else. If you take 'comprehends' the first way, I deny that he who sees a rock

in the Word fails to comprehend it. I say that the soul of Christ sees in the Word every creature and whatever lies in each creature's potential; and hence [I say] the soul of Christ comprehends every creature, in my first sense of 'comprehends it'. For the same reason His soul comprehends the Word as cause of each creature, as such. An indication of this is the fact that, to comprehend this, the soul need not see the Word more completely. And this does not amount to comprehending God, except in a qualified respect, which is no problem. — But if you take 'comprehends it' the second way, then I deny Scotus' final inference. Any given effect, and any given [set of] so-many effects, is not the exhaustive object of God's power; yet "everything possible" is its exhaustive object and its exhaustive effect. And so one's judgment does not stay the same as one passes from one, to several, to all; nor does the trait of being a non-exhaustive or exhaustive effect.¹⁰ So the argument goes wrong by passing from the non-matching to the matching: knowing a less-than-matching effect in a cause does not presuppose comprehending the cause, but knowing a matching effect does.

Many more arguments on this are available in Capreolus' comments on *III Sent.* d.14, q.2, and on *IV Sent.* d.49, q.6. Look them up. The ones I have covered here are just the ones that seemed opportune.

¹⁰ This sounds remarkably like the compactness problem. It sounds as though Scotus is assuming that the ordered set of (possible) divine effects would be compact, while Cajetan is denying it.

When God's essence is seen, are the other things seen in God seen through likenesses?

In III Sent. d 14, a 1, qu^a. 4-5, De Veritate q 8, a.5

It seems that the things seen in God by those who see His essence are seen through some likenesses.

(1) Every case of knowing comes about through an assimilation of the knower to the known; for the understanding in act becomes the thing understood in act insofar as the understanding is informed with the latter's likeness, and the sense in act becomes the thing sensed in act by the same process, as the pupil of the eye is informed with the likeness of a color. It must be the case, therefore, that if an intellect seeing God through His essence understands certain creatures in God, this intellect is informed by their likenesses.

(2) Besides, what we have seen before, we retain in memory. Paul saw God's essence in a rapture, and, as Augustine says in book IX of *Super Genesim ad litteram*, after he ceased seeing it, he remembered many things which he had seen in that rapture. Thus he says (2 Cor. 12:4) he "heard secret things which it is not lawful for a man to utter." So there must have remained in his intellect some likenesses of the things he remembered. For the same reason, when he was still seeing God's essence, he must have had some likenesses or species of the things he was seeing.

ON THE OTHER HAND, there is the fact that one sees both a mirror and what appears in it thanks to a single species. All the things that are seen in God are seen as in a mental* mirror. Therefore, if God Himself is not seen thanks to any likeness, but thanks to His essence, neither are the things seen in Him seen thanks to any likenesses or species.

ANSWER: those who see God through His essence do not see the things they see in His essence thanks to any species, but thanks to the divine essence itself united to their intellect. After all, any given thing is known because of its likeness' being in the knower. But this can come about in two ways. For since things similar to the same thing are similar to each other, there are two ways in which a power-to-know, *P*, can be assimilated

to the thing to be known, *R*:

- (1) in itself — when *P* is directly informed by *R*'s likeness, *R* is known "in itself;"
- (2) in a like thing — when *P* is informed by the species of something like *R*, the thing *R* is not said to be known in itself but "in its like."

For the knowing with which a man is known in himself is one thing, and that with which he is known in his portrait is another. To know things in themselves or in their own natures is to know them thanks to likenesses of them in the knower; but to "see things in God" is to know them insofar as their likenesses pre-exist in God. These two ways of knowing are different. So: according to the way of knowing with which things are seen in God by those who see Him through His essence, those things are not seen thanks to any further likenesses, but thanks to the divine essence alone, present in the intellect and making God seen.

TO MEET THE OBJECTIONS — *ad (1)*: an intellect seeing God is assimilated to the things seen in God by being united to the divine essence, wherein the likenesses of all things pre-exist.

ad (2): there are some powers-to-know that can form other species from those previously conceived. This is how imagination works: from the species of a mountain and that of gold, already conceived, it forms the species of a golden mountain. Intellect works the same: from already conceived likenesses of a genus and of a difference, it forms the scientific definition* of a species. In a similar way, from the likeness of a portrait, we can form within ourselves a likeness of the one portrayed. This is how Paul or anyone else seeing God can, from the sight of the divine essence, form in himself likenesses of the things that are being seen in it; and these remained in Paul even after he ceased to see God's essence. So the "seeing" in which things are seen through such species, so formed, is other than the "seeing" in which things are seen in God.

Cajetan's Commentary

The title question is clear, because 'through likenesses' means ones serving as intelligible species, above and beyond the divine essence itself.

In the body of the article, there is one conclusion, answering the question with no: those seeing God do not see other things in Him thanks to species of them, but thanks to the divine essence itself, united to their

intellect. — The support goes thus. [*Antecedent:*] Any given thing is known thanks to its likeness' being in the knower. [*1st inference:*] So a thing can become known in two ways: (1) thanks to its own likeness, or (2) thanks to the likeness of a thing like it; [*2nd inference:*] so [it can become known] "in itself," or "in another." [*3rd inference:*] So other things' being seen "in God" is not

c.28,
PL 34, 428

* intelligibile

* ratio

their being seen thanks to their own likenesses but thanks to their likenesses in God. [*4th inference:*] So the things seen in God are not seen thanks to species but are seen thanks only to the divine essence itself, united to the intellect.

The first inference is supported on the ground that things similar to the same thing are similar to each other: this ground is what makes the second alternative, which could have been subject to doubt, follow obviously. — The second inference is supported by a commonplace about equivalent expressions: if *x* is known through its own species, *x* is known in itself as an object, and conversely; likewise, if *x* is known through another's species, *x* is known in another object [and conversely]. — The third inference needs no support, because it is well established that things' being seen in God is their being seen "in another" to which they are likened and in which (*i. e.* in God) they are therefore said to have their likenesses, as any effect has in its cause something to which it is likened.

— The last inference, as far as its second part is

concerned ["but are seen thanks only . . ."], holds good on the basis of points previously determined, to the effect that God's essence is joined to the [created] intellect [seeing it] through itself and not through a species.

Otherwise the outcome of the discussion in this article would have had to be, "Therefore the things seen in God are not seen thanks to their own species but are seen thanks to God's species," while in fact the conclusion drawn is ". . . but thanks to the divine essence itself united to the intellect." For God's essence not only stands as the object in which other things are seen but also takes the place of the species by which the intellect is assimilated to the object.

ii. In his remarks on *III Sent.* d.14, q.2, and on *IV Sent.* d.49, q.6, Capreolus recounts some objections to these points, stemming from Aureol and from a certain Irishman, but they are not worth mentioning here, either because (given the text of this article) a child would know how to smash them, or because they raise questions about the difference between "morning and evening knowledge," which will be treated below.

q 58, aa.6-7

Do those seeing God through His essence see *at once* everything they see in Him?

1 *ST* q. 58, a.2; *In II Sent.* d.3, q.2, a.4; *In III Sent.* d.14, a.2, q^a.4, 3 *CG* c.60; *De Veritate* q.8, a.14; *Quodl. VII*, q.1, a.2

It seems that those seeing God through His essence would not see all the things they see in Him simultaneously.

c 10,
114b 34

(1) Aristotle says [*Topics II*] that while we may know many things, we understand one thing at a time. Things “seen” in God are understood, because God is seen with the understanding. Hence those seeing God do not, in fact, see many things in Him at once.

c 22;
PL 34, 388

(2) Besides, Augustine says in book VIII of *Super Genesim ad litteram* that God “moves the spiritual creature through time,” *i.e.* through understanding and affection. But the spiritual creature he is talking about is an angel who sees God. Therefore, because time implies succession, those seeing God understand successively and feel affection successively.

XV, c.16
PL 42, 1079

ON THE OTHER HAND, there is what Augustine says in the last book of his *De Trinitate*: “our thoughts will not be turning, going back and forth from topic to topic; we shall see, rather, our whole knowledge in one, simultaneous surveil.

I ANSWER: the things seen in God are not seen successively but all at once. To grasp this, one needs to consider the fact that the reason we cannot understand many things at once is because we are understanding them through diverse species. A single intellect cannot be informed *in act* by diverse species simultaneously, so as

to be understanding things through them, just as a single body cannot be shaped by diverse shapes simultaneously. But when some *set* of things can be understood by *one* species, they can be understood all at once. Take the diverse parts of some whole: if each part is understood through a species of its own, they are understood successively; but if all are understood through a single species *of the whole*, they are all understood at once. Well, it was just shown that the things seen in God are not each seen through a likeness of its own; they are all seen through the one essence of God. Thus they are seen at once, not successively.

q.12, a.9

TO MEET THE OBJECTIONS — *ad* (1): we understand but “one” thing insofar as we are understanding through “one” species. But many things understood through one species are understood at once. Thus in the [one] species of man, we understand [at once] animal and rational; in the [one] species of a house, we understand a wall and a roof.

ad (2): if you are talking about the angels’ natural cognition, with which they know things through the diverse species with which they are endowed, then no, they do not know everything at once but are moved “through time” with their understanding. But [if you are talking about the angels’ supernatural cognition,] as they see things in God, they see them simultaneously.

Cajetan’s Commentary

The title question is clear from the remarks in the text.

Analysis of the article

In the body of the article, there is one conclusion, answering the question in the affirmative: all the things seen in the Word are seen, not successively, but simultaneously. — The support goes thus. [*Antecedent:*] All the things seen in the Word are seen, not through their own species, but thanks to the divine essence alone; [*inference:*] hence they are seen all at once.

The antecedent is clearly the case, as shown in the preceding article. — The inference is supported as follows. [*Assumption:*] The reason why we cannot understand many things at once is plurality of species; [*inference:*] therefore, where there is not plurality of species, nothing prevents understanding many things at once. The assumption is supported two ways, by reason and by experience:

(1) By reason, thus: an intellect cannot be informed by many species at once so as to understand, *i.e.*, cannot

be so informed in complete act, as one sees from the similar case of a body *vis-à-vis* shapes.

(2) By experience: we can’t understand the many parts of a whole all at once, by species distinctive to each part; but we can understand the same parts all at once *in the whole*, by a species of the whole. So understanding many at once comes with one species, not many.

Clarifications

ii. (1) Observe first that there are many doubts hereabouts. Is it true of all species that plurality [of them] impedes [understanding many things at once], or is it only true of species of the same class*? And are we talking about just any plurality of species, or about a certain kind of plurality, *i.e.* a plurality in which the several species are not ordered to one? *Etc.* These questions will be sorted out in the treatise on the angels, and so I am postponing them until then.

* *ordo*

q.58, a.2

(2) What we get from the argument here is not that all the things represented by a single species *have to be*

understood at once, but that they *can be*, in keeping with the nature of the intellect, because there is no obstacle present. Now, given the possibility, the reason why Aquinas hastens to conclude that all those things are in fact seen at once, is because every possible good must be posited to be present in actuality in the seeing of the Word (because happiness is the state made complete by comprehension of all the goods, and because, where goods are concerned, act is better than potency, as it says in

c. 9.
1051a 5

Metaphysics IX).

Defense against Scotus

iii. In remarks on *III Sent.* d.14, q.2, Scotus rejects the conclusion of this article, because he holds that the soul of Christ does not see everything at once in the Word, but successively, seeing whatever He wants his human mind to be turned to. Scotus argues against our conclusion on two grounds. (1) We experience for ourselves that attention paid to many objects at once is less perfect; so it seems impossible for a finite faculty to see with perfect attention countless things* at once. (2) If Christ's soul actually saw countless things, the perfection of that soul would exceed the perfection of any other soul *limitlessly*,[†] which hardly seems right.

* *infinita*

† *infiniē*

iv. TO ANSWER BRIEFLY, suppose as these arguments do (and as is true) that Christ's soul sees numberless things in the Word. Scotus' (1) is easy to answer: attention paid to many things *as to many objects for understanding*[‡] is less perfect when paid all at once; but not so with attention paid to many *as to one object understood*.[§] Well, whatever things are being understood with one species are being taken as one object for understanding; for one species is, of itself, one such object, and is not many except as they are one. Hence to see many or even numberlessly many in one object does not diminish the attention paid to each of them in it, because the many, as "things seen in it," do not raise the count [of objects], either among themselves or with it. Note this point well. Thus the other ground Scotus thought up against understanding many things at once [his (2)] is also hollow. Diminution of attention is caused by diversity of species; with oneness of species comes entirely complete attention.

‡ *ut plura intelligibilia*

§ *ut unum intellectum*

But in answering his (2) I can also deny his inference. Neither the trait of seeing finitely many things in God nor the trait of seeing countless many specifies or intrinsically modifies or quantifies the seeing of God; rather, such a trait is a cause of seeing God more or less completely. And the following inference,

N sees so well as to see countless things,

hence N sees limitlessly,

is not valid, because, if countless things of one type[¶] have been seen, there remain countless things of another type; if those have been seen, there remain still others;

and as emerged above [a.8], they can never "all" be seen. — And I can also deny that the point inferred by Scotus is "hardly right." As we shall see elsewhere, Christ's soul does surpass without limit all other souls, and the angels — not as the infinite surpasses the finite (because even Christ's soul has a finite light of glory), but as a thing higher in rank* surpasses everything lower in rank (*i.e.* if the lower increased without end, they would never equal the thing higher in the ranking, as one sees case-by-case). Thus Christ is the head over the whole Church Triumphant, [so its membership could grow limitlessly, and He would still surpass it] *etc.*

3 ST q. 10, a.4

* *ordo*

Defending a comparison

v. As to a comparison made in the text, [an intellect cannot be informed by many species at once] "as a body cannot be shaped by many shapes at once," doubt arises. In comments on *I Sent.* d.3, in qu. 1 of the third part, Scotus has an answer to the third argument in which he criticizes al-Gazālī, the author of this comparison. He says it is worthless for two reasons.

(1) Because in the intellectual case, the reason for the impossibility is removed. Why? Because reasons for opposite things do not conflict with each other's being understood, as one learns from *Metaphysics IX*.

c. 2,
1046b 8

(2) Because intelligible species are not shapes but simple forms, according to the Commentator on *Metaphysics VI*.

Averroes,
comment 8

vi. My short answer to these goes along with what St. Thomas says in *2/1 ST* q.54, a.1, in the answer to the last objection, namely: the reason for the comparison lies in what it is to "set the terminus" of something.[†] As the shape of a body sets its termini, so an intelligible species (not in habit but in act) sets the terminus of an understanding. This point came out, in fact, in earlier remarks of mine. So: just as it is impossible for a body's termini to be set by multiple [least] bounds at once, so it is impossible for an understanding to have its terminus set by multiple species in act.

† *terminare*

§ xvi of the
comment on
q. 12, a.3

Thus my answers to Scotus' two objections are these:

— *ad* (1): the argument goes wrong in mistaking a non-cause for a cause. Since there is no contrariety between shapes, either in the real or in concept, "opposition" properly so called is not the reason shapes are incompatible. So the text from *Metaphysics IX* has no bearing on the matter.

— *ad* (2): intelligible species in act are unlike shapes in many respects (extension, boundedness, *etc.*); yet they are alike in meeting this one, exact condition: they set the termini for the thing they belong to. And doing this is compatible with a form's simplicity. What such species get from their simplicity is that they are terminations in an order of being so excellent as to be intellectual being.

‡ *limitatio*

Can anyone in this life see God through His essence?

2/2 ST q 175, aa.4-5; q 180, a.5. *In III Sent* d 27, q 3, a.1; d.35, q 2, a.2, qu^o 2; *In IV Sent* d 49, q.2, a.7;
3 CG c 47, *De Veritate* q 10, a.11; *Quodl. I*, q.1: *In 2 Corinth.*, c.12, lectio 1

It seems that a person in this life can see God through His essence.

(1) After all, Jacob says, "I have seen God face to face," in Genesis 32:30. But seeing Him face to face is the same as seeing Him through His essence, as one learns from I Corinthians 13:12 "now we see through a glass, darkly; but then face to face." So God can be seen through His essence in this life.

(2) Then there is Numbers 12:8, where the Lord describes Moses thus: "For I speak to him mouth to mouth; and plainly, and not by riddles and figures doth he see God." This last is seeing God through His essence. Ergo someone in the state of being we have in this life can see God through His essence.

(3) Moreover, that in which we know all that we know, and through which we judge of other things, is evident to us in itself. Well, even now, we know everything in God. So Augustine says in book XII of his *Confessions*: "If we both see that what you say is true, and we both see that what I say is true, where (I ask) do we see this? Neither I in you, nor you in me; rather, we both see it in the immutable truth, which is above our minds." And in *De vera religione*, he says that we judge of all things according to divine truth. And in *De Trinitate XII* he says that the job of reason is to "judge of these corporeal things according to incorporeal and eternal definitions [*rationes*], and if these were not above the mind, they would not be immutable at all." So we see God Himself in this life, too.

(4) Again, in book XII of *Super Genesim ad litteram*, Augustine says that things which, by their essence, are in the soul are seen with intellectual vision. Well, intellectual vision reaches intelligible objects* through their essences, and not through likenesses, as he says in the same place. So since God is in our soul through His essence, we see Him through His essence.

ON THE OTHER HAND, Exodus 38:20 says, "A man shall not see Me and live." The gloss says: "As long as one is living mortal life on earth, God can be seen through certain images but not by the very species of His nature."

ANSWER: God cannot be seen through His essence by a mere human being, unless the latter is separated from this mortal life. The reason for this goes back to what I said above: how a knower knows is a consequence of how the knower's nature is. So long as we live in this life, our soul has existence in corporeal matter; so it does not naturally know anything but the things that have form in matter, or those that can be known *via* such things. Well, it is obvious that the divine essence cannot be known *via* the natures of material things, as it was shown above that a knowledge of God through any

sort of created likeness is not a seeing of His essence. Thus it is impossible for the soul of a human being living in this life to see God's essence.

A good indication of this is the fact that, the more our soul is removed from bodies, the more open* it becomes to intelligible objects removed from matter. Thus in dreams and states of alienation from the bodily senses, divine revelations are more readily received, as are previsions of future events. The state of affairs, therefore, in which the soul is lifted up to the supreme intelligible object (God's essence) cannot obtain so long as the soul is using this mortal life.

TO MEET THE OBJECTIONS — *ad* (1): as Denis explains in c. 4 of *De caelesti hierarchia*, a person is said to see God in the Scriptures in this way ["face to face"] inasmuch as figures have been caused to appear (sensible or imaginary) representing God according to some likeness. Jacob's saying that he had "seen God face to face," therefore, is to be taken as referring to a figure in which God was represented, not the divine essence itself. This experience of seeing God speaking to one belongs to a high level of prophecy, even if the vision is only imaginary. This will come out below, when we discuss the levels of prophecy. — Alternatively, Jacob says this to designate a high state of intellectual contemplation, much above the usual state.

ad (2): as God miraculously achieves an effect supernaturally among bodily things, so also supernaturally (and outside the common order) He has raised the minds of some people still living in this flesh to see His essence — but not using the senses of the flesh. This is how Augustine (in *Super Genesim ad litteram XII* and in *On Seeing God*) describes Moses, the teacher of the Jews, and Paul, the teacher of the Gentiles. The matter will be treated more fully when we deal with rapture.

ad (3): we are said to see everything "in God" and to judge everything "according to God" insofar as we know and judge everything thanks to a share of His light; for the natural light of reason is a share of the divine light. Similarly, we say that we see and judge sensible things "in the sun," *i.e.* thanks to sunlight. Thus in *Soliloquies I* Augustine says, "The things to be seen in the sciences can only be seen if they are lit up, as it were, by their own sun," namely, God. Just as seeing something with the senses, then, does not require seeing the sun's substance, so also seeing something intellectually does not require seeing God's essence.

ad (4): intellectual seeing reaches things which are "in the soul by their essence" in the sense in which intentional objects* are in the intellect. That is how God is in the souls of the blessed. He is not in our souls that way now, however, but "by presence, essence and power."

c.25
PL 32, 840

c.30, n.31
PL 34, 146f

c.2,
PL 42, 999

cc.24, 31;
PL 34, 474, 479

* *res intelligibiles*

Glossa ordinaria;
PL 76, 91

q 12, a.4

q 12, a.2

* *capacior*

PG 3, 180

2/2 q 174, a.2

PL 34, 476-82

Epist. 147;
PL 33, 610

2/2 q 175, a.3

PL 32, 877

* *intelligibil*

q 8, a.4

Cajetan's Commentary

In the title question, 'can' means 'can happen in this life apart from a special miracle'; the word 'can' is not taken in the sense of 'implies no contradiction'.

Analysis of the article

ii. In the body of the article there is one conclusion, answering the question in the negative: God cannot be seen through His essence by a mere man in this mortal life. — Pay attention to two terms. 'Mere' is put in on account of Christ, who was at once a wayfarer and a comprehensor; 'mortal' is put in on account of man's state after the resurrection, a state in which the body will not impede seeing God through His essence.

The conclusion is supported in two ways: (1) First, *a priori*. [Antecedent:] How a knower knows is a consequence of how the knower's nature is; [1st inference:] so our soul's mode of being in a mortal body carries the consequence that our soul knows forms in matter or [what can be reached] through those forms; [2nd inference:] ergo in such a state it cannot see God through His essence. — The antecedent is obvious, as is the first inference, since this knowing is a certain "how" of knowing, compared to the higher modes. The second inference is supported on the ground that God cannot be seen through any created species or nature.

(2) Secondly, the conclusion is supported by an indication. [Antecedent:] The more our soul is removed from bodily things, the more open it becomes to intelligible objects removed from matter; [inference:] so its being lifted up to the supreme such object, the divine essence, requires a separation from this mortal life. — The antecedent is illustrated by the fact that divine revelations and presentiments of future events are more readily perceived in dreams and in states of alienation from one's bodily senses.

Scotus attacks the indication

iii. Against the indication alleged in the text, Scotus launches attacks in his remarks on *IV Sent.* d.45, q.2. Against dreaming, he aims two blows. (1) If this were so, then the deeper the sleep was, the more readily such things would be seen. This is false. Ergo. Drawing the inference rests on the ground that, in a deeper sleep, there is farther removal from the senses. (2) If the mind is not too preoccupied with sensual matters, it seems more of a miracle for the truth to be revealed in sleep than in a waking state, because it is natural to have the use of reason when awake, not asleep.

Against alienated states, his attack is that this idea seems to be drawn from the legends of Muhammed. He is said to have been an epileptic and, to hide his wretchedness, used to say that he had to fall down when an angel was talking to him, etc. Avicenna, then, out of respect for his religious law, taught this stuff about alienated states in his metaphysics.

iv. To clear these away, you need to know first a point

from St. Thomas (from *De Veritate* q. 12, a. 9, and 2/2 q. 172, a. 1). It is that, for cognition to occur, two things come together: *reception of data and judgment*. Removal from one's bodily senses contributes to data reception, but not to judgment. For we better perceive the subtle impressions of higher things when we are quiescent; but we cannot judge fully whether our impressions agree with the objects, unless a resolution has been achieved, as it says in *De Caelo III* [c. 7] and *Ethics VI* [c. 3]. Thus the text of this article always uses terms for reception: 'be open to' and 'perceive'.

Next you need to know that words are to be interpreted in keeping with the topic under discussion. The topic is our understanding and hence image-formation* in act (because a human who understands has to see mental images†). It obviously follows that the discussion here is not about just any kind of removal from bodily things, nor however great a removal, but a removal consistent with the intellect's being in act.

v. From just these two points, all of Scotus' objections are solved. His first inference is worthless, because a deep sleep is removal beyond what is consistent with the intellect's being in act. — While a judgment of truth is a greater miracle in sleep, a reception of data is not. — A similar analysis holds for all alienated states, from whatever source. If they remove us from our senses consistently with the intellect's being in act, then the more our imagination is taken up with spiritual things as it ministers to the intellect, the more open our intellect will be to higher objects, since it will be closer to them and less disturbed. Thus it happens that, among melancholics, some are entirely lacking the higher things: their imagination is so disturbed that they cannot have their intellect in act (much as happens in boys because of moisture); others speak of many higher things and make many true predictions; still others, only a few (because their inner forces are more or less impeded, or because they have better disposed mental images, or because some have higher such images than others, etc).

These points do not come from the law of Muhammed (as if St. Thomas had been afraid to say so here) but from natural philosophy, experience, the Bible, and the holy doctors. I speak of philosophy and experience, although there is no shortage of authoritative statements by philosophers in *De somno et vigilia*. But the Bible is full of visions in dreams. In Numbers 12:6 God promises to speak to the prophets in dreams. Joel 2:28 lists among the effects of the Holy Spirit that "they will dream dreams," etc. Augustine also, in book XII of *Super Genesim ad litteram*, says, "The human soul is suited to foresee future things according as it is removed from the senses." Gregory teaches the same thing in *Dialogue IV*: in fact, he says that this suits the soul either from refinement of nature or from revelation of higher things. So: let this presumptuous voice fall silent. The teaching here is thoroughly Christian and at the same time philosophical.

306a 6
1139b 18

* phantasia
† phantasmata

Cf. *De divinatione per somnum*, c 2;
464a 10ff

c.19

c.26

Can we know God in this life through natural reason?

1 *ST* q.32, a.1; q.86, a.2 *ad* 1; *In I Sent.* d.3, q.1, a.1; *In III Sent.* d.27, q.3, a.1.
4 *CG* c.1; *In Boethii De Trinitate* q.1, a.2, *In Rom.* c.1, *lectio* 6

It seems that we cannot know God by natural reason in this life.

V. prosa 4;
PL 63, 847
q.3, a.7

(1) Boethius says in *The Consolation of Philosophy*, "Reason does not grasp a simple form." God is supremely a simple form, as shown above. Therefore natural reason cannot reach a knowledge of Him.

c.7;
431a 16,
Cf. De Mem. et Rem.
449b 30 – 450a 14

(2) Besides, the soul understands nothing by natural reason without a mental image [*phantasma*], as it says in *De Anima III*. Since God is incorporeal, there can be no image of Him in us. Hence, we cannot know Him by natural reason.

c.2;
PL 42, 822

(3) Furthermore, knowledge that arises through natural reason is found in good people and bad, as our nature itself is found in both. But knowledge of God belongs to good people only, as Augustine said in book 1 of *De Trinitate*: "man's mental sight is not fixed on that excellent light unless it is purified by the rightousness of faith." Therefore, God cannot be known by natural reason.

ON THE OTHER HAND, there is what Romans 1:19 says: "that which may be known of God," *i.e.* what is knowable about God through natural reason, "is manifest in them."

ANSWER: our natural knowledge takes its origin from sensation, and so our natural knowledge can only extend as far as the objects of sensation can conduct it. Well, from such objects our intellect cannot be brought so far as to see God's essence, because the creatures that are objects of sensation are effects of God that do not exhaust His power as Cause. Thus, from knowing the objects of sensation, the whole power of God cannot be learned, and hence His essence cannot be seen either. Because they *are* effects, however, dependent on their cause, we can be brought from them to the point of knowing that 'He

exists' is true about God, and to the point of knowing what propositions necessarily hold good of Him as the first cause of all things, surpassing all the things He has caused. Thus, what we learn about Him is His relation to creatures (namely, that He is the cause of them all) and the difference between Him and them (namely, that He is not any of the things caused by Him, and that these latter are far removed from Him not because of a defect on His part but because He hyper-surpasses* them).¹

* *superexcedit*

TO MEET THE OBJECTIONS — *ad* (1): reason cannot come to know a simple form to the extent of knowing the answer to *what-it-is*; but reason can come to know *that-it-is*.

ad (2): in our natural knowing, God becomes known through the images[†] of His effects.

† *phantasmata*

ad (3): knowing God through His essence belongs only to good people, since it comes about by grace; but knowing Him through natural reason can belong to the good and the bad. Augustine says in [book 1 of] his *Retractions*. "I don't approve of what I said in the prayer [in *Soliloquies* 1,1], 'O God, who hast willed that the pure alone should know truth ...' One can easily reply, after all, that plenty of impure people know plenty of truths," *i.e.* through natural reason.

c.4;
PL 42, 189

¹ Knowing God by natural reason is thus identified with the results of qq.2-11 above. The present article revisits those results so as to determine in what sense they count as "knowing" God. They so count only in the indirect sense posed by the case of a theoretical entity *x* posited to exist in a theory \mathcal{T} for whose truth we have accepted the evidence — the sense in which a person can be said to "know *x*" who, without direct access to *x*, knows by \mathcal{T} from evidence *e* that there is an *x* of which certain propositions are true in \mathcal{T} . This is how we "know the top quark," if standard particle theory is true. The case of God is peculiar mainly in that the theories positing Him are more philosophical, less empirical.

Cajetan's Commentary

The verb 'know' in the title question does not mean 'see', as it meant in earlier articles, but just means come to know, *i.e.* understand, in whatever way that may happen. 'Through natural reason' means acquirable by the natural light of reason.

ii. In the body of the article, there is one conclusion, answering the question affirmatively, along with a corollary.

The conclusion is: in this life, through natural reason, we can know God insofar as He is the first, most

most excellent cause of all things. — The support goes as follows. [*Antecedent*:] Our natural knowledge arises from sensation; [*1st inference*:] so it only extends as far as the objects of sensation conduct it; [*2nd inference, 1st part*:] so it does not extend to seeing God but [*2nd part*:] to knowing Him insofar as He is the first, most excellent cause of all.

The antecedent and the first inference are obvious. The second inference is supported as to its first part, thus: the objects of sensation are not effects exhausting

divine power: so one cannot learn the whole of God's power from them; so one cannot see His essence [from them], either. Then the second part is supported: the objects of sensation are effects dependent on God. *i.e.* as first cause; so He can be known as first cause from them.

iii. The corollary is this: from sense-objects, we come to know three kinds of predicates about God: *causal predicates, negative ones, and predicates of hyper-eminence.*

- The ones pertaining to causality, in keeping with the three kinds of cause, are not just predicates involving causality (say, 'exemplar of', 'making happen', 'purpose of', *etc.*) but also non-relational

predicates that are inferred *a posteriori* from [the fact of] causality, such as 'exists', 'lives', 'knows' *etc.* All the predicates relating to creatures are reduced to these.

cf. q 13, a.12

- The negative predicates follow from the conditions just stated [of being a first cause and most excellent], such as 'bodiless', 'limitless', 'unchangeable'.

- The ones pertaining to hyper-eminence come from the same conditions; they are such predicates as 'being above everything', 'being an object for intellect', and 'being an intellect'.

For all these traits follow necessarily from the relation between God and the objects of sensation. God's other traits, however, are naturally dark to us in this life.

Do we have by grace a deeper knowledge of God than we have by natural reason?

1 *ST* q.32, a.1; *In I Sent.* d 3, q 1, a 4; *De Veritate* q.10, a.3; *In Boethu de Trinitate* q.1, a.4

It seems that what we have by grace is not a deeper knowledge of God than we have by natural reason.

c 1;
PG 3, 1001

(1) Denis, after all, in his book *De mystica theologia*, says that the man who is best united to God in this life is united to Him as utterly Unknown — and he says this about Moses, who held a preeminence in the knowledge that comes by grace. Well, being joined to God without knowing *what-He-is* comes about through natural reason also. So God is not more fully known to us by grace than He is by natural reason.

(2) Moreover, by natural reason we cannot reach a knowledge of divine things except through mental images.* But the same is true of the knowledge we have by grace. As Denis says in chapter 1 of *De caelesti hierarchia*, “It is impossible for the divine ray to enlighten us except as veiled in a variety of holy veils.” Therefore we do not know God more fully by grace than we do by natural reason.

*phantasmata
PG 3, 121

(3) Besides, what our intellect does by grace is adhere to God in faith. But faith does not seem to be cognition [*cognitio*], since Gregory says that what we have towards the invisible things is “faith and not acquaintance [*agnitio*].” It is not the case, then, that thanks to grace there is added to us a more excellent knowledge of God.

PL 76, 1202

ON THE OTHER HAND, there is what that Apostle says in I Corinthians 2:10, “God has revealed to us through His Spirit” a wisdom which “none of the princes of this world knew.” A gloss identifies these “princes” with the philosophers.

ANSWER: we do have a more complete knowledge of God thanks to grace, than we have by natural reason. This point becomes clear as follows. Our knowledge by natural reason requires two things: mental images taken from the objects of sensation, and the natural intellectual light with which we abstract intellectual conceptions from these images. In both respects, human knowing is

helped by the revelation attributable to grace. The natural light of our intellect is strengthened by infusion of grace-given light. Sometimes God forms images in our imagination better expressing divine things than the images we naturally acquire from sense objects, as one sees in the visions of the prophets. And sometimes God forms some of the very things we can sense, or words we can hear, to express a divine point. Thus at [Christ’s] baptism, the Holy Spirit was seen in the form of a dove, and the Father’s voice was heard, “This is my beloved Son.”

TO MEET THE OBJECTIONS — *ad* (1): although we do not learn by gracious revelation in this life the *what-He-is* of God, and so are joined to Him as to an Unknown, we still come to know Him more fully, in that more and higher effects of His are shown to us, and in that we come to know attributes of His by revelation to which natural reason does not attain, such as His being three and yet one.

ad (2): the stronger the intellectual light becomes in us, the higher is the intellectual knowledge we get from mental images, be they acquired from the senses according to the natural order, or be they formed in our imagination by divine influence. So thanks to revelation, a fuller knowledge is gotten from the images, as a result of the infusion of divine light.

ad (3): faith is a type of knowledge, insofar as the intellect becomes committed by faith to a knowable point. But this commitment to one proposition [rather than another] comes not from the believer’s seeing [that it is true] but from the seeing done by the one believed. It is in this respect (*viz.* that the believer’s own seeing is lacking) that faith falls short of the account of knowing used in science. A scientific competence, after all, commits one’s intellect to a definite proposition through one’s seeing [how it follows] and understanding the first principles [whence it follows].

Cajetan’s Commentary

The title is clear. — In the body of the article there is one conclusion, answering the question with a yes: we do have more complete knowledge of God by grace than we have by natural reason.

The support goes thus. [*Antecedent:*] human knowing is helped by grace both as to our intellectual light and as to our mental images; [*inference:*] so the know-

ing is more complete. — Drawing the inference rests on the ground that our knowing arises from these two factors. The antecedent itself is supported on the grounds that, by grace, sometimes figures are given expressing divine things better; sometimes things to see are formed; sometimes words; so [our knowing is helped]. An example of the first occurs in the prophets’ visions. An ex-

ample of the second is the dove at Christ's baptism. An example of the third is the voice heard on the same occasion.

ii. Observe here the *basis* on which the knowledge we have of God by grace in this life is being set above the natural knowledge: the basis is not the manner of the knowing, because on that basis the natural knowing is stronger, since it has the manner of seeing-as-evident, as it says in the answer *ad* (3). Rather, the basis is the ob-

ject of the knowing, taken in its extent and quality, as it says in the answer *ad* (1). We come to know by grace more things, and more hidden things, than we do by natural reason — hence things that are nobler and more evident in themselves, such as the fact that God is threefold, *etc.* These objects stand higher than the others in that the possibility of knowing them is such a lofty thing that they are naturally evident to God alone, as Aquinas says in 1 *CG* [c.3].



Inquiry Thirteen: Into language about God

Now that we have considered the issues arising in connection with coming to know God, it is time to consider our language about God, because how we come to know a thing determines how we name or describe it. Twelve questions are asked about this:

- | | |
|---|---|
| <p>(1) is God at all describable by us?</p> <p>(2) does any term applied to God describe Him in His very substance?</p> <p>(3) does such a term apply to Him literally or are they all used figuratively?</p> <p>(4) do those that apply literally become synonymous with each other?</p> <p>(5) do any such terms apply to God and creatures univocally, or are they used equivocally?</p> <p>(6) if they are used analogously, is their primary application to God or to creatures?</p> | <p>(7) are there terms that describe God from time?</p> <p>(8) is the noun 'God' a nature-name or an activity-name?</p> <p>(9) is the name 'God' a name He can share with other things?</p> <p>(10) is 'God' being used univocally or equivocally as it shifts between meaning God-by-nature, God-by-participation, God-in-opinion?</p> <p>(11) is God's most proper name 'He who is'?</p> <p>(12) can true affirmative propositions be formed about God?</p> |
|---|---|

article I

Does any name or description fit God at all?

In I Sent. d.1, expositio textus, qua 6, d.22, a.1; In Dionysii De divinis nominibus c.1, lectiones 1, 3

It seems that no name or verbal description even fits God.¹

PG 3, 593

(1) Denis says in chapter 1 of *De divinis nominibus* that there is "no naming Him, no thought that can reach Him." And Proverbs 30:4 asks, "What name hath He, or what name hath His Son, if thou knowest?"

(2) Besides, every name [is a noun, and so] is either abstract or concrete. Concrete nouns cannot fit God, because He is a simple form [not concretized or composed]; abstract nouns cannot fit Him either, because they do not indicate a complete thing subsisting.* Ergo no name can be applied to God.

* cf q.3, a.3
footnotes 1, 2

(3) Furthermore, nouns indicate a substance with a quality; verbs and participles indicate with [tense and thus with] time; pronouns indicate with pointing [demonstratives] or relation [relative pronouns]. None of these fit God, because He is without quality (in fact, without any accident) and without time; He is indiscernible to our senses, so He cannot be pointed at; and relative pronouns cannot indicate Him, because they resume the talk of an antecedent already mentioned with nouns, participles, or demonstratives. In no way, therefore, can God be described by us.

ON THE OTHER HAND, there is Exodus 15:3, "The Lord is like a man of war; 'Almighty' is His name."

mantics in science.

(1) A word has various grammatical properties (morphology, gender, tense, etc.) which determine *how* it functions as a sign (e.g. as a concrete noun, as an abstract one, as a verb, etc.) This was called the word's *modus significandi*.

(2) A word gets semantic meaning from human understanding, perpetuated in established usage [*impositio*]. Semantic meaning breaks down into two components: sense [*significatio*], and reference [*suppositio*].

(a) Words are used to *describe* things, and the descriptive force with which, in a given sentence, a word 'w' describes a given thing x is its sense [*significatum*] in that sentence. A word may have several standard senses, and these may be related. E.g. a figurative sense is related to a literal sense; a cause-wise sense (in which 'w' means what causes things to have a certain trait) is related to a form-wise sense (in which 'w' means what has that trait).

(b) Words are used to *refer* to things, and the thing x to which 'w' is being used to refer in a given sentence is its referent [*suppositum*] or *extension* in that sentence. Nowadays people say that if x fits a sense of 'w', x is in the extension of 'w'; the medieval view would be better expressed by saying that what 'w' conveys has extension in x.

(3) Science is interested in this extension: if a descriptive force of 'w' is met by a thing x, then x has *what it takes* to fit that force, and this what-it-takes will be captured in an explanation of what it is to be as 'w' says; so whenever the use of 'w' results in a true proposition, p, an explanation holds, and the Medievals called this the *ratio* of 'w' in p. If the explanation was known in a given science, it entered into what 'w' conveyed as a technical term used in that science to state p.

¹ This article has two purposes: (A) to establish what warrant we have for applying language to God (pursued in the article's body), and (B) to show that our language is not intrinsically unfit for such employment (pursued in the answers to objections). As to (B), there are three large points about linguistic signs which Aquinas assumes are known to the reader, i.e., that they have (1) a grammatical character, (2) a semantic character, (3) special se-

c.1. I ANSWER: as Aristotle says [in *Peri hermeneias I*], words
16a3 are signs of understandings, and understandings are like-
nesses of things.² Thus it is clear that words relate to the
things they are supposed to “mean” *via* the mind’s con-
ceiving. How a thing can be named or described by us,
therefore, goes according to how it can be known by us
with our minds.

q.12, a.11 Well, it was shown above that God cannot be known
by us in this life through His essence; rather, He is known
q.12, a.12 by us from creatures, along the lines of [basic propositions
stating] His causal relation to creatures as their ultimate
source,* and by way of [corrective propositions stating]
* *habitus principii*
† *excellenti*
‡ *remotio*
His surpassing creatures¹ and being unlike them.² It
follows that He can be named or described by us from
creatures, but not in such a way that a term referring to
Him would express the divine essence as it is, the way
‘man’ expresses by its sense man’s essence as it is (‘man’
conveys the defining makeup³ that is man’s essence, since
a word conveys a scientific definition⁴, and this is the
defining makeup).³

TO MEET THE OBJECTIONS — *ad* (1): the reason God is
said to have no name or to be beyond description is that
His essence is beyond what we understand about Him and
[hence beyond what we] mean by our description.

ad (2): because we come to know of God from crea-
tures, and describe Him on the basis of creatures, the
we apply to God have the manner of signifying that suits
material creatures (the ones we are set by our nature to
know, as I said above).⁴ Among such creatures, those that
are complete things subsisting are composites, while the
forms in them are not complete things subsisting but are
just features whereby a subsisting thing is [as it is]. As a

² An understanding of *x* was said to be a likeness of *x* ab-
stracted by the mind and expressed in the mind. (See above, q.
12, a. 2, and Aristotle’s *De Anima I*, c. 2.) When this work of the
mind contributed sense and reference to noises or marks, they
became verbal signs: words, terms.

³ Cf. *Metaphysics IV*, 1012 a.23. If Jones fits a dictionary sense
of ‘man’, that is already a reason for him to be so called. But a
sense of man tries to discover *what it takes* to fit that sense.
This *ratio* of ‘man’ enters the technical sense of ‘man’ in science.
Aquinas thought the *ratio* of ‘man’ in biology captured an aspect
of us as *it is in us* (a composition of animal-matter with our form).
But in theology, while words convey aspects of God, their *rationes*
do not capture the aspects *as they are in Him*; for that is hid-
den in His unknown nature.

⁴ A human language arises in and from the natural human
enterprise of knowing material creatures, and so a human lan-
guage is shaped not only in its semantic bearings but even in its
grammatical structure (its *modi significandi*) by the ontological
structure of such creatures. This is the fact to which the objector
is appealing, and from it he draws the inference that human lan-
guage is structurally unfit for use in talk about God. This objec-
tion to theology is thus every bit as sweeping as the logical positivist’s
objection, based on the verificationist theory of meaning,
and arguably more sophisticated. Aquinas’ strategy is to concede
the fact but deny the inference drawn from it. See next note.

result, all the terms we use to mean a complete thing subsis-
ting signify in the concrete manner, as suits composite
things, while those we use to mean simple forms signify [in
an abstract manner, *i.e.* they signify] an item not as subsis-
tent but as the “whereby” something is — thus ‘whiteness’
signifies as the whereby something is white. Therefore, be-
cause God is both simple *and* subsistent, we apply to Him
both abstract terms (to indicate His simplicity) and concrete
ones (to indicate His subsistence* and completeness), even
though both kinds of terms fall short of *how He is*. Our
intellect does not know Him *as He is* in this life.⁵

ad (3): to indicate a substance with a quality is to
indicate a referent¹ with a definite nature or form in which it
subsists.² Thus, terms indicating a substance with a quality
are used of God as concrete terms are applied to Him: to
indicate His subsisting and completeness (as I just said).⁶

• Verbs and participles [having a tense and so] connoting
time are applied to God on the basis that eternity embraces
every time; for just as we can only apprehend and indicate
simple referents after the fashion of composed ones, so, too,
we can only understand or describe simple eternity after the
fashion of temporal things, because of the fact that our
minds are nature-set for composed and temporal things.

• Demonstrative pronouns are applied to God inasmuch
as they point to what is understood, not to what is sensed;
after all, things are subject to being shown³ insofar as they
are understood by us.⁷

• And so, given the fashion in which nouns, participles,
and demonstratives are used of God, He can be indicated by
relative pronouns in the same fashion.

⁵ Aquinas breaks the objector’s inference by distinguishing
semantics (what a word means, *significatio*) from grammar (how it
means, *modus significandi*). We can choose to use words in such a
way that what they mean partly or wholly discounts how they
mean, and the choice to attempt God-talk is just such a choice.
Thus we can call God “goodness itself” without meaning that He is
not a complete referent, and “a good thing” without meaning that
He is a composite of goodness with a substance. Ditto for “wisdom
itself” and “a wise one,” “being itself” and “a being,” *etc.* The
words have senses that convey aspects of God and thus truly de-
scribe Him; but their *modi significandi*, rather than reflecting how
those aspects exist in God, reflect how they exist in creatures. This
analysis will be extended in later articles. For now, the reader
should compare the theologian’s situation with the widely admitted
problem in quantum physics: its descriptions convey aspects of the
particles described (very accurately), but even many quantum phys-
icists doubt that *how* the aspect is conveyed = *how* the aspect
exists in those particles.

⁶ The semantic term ‘referent’ corresponded to the metaphysical
term ‘subsistent’, because the verb that expressed what a referent
did as such (namely, stand there as a value for a first-order vari-
able) was ‘subsistere’. The distinction between a referent and a
form or nature which it has, emerged above in q.3, a.3 with the first
three numbers of Cajetan’s commentary, and will reappear at length
in 3.57 q.17, a.2 with its commentary.

⁷ ‘Subject to being shown’ has to mean something analogous to
being subject to ostension here, not subject to proof.

* *subsisten-
tia*

† *suppositum*
‡ *substitut*

cf q.10, a.1

§ *demonstra-
tio*

Cajetan's Commentary

The title question is clear.

Analysis of the article

In the body of the article, there is one conclusion, answering the question in the affirmative, with a qualification. The conclusion is: [*1st part:*] God can be described by us from creatures. [*2nd part:*] but not so as to say what He is in Himself.

Both parts of the conclusion are supported together. [*Antecedent:*] Words are signs of understandings, and understandings are likenesses of things; [*1st inference:*] so words are related to the things they are to mean by way of understandings; [*2nd inference:*] so a thing can be named or described by us according to how it is understood by us; [*3rd inference:*] therefore [*1st part:*] God can be named or described by us from creatures, [*2nd part:*] and not according to how He is in Himself.

The antecedent comes from Aristotle, *Peri hermeneias* I. The first and second inferences are left as obvious. The third is supported, as to its first part, on the ground that God is known by us from creatures in the threefold way discussed above;* it is supported as to its second part on the ground that God cannot be seen by us in this life through His essence. — To make sure the terms used are clear, he adds an example of the opposite [how 'man' conveys man's essence] to illustrate how terms for God will not describe God as He is in Himself. What Aquinas intends to say is this:

[for 'w'] to describe x as it is = [for 'w'] to have the sense of the terms delimiting x's nature,

as 'man' does for our nature [when its sense is 'rational animal'] and no term for God can do here below [for His nature]. Why not? Because all of our words for Him have the sense of terms for general traits not unique to Him,¹ or the sense of terms for negations, or the sense of terms for relations, etc., or have the sense of conjunctions of these, as one sees case-by-case.¹

Defending the conclusion against Scotus

ii. Concerning this part, doubt arises. In his remarks on *I Sent.* d.22, q.1, Scotus takes up a proposition assumed here, namely,

as a thing is understood by us, so too is it named or described by us,
and introduces a distinction into it: [so too is it named

by us] in introducing* a name? or in using a name already introduced? Then he says three things.

(1) If the claim is made about introducing a name, it seems false, says Scotus, and he supports this as follows. [*Antecedent:*] Suppose we have no clear[†] understanding of a given substance in its own nature; we can still mean it. [*Inference:*] Ergo we can establish words that mean more clearly than we understand. Scotus supports drawing this inference and supports the second part of his antecedent on the following ground: when the common and proper accidents of a stone are learned, for example, we introduce a name for that stone substance, intending that it should be meant by that name; and yet we lack clear knowledge of it.

(2) If the claim that "as we understand, so we name" is made about our actual use, it is flatly false.

(3) A pilgrim in this life can use many names expressing the divine essence under the definition of that very essence.

Points (2) and (3) are then supported on the ground that, quite probably, such names are found in the Bible, as the Jews say is the case with the sacred tetragrammaton, etc., whether these names were introduced by God or by an angel. [So, we are using some words whose meaning goes vastly beyond our understanding.]

iii. One only needs to answer these remarks insofar as they conflict with the truth.

ad (1): it is unimaginable that a name should be introduced with a clearer meaning than we conceive, and the text of this article tells why: because words only mean things via mind's conceiving; hence semantic meaning* is caused by conceiving; hence distinct meaning presupposes distinct conceiving; and vague[‡] meaning, vague conceiving; and greater, greater; and lesser, less. Why, then, should there be alleged exceptions to this fully universal rule about cause and effect? — Scotus' support is worthless. The first part of his antecedent is false, and the second part is badly supported. What I am saying (and experience bears this out) is that, when accidents have been noted, we know that something or other is underlying them and is existing in its own right and is subsisting, etc.: and a thing of this sort will never be more clearly "meant" than it is known. If, as in the example Scotus gives, it is known vaguely, it will never be meant in any way but vaguely. And from a name introduced that way [as in Scotus' example], no one will ever understand any more than the person fully responsible for introducing the name apprehended. Of course, a person coming along later with better talent may, after learning the *de facto* meaning of the name, come to know other points by a reasoning process (as we deduce conclusions from starting premisses). But this is not gotten from the force of the name's meaning.[§] Perhaps this is why Scotus himself, in the passage cited, seems to leave his first point in a state of suspended judgment.

ad (2): here Scotus's remarks are well taken. We experience for ourselves that we use many words [*nominia*]

* See fn. 1 on this page

† res communes

¹ This is a short statement of an analysis Cajetan has given above, in § v of his commentary on q.1, a. 6, and at the start of his commentary on q. 1, a. 7. Words applicable to God with the sense of general traits include 'being', 'good', 'act', 'subsistent', etc. Words with the sense of negations include 'simple' (= 'not composed'), 'infinite', etc. Words with the sense of relations include 'preceding', 'causing', 'governing', etc. All our other descriptions of God have senses that are conjunctions of these: 'first cause' (= 'cause preceding all others'), 'pure act' (= 'act not composed'), 'subsistent being', etc.

* *impositio*

† *distinct*

‡ *significatio*
§ *confusio*

§ *ex vi significationis nominis*

that are only vaguely known to us, before we come to a clear knowledge of their delimitations.*

* *termini*

ad (3): experience testifies that we have no such divine name. Again,
 – because such names would be given to human beings pointlessly (since we cannot know God for what He is in Himself), and
 – because this novel opinion is stated without sufficient authority, and

PG 3, 121

– because [authority is on the other side, namely] Denis says in c. 1 of *De caelesti hierarchia*, “It is impossible for the divine radiance to enlighten us otherwise than veiled by a variety of sacred veils,” it seems to me that what Scotus says is flatly false, and that the right thing to say is what this article says: in this life God is not namable or describable by us except from creatures — and that goes for the introduction of terms as well as for their use.²

² This argument with Scotus raises several issues still controversial in the theory of reference. Everyone agrees that the relation between a given word ‘w’ in a given language *L* and the things to which it refers in utterances in *L* is a non-natural relation, established by human convention (*impositio*). But ‘convention’ covers a wide range of cases, from immemorial tradition to conscious invention. As a whole system, a natural language is more like the former; but certain words, especially technical terms, are consciously invented. Such a case is under debate here. The exact point at issue can be put this way: when a technical term ‘w’ is introduced in *L*, what sort of “meaning” does it carry? Does it carry fully determinate reference, so that a unique set of things is the denotation of ‘w’ in *L*, whether we can specify its members or not? Or does it carry only a condition of reference *C*, such that ‘w’ refers in *L* to *x* if and only if *x* meets condition *C*, so that the reference of ‘w’ is inevitably vague if *C* is vaguely drawn?

Cajetan is defending the latter view: the understanding with which ‘w’ is introduced and *via* which it refers to things is a conceived condition *C* which *w*-things meet, so that while ‘w’ can be misused by beginners or muddled persons ill acquainted with *C*, ‘w’ can have no more determinate reference than *C* specifies. Thus if ‘ruby’ is introduced to name stones (of unknown chemical structure) with certain prized accidents, the condition of reference for ‘ruby’ cannot go beyond those accidents. Perhaps only one chemical structure yields them; but if there is another (yielding Twin-rubies), the reference of our word ‘ruby’ cannot be to rubies alone (*pace* Scotus) but is underdetermined as between rubies and Twin-rubies.

Hence Cajetan insists, too, that further discoveries about the nature of rubies do not arise by reasoning from the *sense* of ‘ruby’ (meaning here, its condition of reference). This nicely liberates science from hermeneutics. If Cajetan also means to suggest that the further discoveries need not be added to the term’s condition of reference, then he has anticipated a highly important modern position. It is this: the reference of a theoretical term ‘w’ in a theory \mathcal{T} is not set by some “whole sense” of ‘w’ comprising everything \mathcal{T} postulates about *w*-things; rather, the reference of ‘w’ is set by its original condition of reference *C* (or an accepted revision thereof).

This position is currently defended by Michael Devitt and other scientific realists, because it helps to undercut Kuhn’s relativism. Take the case of Thompson: he introduced ‘elec-

Understanding the answer *ad* (2)

iv. In the answer to the second objection, a beginner may have doubts over how it can be the case that an abstract noun signifies as a *whereby* and not as a full referent,* since an abstract noun (say, ‘whiteness’) is, after all, a substantive, and the distinctive mode of signifying that a substantive has is to signify after the manner of substance.³

* *per modum substantis*

The short answer is that the beginner is committing a fallacy of the consequent, going from ‘a substantive signifies after the manner of substance’ to ‘it signifies after this particular manner of substance’. A substantive does signify after the manner of “substance” but just in the sense of “standing on its own,” that is, “in isolation,” not in the sense of “a referent.”

If the beginner objects that ‘snubness’ signifies as ‘curvature in a nose’ and hence does not signify the form in isolation but as with its subject, my answer is that the issue here is not *semantic sense*[†] and its consequences but *mode of signifying*. An abstract noun and a corresponding concrete one agree in sense, because the semantic sense of both is a mere form (as Aristotle says in the *Categories* about ‘white thing’);⁴ and in consequence of the nature of the form that is serving as the sense, both need to be said of a subject having that form. The difference arises, rather, from the mode of signifying:

† *significatio*

c 2,
1a 27 (?)

- a concrete noun implies, by its mode of signifying, a subject and composed thing as the first thing in its sense (thus we say, “A snub is a nose that is curved,” expressing the nose ahead of the curvature); but

- an abstract noun either does not imply a subject at all by its mode of signifying (but by the nature of the form that is its sense) or, if it does imply a subject by its mode, does not imply it in first place but in last (as when we say, “Snubness is curvature of the nose”).⁵

An abstract noun, then, by its mode of signifying,

trou’ with a causal understanding: the cause of the cathode ray-tube phenomenon (leaving unsaid the nature of that cause). The reference of ‘electron’ was thus underdetermined as between competing models of what that cause was and has been able to remain stable across theory-changes.

Aquinas says that ‘God’ is also introduced with a causal understanding (it refers to the cause or first cause of certain effects (q.2, a.2 *ad* 2); if this is right, and Cajetan’s view of reference is right, then ‘God’ keeps referring to just that Cause despite conflicting religious beliefs; Hebrews and Hellenes are able to refer to the same entity and disagree about Him.

³ ‘Substantive’ is an old-fashioned term for a noun or an adjective functioning as a noun. It was important in the description of Greek and Latin grammar, because those languages were able to make an adjective function as a noun without altering its morphology or adding extra words.

⁴ In Greek, δ λευκός (the white [thing]) had the same sense as τὸ λευκόν (white color) or λευκότης (whiteness) but differed as concrete differs from abstract.

⁵ This concession is ill-advised. An abstract noun like ‘ ϕ -ness’ implies by its “mode” nothing at all about a subject; if ‘snubness’ implies a nose, it is entirely by semantics.

signifies “after the manner of substance” in this respect: it signifies [a form] “on its own,” *i.e.* “not with another” (either at all or not in first place). A concrete noun, however, by its mode of signifying, signifies in first place another thing *with* the form serving as its sense. — Thus a remark that Avicenna made, though casti-

gated by Averroes in his comment 14 on *Metaphysics V*, was in fact true, if taken in terms of mode of signifying. Averroes’ argument in that passage does not prove otherwise, because his argument only works for formal senses,* and these arise only from the force of semantic meaning.†

* *in formaliter significatis*
 † *ex vi significationis*

Does any term describe God in His substance?

In I Sent. d.2, a.2; 1 CG e. 31; Quaest. Disp. De Potentia Dei q.7, a.5

It seems that no term applies to God in such a way as to describe His substance.

c.9; PG 94, 835 (1) Damascene says [in *De Fide Orthodoxa* I], "Each term used of God must be used not to mean what He is according to His substance but to mean what He is not, or else to indicate a relation, or else to mean some consequence of His nature or activity."

PG 3, 589 (2) Also, in c. 1 of *De divinis nominibus*, Denis says, "You will find that every hymn of the holy theologians is taking the descriptions of God and dividing them (in a way that clarifies and gives praise) according to the processions-of-good from the divine origin." His meaning is that the terms used by the holy doctors to praise God differ from one another according to the [different] things flowing out from God. But when a term indicates an out-flow from x, it indicates nothing within the essence of x. Thus the terms applied to God are not used to describe Him in His substance.

(3) Besides, a thing is described by us according to how it is understood by us. Well, God is not understood by us in this life as He is in His substance. So, no term introduced by us is being used to describe God as He is in His substance.

c.4, PL 42, 927 ON THE OTHER HAND, there is what Augustine says in book VI of his *De Trinitate*: "in God's case, the 'is' in 'is mighty' or in 'is wise' (and in whatever else you say about that utter simplicity of His) is just the 'is' by which His substance is indicated."

ANSWER: one should set aside words used in the negative about God, or which indicate a relation of His to creation; they obviously do not describe His substance in any way; their sense is that something is unlike Him or that He relates thus-and-so to something else (or rather, it to Him). One is then left with the terms which are applied to God non-relatively and affirmatively, such as 'good', 'wise', and the like. About these, differing opinions have been put forward.¹

Some writers have thought that all these terms, despite being said of God affirmatively, are really being used to deny something of Him rather than to posit anything in Him. In their view, when we say, 'God is living', we mean that God is not the way inanimate stuff is, and likewise for other cases.² Rabbi Moses

¹ A positive, non-relational predicate will often convey different senses when applied to different subjects: 'wise' in 'Jones is wise' conveys having an ability, but in 'His choice is wise' it conveys evincing the ability. The question here is what sense such a predicate conveys in 'God is ϕ '.

² This theory presupposes an account of contrary opposites (like 'wise'/'foolish') rather than contradictory ones. Suppose 'O' and 'θ' mention contrary opposites; then the theory is that 'O' in 'God is O' is misleading; it conveys no sense beyond what 'God is not θ' would convey; it denies one contrary without affirming the other.

[Maimonides] proposed this in his *Guide for the Perplexed*.

Part I, c.58

Others maintain that these terms are brought in to indicate a relation of God's to created things, so that when we say, "God is good," the meaning is that God is the cause of goodness in things. Likewise for the other cases.³

Neither view seems adequate, for three reasons.

(a) Neither can explain why certain terms *rather than others* are applied to God. He causes bodies as much as He causes goods; so if all 'God is good' means is that God causes goods, one should be allowed to say, "God is body," because He causes bodies. The other theory would allow the same statement: "He is body" is only denying (one could say) that He is just a potential entity, like prime matter.

(b) It would follow that the terms used of God describe Him only in a secondary sense of theirs — as a word whose primary sense describes a living body, like 'healthy', is applied secondarily to a drug, with the sense that the drug just *causes* health in a living body.⁴

(c) These theories clash with the intentions people have in talking about God. When people say, "God is living," they intend to say something else than that He causes our life or differs from inanimate objects.

A different theory is thus in order. The thing to say is that such terms do indicate the divine substance and are used to describe God in His substance, but they fall short in representing it.* The way to see this is as follows. Our words indicate God in the way in which our minds know Him; since our minds know God from creatures, the way we know Him is the way creatures represent Him.⁵ It was shown above that God pre-possesses in Himself all the completive traits of creatures, as He is unqualifiedly and all-inclusively complete. Each creature, then, represents Him and resembles Him just insofar as it has *some* completeness, but none represents Him as being of its own species or genus; creatures represent Him rather as a surpassing[†] Source, whose effects fall short of His form but retain some resemblance to Him — as the forms of bodies here below represent the power of the sun. This was discussed above in dealing with God's completeness. In this way, then, the

* deficient a representation *in se ipso*

q.4, a.2

† excellens

q.4, a.1

³ Let ' ϕ ' be any positive, non-relative predicate; the theory says that ' ϕ ' in 'God is ϕ ' is misleading in that it conveys no sense beyond what 'God causes things to be ϕ ' would convey. Aquinas probably encountered this theory in Alan of Lille (1114-1202), whose *Regulae de sacra theologia* (PL 210, 631-33) were widely read.

⁴ This entailment seems to conflict with Ephesians 3:15. Aquinas returns to the topic below, in a.6.

⁵ Aquinas always maintained, as a general truth about efficient or agent causes, that their effects resemble them in some (perhaps remote) way. See above, q.4, aa.2-3, and q.6, aa.1-2. Since God is the efficient cause of creatures, they resemble Him (in a very remote way). But resemblance was said to yield *representatio*, for a reason explained above, in footnote 1 to Cajetan's commentary on q.12, a.8.

terms in question do describe God's substance, but they do so incompletely, as creatures also represent His substance incompletely.

So when 'God is good' is said, the meaning is not that God is the cause of goodness, nor that God is not bad, but that what we call goodness in creatures pre-exists in God and does so in a higher way. The implication, then, will not be that 'is good' fits God because He causes goodness, but the other way about: because He *is good*, He pours out goodness upon things — as Augustine said in *De doctrina christiana*: "Inasmuch as He is good, we are."⁶

TO MEET THE OBJECTIONS — *ad* (1): Damascene says these words do not mean what-God-is, because what-He-is is not expressed by any of them completely. But each means Him incompletely, as creatures, too, represent Him incompletely.

ad (2): it is sometimes the case that what a word is derived from [etymologically] is one thing, and what it is used to mean is something else. Thus the word '*lapis*' ['stone'] is derived from the fact that a stone injures the foot [*laedet pedem*]; but '*lapis*' is used to mean a certain kind of body; it is not used as 'foot-

⁶ The topic of this article has been the *senses* of those words in our language that convey complete or finishing traits, like 'good', 'wise', 'living'. The sense of such a word conveys a complete aspect, and how it does so captures how that aspect exists in creatures. How that complete aspect exists in creatures portrays (*repraesentat*) God, in that every creature's *perfectio* is an *imago Dei* — but portrays Him as a defectively participated form resembles (and so portrays) the super-eminent source in which it defectively participates. The portrayal is defective in that the creature's share of God's form does not resemble God's form in species or genus (no creature is even in a common category with God) but only in the remoter way called "analogically" in q.4, aa.2-3.

In sum: the senses conveyed by these descriptions are positive aspects of what God is form-wise (not just power-wise), but their senses fail to portray or "represent" Him as He is, because they fail to capture how these aspects exist in Him.

injurer' is — otherwise everything that injures a foot would be [called *lapis*] a stone. So the thing to say here is that, on the one hand, these terms for God are *derived* from out-flows from divinity. Just as creatures represent God (however imperfectly) according to different out-flows of complete traits, so our mind knows and names God according to each such out-flow. But on the other hand, these terms are not used to *mean* those out-flows — as if 'God is living' meant 'life flows out from Him'. No, they are used to mean the very Source of these things, in that [for example] life pre-exists in Him, though it does so in a higher manner than is understood or meant.⁷

ad (3): what we cannot know in this life is God's essence as it *is* in Him; but we can know it as it is *represented* in the complete traits of creatures. And that is how the words introduced by us "mean" His essence.

⁷ Every word in a human language is derived etymologically from words for some human experience of creatures and their traits or operations. But the speakers of any language can put together sentences in which certain words are not being used to mean creatures or their traits or their operations. 'God' and 'living' are examples in 'God is living'. Hence if these creatures-and-traits are out-flows from God, and our words for God are derived from words for such out-flows (as Denis said), it still does not follow (says Aquinas) that our words *mean* these out-flows. His point that meaning is set by *use* has been strongly re-emphasized by Austin, the later Wittgenstein, and other "ordinary language" philosophers. His point that *use is often* — he could have said *normally* — independent of etymology should have been obvious all along and to everyone, since, in every language, the average speaker manages to know the meanings of her words without knowing the etymologies. (English-speaking wives are perfectly capable of knowing what they mean by 'husband', without knowing that it derives from 'house-bound'.) But strange to say, this obvious distinction has been lost on certain philosophers (like Heidegger) and certain exegetes (like the contributors to the Kittel *Theologisches Wörterbuch*). Confusing etymology with meaning has been a mainstay of those who wished to find, in different human groups (say, Hebrews and Hellenes), divergent "conceptual schemes." For a critique, see James Barr, *The Semantics of Biblical Language* (Oxford, 1961).

Cajetan's Commentary

The word 'describe' in the title question, 'does any term describe God ...' means to ask whether any term is applied to Him *according to its sense*: it is not asking whether any term refers to Him (by attachment* or on its own[†]) etc.¹

The phrase 'in His substance' contrasts with 'in an accidental respect', such that anything outside a thing's

being [what it is] is called an "accident." By this rule, 'man' describes Socrates in his substance, while 'gifted teacher' and 'white' describe him in accidental respects. But do not take the question too narrowly. Take its full breadth, so that it covers what describes God *either* in substance completely (as an ultimate specific difference or definition would describe Him) *or* in substance incompletely (as 'animal' describes man). All of that is included in the topic when we ask whether any term describes God "in His substance."

¹ Nouns referred to something on their own (*supponere*), while adjectives were said to refer through the noun to which they were attached (*copulare*).

* *copulata*

† *supponit*

Analysis of the article

ii. In the body of the article, five jobs are done: (1) he states which terms give rise to the question; (2) he mentions two opinions on the answer; (3) he disapproves of both; (4) he answers the question in the affirmative, and (5) he shows what sense such terms do have when they are attributed to God. At which points in the text each distinct job is being done is obvious.

iii. As to job (1), he makes two points. The first is that there are three types of terms for God:

(α) negative ones (like 'incorporeal', 'measureless', etc.)

(β) relative ones (like 'Lord of ...', 'end of ...', 'efficient cause of ...' etc.) and

(γ) positive non-relative ones (like 'being', 'wise', 'living', etc.)

The second is that the question is not about types (α) or (β), because their sense is obviously just a negation or relation (as the sense of 'white' is obviously just a pure quality). The question is only about type (γ).

iv. As to job (2): the opinions reviewed are two. The first is held by those who say that these terms are used to describe God negatively; the second, by those who say they are used to describe Him relatively. All quite clear.

v. As to job (3): he argues against both opinions at once, along three lines which are clear enough. But in the second line of argument [the one in which Aquinas says that, if these opinions are true, terms like 'good' and 'wise' apply to God only in one of their secondary senses], notice that the reasoning is based on a very general principle: every term applies first to what it describes form-wise, before it applies to what it describes in any other manner.²

vi. As to job (4): the conclusion answering the question in the affirmative is this: such terms describe God in His substance, but imperfectly. — The support goes as follows. [*Antecedent:*] Our words describe God as He is known by our mind; [*1st inference:*] hence as He is known from creatures; [*2nd inference:*] hence as He is represented by creatures; [*3rd inference:*] hence as creatures manage to resemble Him; [*4th inference:*] hence as a Source surpassing them, whose form is shared in defectively by them; [*conclusion:*] ergo [our words describe Him] in His substance.

The antecedent is obvious from *Peri hermeneias I*,

c.1;
16a.3

² The principle is: for any descriptive term 'φ', the basic sense of 'qx' must be to say that x has within itself the wherewithal to be φ; only secondarily can 'qx' have the sense that x makes other things φ or that x is not un-φ.

along with the first and second points inferred. The third inference is self-evident. The fourth is supported by the arguments advanced in q.4: God is not represented by a specific or generic likeness; so it is by an analogical likeness, as a Source [remotely participated] etc. The conclusion then follows obviously. For necessarily: if the WHAT-IT-IS of each creature is a diminished likeness of God's utterly simple substance, that divine substance is [in the same diminished way] participated, represented, known, named, and meant, etc.

vii. As to job (5): the sense of the propositions [in which such terms appear] is disclosed by saying that, when we say 'God is good', the sense is that what we call goodness in creatures is in God, and is there in a higher way.

Two points to note

Pay attention to two points here. First, the 'is' [in 'what we call goodness in creatures is in God'] indicates formal standing. The intended meaning is that [such goodness] is in God form-wise. 'God is a body' is not open to such explication.

The second point is that the phrase 'and is there in a higher way' is not to be taken as part of the sense conveyed. When we say, 'God is good', we do not convey His goodness and its higher manner. We just convey the goodness. The higher manner [is not a matter of semantic sense but] comes out in discounting the mode of signifying, as we shall see in the next article. The upshot is this: when someone says, 'God is good', what is gotten from the sense is just that what the word 'good' involves form-wise is in God form-wise. But since the word 'good' [is morphologically concrete rather than abstract, it] presents goodness in concretion [with something else having the goodness], and since that situation does not obtain in God (because it is an imperfect way to be good), the implication is that how goodness is in God is higher than how 'good' conveys it, because how 'good' conveys it is how it is in creatures.

The answers to the objections

viii. In the answer ad (1), notice that, among excellent teachers, "conveying WHAT-X-IS" and "describing X in its substance" are not quite the same; the former requires completeness, and the latter does not, as it says in the text. The reason [such teachers do not identify these] is that they are talking about WHAT-X-IS after the fashion of the *Posterior Analytics* and the *Metaphysics* (which one cannot do without the distinctives of X), not after the fashion of the *Topics* (which is aimed at more general forms of discourse).

ix. In the answer ad (2), the distinction drawn can be reworded this way: 'indicate an out-flow' can be taken two ways: (1) form-wise or (2) origin-wise.

Does any such term apply to God literally?

In I. Sent. d.4, q.1, a.1, d.22, a.2; d.33, a.2; d.35, a.1 ad 2, 1 *CG* c.30; *De Potentia Dei* q.7, a.5

It seems that no term is used for God in its proper [*i.e.* literal] sense.

q.13, a.1 (1) Every term we use to describe God is taken from creatures, after all, as has already been pointed out. But terms for creatures are applied to God figuratively, as when one says, "God is my rock," or "God is a lion," or the like. Thus all the terms applied to God describe Him figuratively.

PG.3, 141 (2) Also, a term never applies in its literal sense to a thing of which it is more truly denied than affirmed. But each of the terms like 'good', 'wise', *etc.*, is more truly denied of God than affirmed of Him, as you can see in c. 2 of Denis's *De caelestia hierarchia*. Hence no such term applies to God in its literal sense.

(3) Moreover, terms for bodies are only applied to God metaphorically, since He is bodiless. But all the terms just mentioned imply certain bodily conditions: they convey [tense or] time, composition, and other bodily conditions. Therefore, all such terms apply to God figuratively.

PL 16, 583 ON THE OTHER HAND, there is what Ambrose says in book II of his *De fide*: "There are terms that obviously convey the hallmark of divinity, and some that make clear the truth of divine majesty; but there are other terms that are said of God in a transferred sense, thanks to a likeness." Not all terms are said of God figuratively, then; some are said literally.

q.13, a.2 I ANSWER: we know God from the completive traits flowing out from Him into creatures, as I said, and these completive traits exist in God in a higher manner than in creatures. How our understanding apprehends them is how they exist in creatures, and how our understanding conveys them in words is set by how it apprehends them. As a result, there are two factors to consider in a term we attribute to God:

- the trait it conveys (goodness, life, *etc.*)
 - the manner which is *how* it conveys the trait.*
- * *modus significandi*

As for the very traits which these terms convey as their

sense: they fit God literally, and indeed more distinctively than they fit creatures [so that] they even apply to Him ahead of* applying to creatures. But as for the manner which is *how* the terms convey their sense, it is not said of God literally: for how these terms convey their sense is how that sense fits creatures.¹

* *per prius*

TO MEET THE OBJECTIONS — *ad* (1): for the completive traits flowing out from God into creatures, some terms convey them in such a way that the defective mode which is how the creature shares in them is included in the very sense of the term — as the sense of 'rock' includes "a thing that exists in matter"[†] — and such terms can only be applied to God figuratively. But other terms convey completive traits manner-independently, with no mode-of-sharing included in their sense — terms like 'being', 'good', 'living' — and such terms are said of God literally.²

† *aliquid materialiter ens*

ad (2): the reason Denis said each such term was to be denied of God was because its sense does not fit Him as to *how* the term conveys it but [fits Him] in a higher manner. Thus Denis said in the same passage that God is "above any substance and life."

ad (3): terms applying to God literally do not involve bodily conditions in their sense but only in how they convey it. Terms applying to Him figuratively involve a bodily condition in their very sense.

¹ Let $S('φ)$ be a sense of the term 'φ' of language L , *i.e.*, a conception $|φ|$; let $G('φ)$ be the grammar/morphology settling how 'φ' conveys $S('φ)$ in L . As $|φ|$ is distinct from how it has extension in the things of which 'φx', 'φy' are true in L (so that $|φ|$ may have it in a higher way in x and a lower way in y), so also $S('φ)$ is distinct from $G('φ)$, so that this latter may reflect how y fits $S('φ)$ without reflecting how x fits it. N.B. $|φ|$ has extension in x is a semantic claim; 'a trait exists in x ' could be the same in disguise or else an existence claim of second-order.

² Here Aquinas partitions the terms of L into those whose sense $S('φ)$ restricts $|φ|$ to having extension in limited things, such as material ones, and those whose sense does not.

Cajetan's Commentary

In the title question, the word '*proprius*' is one that can be taken two ways:

(1) In one [it means *distinctively*], so as to contrast with 'in common with others'. So taken, 'animal' is not said of man *proprie*, since it also applies to other species.

(2) In the other way [it means *literally*], so as to contrast with 'figuratively'. So taken, 'animal' is said *pro-*

proprie of man, but 'flowering' is not. For a word is used literally of a thing x just in case its sense is found in x according to that very sense, while a word is used figuratively of x in case its sense is found in x according to a mere likeness of that sense.

Here 'properly' is being taken in the sense that contrasts with 'figuratively'.

Are these articles in proper order?

- ii.* Doubt arises over the order of these articles, because the sequence from article 2 to article 3 seems backwards. In the composition of an orderly treatise, more general topics are supposed to be handled first. But whether a term applies to *x* literally is a more general issue than whether it describes *x* in its substance; after all, accidental terms are also used literally, as is obvious in 'Socrates is white'.
- iii.* The SHORT ANSWER to this is that the order here is optimal. It is not going from the more to the less general, but from the more radical basis for doubting [to the less radical]. Since the first and most radical question is 'Does it exist?', the first issue to raise here is: *can descriptions of God exist?* Then, since the second question is 'What is it?', the next issue to raise is: *what can they describe in God?* His substance? A relation? An absence? *Etc.* Then since the third question is 'Why is it?', the thing to ask in third place is *how do they describe it?* And here a series of "hows" emerges: (1) how the terms themselves are predicated (literally or figuratively); (2) how they end up (with one meaning, as synonyms, or many). *Etc.* Such is the order being observed in the text. So it is quite optimal.

And it is not true, by the way, that 'describes literally' is more general than 'describes in substance'. Each in a way goes beyond the other. Description-in-substance, after all, happens both literally and figuratively. We can indicate the WHAT-IT-IS of things figuratively, as the ancients did. Thus, after determining that [certain] terms apply to God substance-wise, one can still rightly wonder whether they apply to Him literally.

Analysis of the article

- iv.* In the body of the article, two jobs are done: (1) he draws a distinction, and (2) he answers the question. As to job (1), he distinguishes the factors in a term applied to God: in such terms there are two items: the completive trait conveyed, and how it is conveyed. — Support for the distinction goes thus. [*Antecedent:*] The completive traits flowing out from God into creatures exist in a higher manner in God than they do in creatures; [*1st inference:*] so they have two factors to them: the trait itself and how it exists; [*2nd inference:*] so our concepts of God have correspondingly* two factors: the trait conceived and how it is conceived; [*3rd inference:*] so the terms we apply to God have two factors to them: the sense and how it is conveyed.

The antecedent is obvious, as is the first inference.

The second inference is supported on the ground that we know God from these completive traits [taken] not just in any fashion, but according to how they exist in creatures. *I.e.*, because we know God from His effects taken this way, *how* the effects exist spills over correspondingly into *how* we conceive. So a concept about God has to be distinguished into two parts, not so as to yield two different traits conceived, but so as to yield the trait conceived as one part and the how-we-conceive-it as the other (I mean: a "how" of the concept itself, not a "how" of the trait conceived). Yet this "how" of the concept derives from the "how" of the trait conceived. Then the third consequence is obvious.

v. As to job (2): in line with the distinction just drawn, he answers the question with a two-part conclusion. It says: *in terms of the sense they convey*, some terms applied to God apply to Him literally, more distinctively, and firstly; *in terms of how they convey it*, no term applies to Him. — This last part is supported on the ground that [these terms] have the manner of conveyance belonging to creatures. The former part is left as obvious from the points made in q.4 [a.2].

On the answer *ad* (1)

vi. In the answer *ad* (1), the phrase 'in the very sense of the term' means in its literal *form-wise* sense,* not its material, broad sense. 'Wisdom', for example, does not convey "a quality" unless taken materially/broadly; in the sense that is form-wise and literal, what 'wisdom' conveys is neither quality, habit, nor anything else but "what it takes to put-in-order, judge, regulate," *etc.*, and this what-it-takes can be realized as substance, as accident, as habit, as act, *etc.*¹

* *significatio
formali proprio*

* *proportionaliter*

¹ 'Formale significatum' is about the same as 'basic sense strictly taken' (see footnote 2 to Cajetan's comment on q. 13, a. 2). To capture it, one must prescind from some of what the broad sense includes (much as one must prescind from the matter in order to grasp a pure form). The important point here is that the sense $S('φ')$, strictly taken as $φ$, is much narrower than any scientific *ratio* $R('φ')$, explaining what it takes for some entity *x* to be $φ$. If a human being, for instance, needs an acquired habit (a kind of quality) in order to be wise, the *ratio* of 'wise' in 'a man is wise' will include that fact. If an angel is wise just through its substance, the *ratio* of 'wise' in 'Gabriel is wise' will include that. But the basic sense strictly taken includes neither. For a modern example of how a term taken in the same strict sense can have extension through an accident in *x* but through substance in *y*, take 'spin'. Spinning is an accident in baseballs but is an intrinsic property (a matter of the "substance") of many sub-atomic particles.

Are such terms synonymous when applied to God?

In I Sent. d.2, a.3; d.17, a.3; I CG c.35; De Potentia q.7, a.6; Comp. Theol. c.25

It looks as though these terms become synonyms when applied to God.¹

(1) After all, we call terms that mean exactly the same thing synonyms. But when the terms discussed above are applied to God, they mean exactly the same thing, because God's goodness = His essence = His wisdom. Hence these terms are quite synonymous.

(2) If you say these terms [do not become synonyms because they] indicate the same reality but convey different accounts* of it, the rejoinder is as follows. An account of *x* to which nothing in *x* corresponds is vacuous;[†] so if these accounts are many but the reality in God is one, the several accounts are seen to apply vacuously.

(3) Also, what is one in its reality and in its scientific account is more "one" than what is one in reality but multiple in its account. God is supremely "one." So it seems He is not just one in reality while being multiple in His account. So the various terms applied to Him do *not* convey diverse accounts; ergo they become synonyms.

ON THE OTHER HAND, all synonymous terms are such that, when they are applied to one another, they induce a tautology, like "Dress is clothing." If all these terms that apply to God are synonyms, then one could not say, "God is good," or anything of the kind informatively.[‡] Yet written in Jeremiah 32:18 [which is supposed to be informative, because it is revelation] is "O most mighty, great, and powerful, the Lord of Hosts is thy name."

ANSWER: such terms do *not* become synonyms when applied to God. This would be easy to see if we adopted the theory that these terms are used to deny something of God or to pick out causal relations towards creatures, because then different real definitions of the terms would arise from the different items denied or the different effects picked out. But on the theory adopted above, these terms describe God's substance, albeit imperfectly. Even so, it is clear enough from points already made that the terms have different defining accounts [*rationes*]. After all, the *ratio* which a term conveys is a conception which the mind has about

¹ What makes words synonyms in a context is their having the same *sense* there, not the mere fact that they describe the same referent there. But consider the context created by a theological theory, \mathcal{T} , in which all words applying literally to God's substance describe one and the same completive trait in the real (the one utterly simple ACT whereby God is everything He is and does everything He does). Indistinction of traits in God will make these words as said of Him synonyms, if the words become *indistinct* in sense when so said. Do they? In talk where 'sense' means dictionary definition, the answer is no, of course. But in \mathcal{T} , don't their senses become the scientific *rationes* explaining why God is as these words say? So, aren't they synonyms in \mathcal{T} ? That is the question.

the trait meant by the term. As our mind knows God from creatures, the conceptions it forms to understand God are proportioned to the completive traits flowing from God into creatures. These traits pre-exist in God as one* and without composition.[†] But they are received in creatures as divided off from one another[‡] and as several.[§] Just as, to the different completive traits of creatures there corresponds one, uncomposed Source, represented variously and severally by the diverse perfections of creatures, so also, to the various and several concepts of our understanding there corresponds one utterly uncomposed trait, imperfectly understood in such conceptions. Ergo, although the terms we apply to God "mean" one trait, they are still not synonyms: they mean it under many and diverse accounts.[‡]

HOW TO MEET OBJECTION (1) IS THUS CLEAR — because terms are synonymous when they convey the same thing under the same definition. Those conveying different definitions of the same thing [or trait] do not firstly and of themselves[‡] convey one item. Why not? Because a term only conveys a thing [or trait] by way of the mind's conceiving, as I said above.

ad (2): the several definitions conveyed by these terms are not vacuous, nor pointless: one uncomposed "something" corresponds to all of them, being multiply and imperfectly represented through all of them.

ad (3): it is part and parcel of God's perfect oneness that traits flow severally and dividively in others are found uncomposedly and unitedly in Him. This fact carries an incidental result: given that our understanding apprehends God along as many lines as created traits represent Him, the result is that He is one in reality and "many in our account."

² Let ' ϕ ', ' ψ ' be terms; let their senses $S(\phi)$ and $S(\psi)$ be distinct in L , so that the terms are not ordinary-language synonyms. But let $R(\phi)$, $R(\psi)$, be scientific accounts of what it takes to fit these terms as they apply to a thing *x*, except that a well-regarded theory \mathcal{T} points to a hidden factor in both. This alone will not make ' ϕ ' and ' ψ ' synonyms, any more than a unified force makes 'electricity' and 'magnetism' synonyms. Rather, the terms are theory-synonyms if, and only if, $R(\phi) = R(\psi)$, in that theory. Suppose that, for every created entity *x* of which ' ϕ ' and ' ψ ' are true in science, $R(\phi) \neq R(\psi)$. Then, says Aquinas, $R(\phi) \neq R(\psi)$, in any human theory of any *x*. For since $R(\phi)$, corresponds by way of human understanding to the real trait in *x* which is that whereby $|\phi|$ has extension in *x*, $R(\psi)$, is a human conception of that trait, and humans conceive it as it is found in creatures; so they define the makeup for $|\phi|$ as distinct from the makeup for $|\psi|$. Ergo ' ϕ ' and ' ψ ' are not synonyms in any theory, even the theological one. For even though the makeup for $|\phi|$ in God = the makeup for $|\psi|$ in Him, this identity is entirely a matter of how $|\phi|$, $|\psi|$ have extension in God, and how they have extension in God is not how they have extension in creatures. In sum, the extension is either the higher makeup ϕ or a lower ψ , and $R(\phi) = |\phi|$ plus how it has extension in creatures, i.e. through ϕ divided off from ψ , χ , etc.

* unit²
† simpliciter
‡ divis²
§ multipliciter

‡ per se primo

* rationes

† vana

‡ convenienter

Cajetan's Commentary

* *idem significatur*

In the title, 'synonymous' means having exactly the same sense.* so that saying 'God is wise' would be just the same as saying 'God is good'.

Analysis of the article

ii. In the body of the article, he answers the question with a single conclusion, in the negative: such terms, as attributed to God, are not synonyms.

The support is two-fold: (1) according to the two theories rejected in article 2; then (2) according to the theory we are actually following. Support (1) goes thus: the definitions of these terms differ thanks to the different traits negated in their sense or caused according to their sense; hence the terms are not synonymous.

Support (2) goes like this. [*Antecedent:*] Our mind knows God from creatures; [*1st inference:*] so our conceptions of God are proportioned to the complete traits flowing from God into creatures; [*2nd inference:*] so our conceptions are various and multiple while corresponding to one utterly simple reality; [*3rd inference:*] so the definitions of such terms for divine attributes are different; [*4th inference:*] hence these terms are not synonyms. — The antecedent is obvious, along with the first inference. But the second inference is supported on the strength of a proportion:

just as one utterly simple trait is represented by many complete traits in *real being*, so also [one is represented by many] in *intensional being*, i.e. by many conceptions.

Then the third inference is supported on the ground that a term's definition is a conception. The last inference is then obvious.

Definitions and conceptions

iii. Doubt arises about a proposition used in support of the third inference, namely:

the *ratio* that a term conveys is a conception that the mind has about the thing [or trait] meant by the term.

Doubt arises, for one thing, because it says in *Metaphysics IV*, text 28, that the *ratio* which a term 'φ' conveys is the makeup¹ that explains [why a thing is as 'φ' says]; but it is clear that this makeup is not a conception, since it is identified with the thing explained. For another thing, '*ratio*' is a term of second intention, while 'concept' is a term of first intention.⁴

The SHORT ANSWER to this is that, among Philoso-

¹ Terms of "first intention" were what we now call object language: they mentioned things, traits, doings, etc., whether these were physical (Popper's world 1) or psychic (Popper's world 2). 'Concept' named a psychic entity and so was a term of first intention. Terms of second intention, meanwhile, were ones mentioning things as they were known or brought into language. They included meta-classifications like 'genus' and 'species', epistemic labels like 'object of [a faculty]', and semantic or metalinguistic terms like 'noun', 'meaning', and 'account' or '*ratio*'.

phers and theologians, the word '*ratio*' in this context can be taken two ways: (1) form-wise and (2) extensionally.* Thus 'white' is taken form-wise for white-ness and extensionally for a thing that is white. If '*ratio*' is taken form-wise, it is a term of second intention and means a certain relation.² If taken extensionally, it means (for one reason) a conception and (for another) an explanatory makeup. A mental conception is called "the *ratio*" of a term 'φ' because it is that by which 'φ' is related to an extra-mental thing meant; an explanatory makeup is called the same because it is that by which the thing meant by 'φ' is explained. In the present article, clearly, the word is being taken extensionally for the mental conception. It is said to be "conveyed" by the term, since it is conveyed proximately; the explanatory makeup is the *ratio* conveyed ultimately by the term.³ — Thus the solution to the objections becomes obvious.

iv. Please observe at this point that the question addressed in this article is not about *things* [traits] but about *words*. So, while one could perhaps answer it on the basis that the formal makeups of the objects-meant are different, as the Scotists do, mixing in the issue of

² So taken, '*ratio*' means a semantic rule relating a word to a thing, a trait, or a set. Cf. 'definition' as we use it today.

³ What appears in an actual speech-act is a token of 'φ', and this token is produced because, by it, the speaker intends to convey a sense which she understands about some item to which she thinks of herself as referring. Language is learned from her by a new speaker, when he "catches on" to these understandings (*alias*, concepts) with which she is producing her tokens. Thereafter, he has his own understanding, more or less isomorphic to hers, with which to interpret her saying-things (e.g. saying tokens of the type 'φ'). It is vastly controversial what psycho-physical events are really going on in this "catching on," but this surface statement of the matter should justify saying that 'φ' proximately conveys a conception.

Subsequently, once the speakers have the same sort of concept in mind with which to use and interpret tokens of the type 'φ', further questions arise. One question is what this sort of concept "contains," and an answer spells out in different words a standard sense S('φ'). Thus a dictionary assigns to 'water' the (approximate) sense "a clear liquid used for washing and quenching thirst". This sort of definition is what 'φ' conveys for purposes of linguistic competence. It is the *verbal* "explanatory makeup" of 'φ'. But beyond the knowledge involved in language competence, further knowledge is needed for a scientific account of the things spoken of. Questions arise as to what this 'φ'-sort of concept is really a concept of, and the answers spell out what it takes in the real for something to count as φ. Thus what it takes for a clear liquid to be water is the chemical composition H₂O. This sort of *ratio* is not the dictionary's S('φ') but a scientific theory's R('φ'), namely, an "explanatory makeup" of φ-things in Aristotle's sense, and this is what 'φ' has for its 'meaning' and extension in science.

What stymies the modern reader of § iii is the fact that the Medievals used '*definitio*' for the real structure which we think a "real definition" captures or expresses, and they used '*ratio*' for both the structure (makeup) and the conception defining it. This situation is why I despaired of translating '*ratio*' into English at all in this section. No word of ours straddles the ambiguity between the uses *formaliter* and *denominativē*.

* *denominativē*

things (the distinction they draw among the divine attributes), the god-like talent of Aquinas led him to proceed more formally. Having learned from *Peri hermeneias* I that words are “signs of the impressions in the soul,” he showed that difference of meaning among words comes from difference of *conceptions* conveyed, without mixing in the other problems about the *things* [on which those conceptions bear].⁴ His solution here is thus consistent with either side of the controversy about attributes [over whether they are distinct in God]. So, lest this great work of theology be muddled up, the distinction-of-attributes problem should not be treated here. It is a side issue, to be treated on its own.

Understanding the answer *ad* (2)

v. In the answer *ad* (2), you should note that the talk of “several [*rationes*, *i.e.*] concepts” involves two points: their assimilation to their object, and their plural number. So if the question is raised,

What in *x* (say, in God) corresponds to the many concepts of *x*?

the answer has to be that what corresponds to these concepts is the one thing, *x*, multiply imitable or representable. What corresponds to the manyness of the concepts is not a manyness in the thing conceived but its *eminence*, whereby it has what it takes to contain undividedly* what is apprehended by another dividedly. Therefore, an effort to argue from

a distinction between the concepts-of-*x*

to

a distinction within the conceived object *x*,

is an effort to argue from disidentity of effects to a distinction in the cause — which is ridiculous, because the effects’ being many is obviously consistent with the cause’s being one.⁵ Hence both points are being

⁴ Here Cajetan fingers a deep difference between Thomism and Scotism. Thomism draws a more emphatic line between what words mean and how things are. The question of *what (and how) words mean* has first-off a psychological answer; the question of *what (and how) things are* has first-off a physical answer, and the former is largely independent of the latter. Only in a subsequent order of business does a science try to verify statements that induce concepts better matching what-and-how-things-are. In modern science, as in medieval theology, these latter statements become ever stranger, the concepts they induce ever more mind-boggling, as the remoteness of physical structure from everyday verbal meaning is discovered to be vaster and vaster. The Medievals did not anticipate this emerging remoteness in sciences outside theology, but at least the Thomists had room for it. See next note.

⁵ This is a swipe at Scotist reasoning. For Scotists, the content thought in a concept of *x* always cashed out as real: a form or “formality” within *x*. The fact that there were many sound concepts of *x* did imply distinctions within *x*: “formal” distinctions between the several “formalities” conceived. In effect, for each object-language predicate ‘ ϕ ’ of *L* such that ‘ ϕx ’ was true in *L*, a philosopher’s version of the verbal explanatory makeup of ‘ ϕ ’ in *L* was being identified with the physical explanatory makeup of ϕ -things *qua* ϕ . (If one takes ϕ -

touched upon in the text, where it says that what corresponds to the concepts is one thing (unqualifiedly, one thing), multiply represented.

Understanding the answer *ad* (3)

vi. In the answer *ad* (3), notice that the key proposition, namely,

God is thing-wise one and definition-wise many,

can be construed two ways: (a) One would be that He is manifold in definition as a subject understanding.* *i.e.* that He entertains multiple self-concepts; and that is false, because the concept in God’s mind by which He understands Himself and everything else is one, single concept. (b) The other way would be that He is manifold in definition as an object understood,[†] *i.e.* that He is the object of many concepts, actually or virtually; and so taken, the proposition is true and germane to the topic. When God is called many “by reason of definitions,” the sense is that He is an object verifying many conceptions, actual or virtual, about Him.

vii. In the same answer *ad* (3), notice that the basis in God for the proposition just discussed is His eminent Oneness, while the basis for it in our minds is His relation to objects-of-sense. The point Aquinas intends to get across is this: the reason there are so many definitions of God conveyed by our terms is because our mind stands so far distant from that supreme Oneness, [and it stands so far off] because the extent of disengagement [from matter] with which our minds understand His Oneness is no better than the extent to which there are

things as objects for consciousness and changes ‘physical’ in the last sentence to ‘objective’, the resulting identification is being made in certain sects of phenomenology.)

If it is imagined that some such identification is required by realist thought (say, by its commitment to correspondence-truth, or by its epistemology), Cajetan is saying otherwise. All that a commitment to correspondence-truth requires is that the thing *x* have *eminencia*, that is, have in some one structure what it takes to verify various statements about *x* whose predicates convey diverse concepts. (For the Medievals, the examples of *eminencia* were God and the sun, for moderns, the examples are as plentiful as the photon, which has in its one structure what it takes to verify ‘is a particle’ and ‘is a wave’. Quite remarkable, really, is the parallel between Aquinas’ problem of how we can describe God with language shaped by material creatures and the modern problem of how we can describe quantum phenomena with language shaped by macroscopic bodies.) All that a realist epistemology requires is that the several concepts of *x* be causal consequences (perhaps remote) of what *x* physically is (and of what man’s apparatuses of apprehension physically are). For so long as a causal chain connects what we perceive to what *x* is, the intelligible species abstracted will represent *x* in the same way as creatures represent God, and the discovery of links in the chain will lead to better concepts of what it takes to be what *x* is. And if this process stalls, because it bumps up against a natural human inability to observe, so that we should need a supernatural Vision to know what *x* is . . . well, to be a Christian is to enjoy that hope.

imitations [of that Oneness] in the diversified creatures outside God. *As* in the outside creatures, *so also* in our understanding: justice is one thing, wisdom is another, etc.; and the reason for this, as will come out later on, is that our understanding is the lowest of the lot. —
 q 89. a.1 And notice that the text does not say, “because our understanding gets *from* created traits ...” Rather, it says, “because our understanding apprehends ... along as many lines as created traits represent ...” Thus even in a case where our mind was not getting its knowledge *from* created traits, as happened in Adam [when he received infused knowledge of things from God instead of learning by experience], the same conclusion would still follow, because our understanding is proportional to such traits, as it says in the text.

viii. If you are thinking about minds other than our own, the basis just presented will easily give you the

grounds for any plurality of *rationes*-of-God. After all, if this big a plurality springs from the bearing of the Object’s supreme Oneness towards an intellect so remote, then a lesser plurality will spring from the same bearing towards an intellect that is closer, and no plurality at all will arise from its bearing towards the intellect that is closest. But there is no “closest” intellect, of course, among those that are distinct in any way from the Object itself; so only the divine intellect remains. Towards it, no plurality of concepts at all arises from that supreme Oneness. Absolutely and universally, then, and not just relative to us, the ground that explains why God is definition-wise many is His complete Oneness and the *finitude* of created intellect. I have taken this topic up here because it can be deduced from the text, not because it pertains to the present inquiry, which is only about terminology and thus about things dependent on us.

Does any such term apply to God and to creatures univocally?

In *I Sent. Prol.*, a.2 ad 2, d 19, q 5, a.2 ad 1, d 35, a.4, 1 *CG* cc 32-34, *De Veritate* q 2, a.11;
De Potentia Dei q 7, a 7; *Comp. Theologicus* c 27

It would seem that terms applying to both God and creatures are said of the two univocally.¹

* *reducitur ad*

(1) Any equivocal use traces back* to a univocal use, as the many depend upon the one.² If 'dog' is used equivocally for things that bark and things in the sea, it has to be used univocally for some (say, the ones that bark); otherwise there would be an infinite regress. Well, one finds with agent causes that some are univocal (having the same name and definition as their effects, as when a man begets a man) and some are equivocal (as when the sun makes something hot, as the sun itself is not "hot" except in an equivocal sense). It seems, then, that the agent cause on which every other such cause depends — the First Agent — is a univocal cause. So terms applying to both God and creatures [e. g. 'being', 'alive'] are predicated of them univocally.

See fn. 1 on p 117

(2) Besides, if things have a common description but it is equivocal, one does not look for likeness between them. There is likeness between God and a creature (says Genesis 1:26, "Let us make man in our image and likeness"); so it seems that some term must apply to both univocally.

c 1;
1053a 24

(3) Furthermore, a measure is homogeneous with what it measures, as it says in *Metaphysics X*. God is the first measure of all beings, as it says in the same passage. Hence God is homogeneous with creatures, and some term can serve to describe both, univocally.

ON THE OTHER HAND, whenever it is the case that what is predicated of *x* and *y* is verbally the same but not the same in its real definition, the predicate is being used equivocally of *x* and *y*. Well, no term describes God under the same such definition as it describes a creature. [Take 'wise' for example.] Wisdom is a *quality* in creatures, but not in God. A change in the category [to which the trait belongs] changes the real definition [of the corresponding term], because the category is part of what it takes to be that trait. The same will hold for other exam-

¹ Univocity and its opposite, equivocality, were relations between *uses* of a term. Suppose 'x' was used to describe ϕ -things and also ψ -things. If the scientific *ratio* R('x'), explaining what it took for a ϕ -thing to be χ was the same as the R('x'), explaining what it took for a ψ -thing to be χ , then 'x' was being used "univocally." Cf. 'spin' used of balls and planets. If the scientific definition changed as one went from discussing ϕ -things to discussing ψ -things, 'x' was being used "equivocally." Cf. 'spin' used of balls and fermions.

² This premise tries to cover both semantics (equivocal uses of a term) and physics (equivocal cases of causation; cf. q 4, a.2). The objector is after a lemma to the effect that all causes exhibiting χ -ness under one *ratio* and producing effects which are χ under another, depend on a cause that shares in χ -ness with its effects under the same *ratio*.

ples. Therefore, any term applied to both God and creatures applies to them equivocally.

MOREOVER, God is further removed from all creatures than any one creature is from another. Yet there are cases where no term applies univocally to a pair of creatures, given how far apart they are (as when they have no genus or category in common). Much less, then, will any term apply univocally to God and creatures; all will apply equivocally.

ANSWER: it is impossible for any term to be predicated univocally of God and creatures. For whenever an effect fails to match* the power of its agent cause, it receives the likeness of its cause deficiently, failing to agree in scientific definition with its cause. The result is: there exists in the cause, simply and in one fashion, what exists dividedly and in many fashions in the effects. This is how the sun, acting with a single active power, produces forms that are manifold and various in the things here below. In the same way, as I said before, all the complete traits of things exist dividedly and in many fashions in created things but pre-exist as one in God. The result of this is that, whenever a term bespeaking a complete trait is applied to a creature, it conveys that trait as *distinct from others* according to the scientific account of its defining makeup. For example, when we apply 'wise' to a man, we mean* a complete trait distinct from his essence, distinct from his power, distinct from his sheer existing, etc. But when we apply 'wise' to God, we do not intend to convey* something distinct from His essence, power, or existence. So when we apply 'wise' to a man, the word somehow puts a boundary around the trait meant and "circumscribes" it; when we apply it to God, that does not happen — the word leaves the trait meant "uncircumscribed," so that it oversteps the word's semantic boundary.³ Thus it becomes obvious that 'wise' is not said of God and of a human being under the same scientific definition. And the same goes for the other terms under discussion. So, no term is predicated of God and of creatures univocally.

* *adequare*

q 13, a 4

† *significamus*

‡ *non intendimus significare*

§ *excedentem nominis significationem*

Nevertheless, they are not predicated purely equivocally either (as some writers have maintained). If they were, we could know nothing about God from creatures: nothing could be proved; we should be falling continually into the fallacy of equivocation. That would go against the philosophers, who prove many points about God conclusively, and would also go against the Apostle Paul, who said in Romans 1:20 that "the invisible things of God ... are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made."

The thing to say, then, is that such terms are applied to God and creatures analogously,⁴ i.e. thanks to a relation [*proportio*]. Analogy arises in two ways:

¶ *secundum analogum*

(1) it arises between uses that have relation to one use, as 'healthy' is said of medicine and of urine, because both have an order and relation to the health of an animal (the one being a sign of it, the other a cause of it);

(2) or it arises between uses where one is related to the other, as 'healthy' is said of medicine and of the animal, because the medicine is a cause of the health in the animal.³

q. 13, a.1 And in this [latter] way, some terms are applied to God and to creatures analogously, not purely equivocally, nor univocally. After all, we can only describe God from creatures, as was said above; and so each and every term we apply to both is applied on the basis of the fact that there is an ordering of the creature to God, as to a Source and Cause wherein all the complexive traits of things pre-exist in a higher manner.⁴

This way of sharing [meaning] stands in the middle between sheer equivocation and simple univocation. In cases where a term is being used analogously, there is

³ Suppose again that 'x' is used to describe ϕ -things and ψ -things; and suppose the scientific definition of what it takes to be χ changes as one goes from $R(\chi)$, to $R(\chi)$, so that 'x' applies equivocally to the two kinds of things; but now suppose further that the change of definition occurs in a rule-governed way, so that the *ratio* $R(\chi)$ bears or even contains a predictable relation to the original *ratio*, $R(\chi)$. Now we are in the subclass of equivocals where the uses are not "sheer equivocals" but analogates, said Aristotle. The original or "proper" *ratio* fits only one analogate, but the other is being "named after" this one because of its relation thereto, says Aquinas in q. 16, a. 6. These pioneers studied analogy in scientific discourse. On analogy in natural languages, see James F. Ross, "A New Theory of Analogy," *Proceedings of the ACPA* (1970) 70-85; "Analogy and the Resolution of some Cognition Problems," *Journal of Philosophy* 67 (1970) 725-746.

⁴ Aquinas was not using analogy to ascertain the relevant ontological situation between God and creatures; he had already done that in q. 4, where the all-inclusive "completeness" of God carried the consequence that the completenesses of creatures represent Him defectively. Given that situation, the question here was just semantic: how do the terms picking out these completenesses convey meaning as they are used now of God, now of creatures? Of his three options, Aquinas picked the third.

not just one definition of the term in play, as there is in cases of univocal use, and yet the definitions in play are not wholly unrelated,* as they are in equivocal uses. Rather, a term analogously applied to many cases conveys different relations to some one thing, as 'healthy' said of urine conveys a sign of animal health, and 'healthy' said of medicine conveys a cause of the same.

* nec totaliter
diversa

TO MEET THE OBJECTIONS — *ad* (1): it is quite true that, in predicating terms, equivocal uses have to go back to univocal ones. But in the actions of agent causes, it is not necessary that a univocal agent come ahead of a non-univocal agent. After all, a non-univocal agent is a universal cause of a whole class of events, as the sun is a cause of every event of human reproduction. By contrast, a univocal agent is not an agent cause of a whole class of events (otherwise, it would be a cause of itself, since it is a member of the class); it is rather a particular cause of an individual, causing the individual to be a member of some class. Ergo, a universal cause of a whole class is not a univocal agent. And yet [in order of causal priority] a universal cause comes ahead of a particular cause. Now this universal agent, although it is not a univocal cause, is not wholly equivocal either (because if it were, it would not be producing something resembling itself); it can be called, rather, an analogical agent.⁵ The parallel to this in the predication of terms is that all univocally used terms depend on one first term, which is not used univocally but analogously, and that term is 'being'.

ad (2): a creature's resemblance to God is incomplete. As I said above, the creature doesn't even represent God as being in the same category with it.

ad (3): God is not the sort of measure that is proportioned to the things measured, and thus He and His creature do not have to belong to a common category.

AS TO THE POINTS ON THE OTHER SIDE — they support the conclusion that these terms are not used of God and creatures univocally; they do not show that the terms are used [purely] equivocally.

⁵ When the context is semantics, the adjective to go with 'analogy' will be 'analogous'. When the context is ontology in semantic dress, as here, the adjective will be 'analogical'.

Cajetan's Commentary

c. 1:
1a6-10 The word 'univocally' in the title question is used according to the definition of 'univocal uses' given in Aristotle's *Categories*; nothing should be added or subtracted from that definition, as the last paragraph in the body of this article confirms.

Analysis of the article, I

In the body of this article, four jobs are done: (1) he answers the question in the negative: they are not used univocally; (2) he says they are not used purely equivo-

cally either; (3) he affirms that they are used analogously; (4) he compares analogy to the other two.

ii. As to job (1), the conclusion is no. Terms applied to both God and creatures are not used univocally of them. — The support goes thus. [*Antecedent:*] Every effect failing to match its cause receives as distinct complexive traits what was one, simple such trait, ϕ , in the cause; [*Ist inference:*] so every such effect receives a ϕ -likeness of its agent cause under an explanation of what it takes to be ϕ differing from how the agent's own being- ϕ would be ex-

plained; [2nd inference:] so creatures share dividely [i.e. as multiple traits ϕ , ψ , etc.] what was one trait in God; [3rd inference:] so each term for such a trait [ϕ , ψ], if applied to creatures, means something distinct from what any other such term means; but if each term for such a trait is applied to God, it does not mean a trait as distinct from the others; [4th inference:] so each such term, when said of creatures, “comprehends” the trait meant; but when said of God, it leaves the trait overstepping the sense of the word; [5th inference:] so such terms are not affirmed of God and creatures according to the same defining account; [6th inference:] so they are not being used univocally.

The antecedent is illustrated by the sun and things here below; it is not an exact example so much as a parallel case.* On the strength of the parallel, the first inference is left as obvious, as is the second. The third inference, too, in the body of the article is left as obvious, because an inference from plurality-of-senses to plurality-of-accounts defining the terms having those senses is obviously a perfectly good inference. But the point inferred in the third inference, and in the fourth, is illustrated by the example of ‘wise’, a description common to God and many creatures.

On the first inference

iii. For beginners, doubt arises about the very first inference [if an effect fails to match its cause, the ϕ -ness it receives differs in definition from the cause’s own ϕ -ness]. It does not seem valid, for the following reason. [Antecedent:] Many classifying traits are found both in bodies here below and in the heavenly bodies under the same definition, or at least under one that makes the corresponding terms univocal for semantic purposes (which is the sort of univocity under discussion here); and yet the lower bodies stand to the heavenly ones as effects sharing dividely the traits that their heavenly causes have as one; [inference:] [so this situation between cause and effect does not mandate a difference in trait-definition.] — The antecedent is clearly true, since the same scientific definition explains what it takes to be body, to be transparent, to be light, etc., down here as up there.

iv. The SHORT ANSWER is that the very general principle Aquinas assumes as his antecedent and whence he infers diversity of definition, is taken formally, i.e., [as true of effects failing to match] as *so failing*, so that what is always the case is that sharing dividely in what is present in the cause simply and unitedly excludes identity of definition (even for semantic purposes) *from the trait so shared*, but not from other traits, if the cause and its effect have any in common which have not become common as a result of *such* sharing. Well, that is what is going on in the counter-examples alleged. Transparency and the rest are found dividely in the heavenly bodies, as they are down here. Now Averroes thought that even being-a-body was found unitedly up there, i.e. without composition of matter and form. But in that case, ‘body’ is not used univocally of the things up there and the ones down here. In fact, this is why, in his commentary on

Porphyry, Averroes denied that “body” was a genus within the category of substance, and put “composed body” in its place, etc. But now suppose that bodies arise from matter and form up there, too [as we hold]; in that case, bodihood is had dividely up there, too.

Let it be agreed, then, that for every trait ϕ such that the heavenly bodies have ϕ as one trait, but ϕ is shared as many traits down here (and one sees such a thing in their active powers, all or most of which they have in the sole nature of light), nothing down here has ϕ -ness under the same definition as they do.¹

Problems with the third inference

v. No little difficulty arises about the third inference [i.e. if creatures share being- ϕ , being- ψ , etc. as multiple traits, but they were one trait in God, then each term for such a trait (ϕ , ψ , etc.), if applied to creatures, means something distinct from what any other such term means, but if each such term is applied to God, it does not mean a trait as distinct from the others], and the difficulty comes from two main arguments.²

(1) The third inference is invalid [Scotists will say], because it jumps from how-it-is with things to how-it-is with words. Words depend on our understanding, which has a natural tendency to split up what is united in things; hence we can understand and signify a complete trait, say, wisdom, without understanding or signifying the various involvements which the trait has in this thing x or that thing y , such as whether it is the same as other traits in x or not the same. Thus inferences such as the following,

wisdom in creatures is distinct from fairness;
ergo ‘wisdom’ said of creatures means wisdom
plus its distinction from fairness, etc.,

are invalid, just as this other inference,
quantity in mixed things is conjoined to color:
ergo ‘so much’ said of mixed things means
quantity conjoined to color, etc.,

is invalid.

(2) Leaving aside the validity of the inference, the very proposition inferred is false [they will say]. Here is why.

¹ The “science” from which Cajetan’s “beginners” were deriving their problem is utterly obsolete, and yet his answer bears an eerie similarity to a living issue. The objects of classical physics are in some sense causal consequences of quantum-scale entities. Classical objects have the traits of position and momentum. It is not far-fetched to say that, in having these traits, classical objects have “dividely” what quantum-scale entities have “unitedly.” At least it is clear that “has a position” and “has a momentum” are *not* being used univocally when they are said of the one and of the other. And yet it may well be that some other traits (mass? charge?) are named univocally as between the two cases.

² The difficulties discussed in §§ v-viii are drawn from Scotist sources which Cajetan knew. Scotists were highly critical of Aquinas’ reasoning in this article and of his whole theory of analogy, as will come out further in §§ ix-x. So every thing under this subhead and the next should be read as Cajetan’s report of Scotism and his response to it.

* proportionalis

De substantia
orbis, c.2

The word 'wisdom', taken independently [of this or that use of it] either means finite wisdom, or else infinite wisdom, or else both, or else it means neither but abstracts from finite and infinite. Well, it can't mean finite wisdom, because then 'God is wise' would be false. It can't mean infinite wisdom, because then 'A man is wise' would be false. It can't mean both, because then both those propositions would be false. So it means neither. And in that case, the word 'wise' no more means something distinct [from other traits] in 'A man is wise' than it does in 'God is wise'. In both uses it is predicated simply and independently without any addition.

In confirmation of argument (2), [Scotists will say that] Aquinas went wrong here because he did not distinguish a word's *form-wise sense** from the referent to which it happens to be applied.³ For although when I say 'A man is wise', the word 'wise', thanks to the subject matter, predicates a distinct thing, *etc.*, on account of the fact that wisdom in man is a distinct trait from his existence, *etc.*, nevertheless, as far as the form-wise sense of 'wise' is concerned, it predicates nothing but being-wise, whether that is something limited in a given real case or not.

vi. TO CLEAR THIS UP, three jobs need to be done: we must (1) clear up the terms used in the argument, (2) head off a false construal of the reasoning process, and (3) bring to light the right construal.

[For job (1) you should know that conveying a trait as distinct (or in such a way that it has what it takes to be distinct) can happen two ways: (a) It can happen formally [*explicitly*], and then the word conveys the trait and conveys its being distinct from other traits; this is not what Aquinas is talking about. (b) It can happen basis-wise² or causally, and then the word conveys a trait in such a way as to provide the basis for its distinction from other traits. This is what Aquinas had in mind. In the text of article 5, he did not mean to say that a word like 'wise' affirmed of creatures conveys *both* what-it-is to be wise *and* the distinction between that and what-it-is to be fair [or whatever else the thing might be]; no, he meant to say that the word conveys what-it-is to be wise, in such a way that what is conveyed provides the basis for its difference from being fair. As I shall say more fully below, wisdom has what it takes to provide this just from its definable quiddity [*i.e.* just from what-it-is to be it]. Thus, to convey wisdom as distinct from other traits is merely to convey wisdom as a definable quiddity.

(And by the way, when you hear '[distinct] from others', you shouldn't think it means *from any and all other traits*, because on that interpretation every term conveys something "distinct," even in God, and no difference emerges between a term as used of God and as used of creatures. Rather, you should think of it as meaning [distinct] *from other complete traits or from other complete traits that could be in the same subject*, as the text of the article obviously means to say.)³

³ This aside heads off an interpretation that would trivialize the whole issue. It takes no brains to see that 'wise' (like any

vii. [As to jobs (2) and (3):] the reasoning involved in the third inference can be taken in two senses. Taken one way, Aquinas would be going from *thing-wise* distinctness* of the complete traits [in *x*] vs. *thing-wise* identity of them [in *y*] to infer that the words differ [when used of *x* and *y*] as to conveying a complete trait as distinct vs. conveying it but not as distinct. This is how the objections construe his inference as going. Well, so construed the inference *is* wrong, and for the reasons the objections point out; but this is not what Aquinas had in mind. Taken the other way, Aquinas would be going from *explanational* distinctness⁴ of the complete traits [in *x*] vs. *explanational* identity of them [in *y*] to infer that the words differ [when used of *x* and *y*] in the way indicated.⁴ This construal of the inference is what he intended; and when so construed, it is true, formal, and reaches the conclusion he wanted.

To see this, one needs to realize that two complete traits can be joined as one, as we are discussing in this context, in two ways: as one thing [*identice*] and as having one explanation [*formaliter*].

- They would be joined as one thing, for example, if we imagine that Socrates' wisdom and his fairness are exactly one and the same *thing*.

- For them to be joined as having one explanation, however, can be imagined in two ways.

- For the first way, imagine that the account of what it takes to be just exactly wise² and the account of what it takes to be just exactly fair are one and the same account — not that this is an account explaining a third trait pre-containing both, but that it is just the exact explanation of wisdom *and* of fairness. This sort of imagined identity is flatly impossible. It involves two contradictions. For if these two explanations are not one third explanation, they are not one explanation at all, because no explanation captures why there is identity-of-explanation between one [explanandum] and another without making them, of themselves, one [explanandum]. And *vice-versa*, if the accounts are one explanation, then they are one third explanation, since, of themselves, the one [explanation] is not the other.

- For the second way, imagine that what it takes to be wise and what it takes to be fair are wrapped up in a higher manner in one explanatory factor of a higher order and have one explanation therein. Well, this sort of identity is not only possible but is in fact how all complete traits [formally in God] are identical in God. For one should not think that the explanation of what it takes to be *just exactly* wise is satisfied by God; rather, as Aquinas says in the

other word) is used with the intention to convey "something distinct from" its own negation or privation, no matter what subject it is predicated of. Hence, to see how the intended sense in 'God is wise' can differ from the intended sense in 'Socrates is wise', one must limit the discussion to other complete traits.

⁴ Cajetan uses here the Scotist expression '*distinctio formalis*' but reinterprets it, so that it is not an ontological distinction between form-like entities but a semantic distinction between definitions or explanations [*rationes*]. This becomes clear in the next paragraphs, and I translate accordingly here.

* *formale significatum*
† *materiale suppositum*

* *distinctio realis*

† *distinctio formalis*

‡ *propria ratio formalis sapientiae*

‡ *fundamentaliter*

in §§ VII, VIII

text, the explanation of wisdom in God is not just exactly of wisdom but is just exactly of a higher trait — call it divinity — and is eminently-formally the common explanation of His fairness, goodness, power, etc. For just as the *thing* which is wisdom in creatures and the *thing* which is fairness in creatures are elevated into one *thing* of higher order (divinity) and thus are *one thing* in God, so also the account of what it is to be wise and the account of what it is to be fair are elevated into one account of a higher order, namely, the explanation of what it is to be just exactly divine, and have numerically one formal explanation, eminently containing both accounts — not only virtually (as the account of what it takes for there to be light contains the account of what it takes for there to be color) but formally (as the account of what it takes to be light contains the account of what it takes to be potentially heat producing). With supreme subtlety, then, did the God-given genius of St. Thomas go from the fact that the explanation of wisdom in God is explanatory not just of His wisdom but also of His fairness and hence is not the explanation of just-exactly-wisdom but of some third thing, while the explanation of wisdom in creatures is explanatory of just wisdom alone, to infer that ergo the explanation of wisdom in God is one affair, and the explanation of wisdom in creatures is another, and hence that the common word ‘wise’ applied to both is not said of both with the same explanation.

To foster clearer perception of this [and to finish job (3)], let us add some examples. If we ask, “What is a man insofar as he is wise?” we shall say, “Apt to put things in order,” or something of the sort. But if we ask, “What is God insofar as He is wise?” we shall have to say, “Something that in a higher way pre-contains within Itself being apt to put things in order.” Now it is obvious that, although ‘wise’ is a word applied to both God and man, the account of what-it-takes for each to verify this word is not entirely the same. Why not? Because the account of what it takes for a man to be wise is just that, while the account of what-it-takes for God to be wise is that and more; indeed, in His case, it is not an account of what-it-takes to be wise nor an account of what-it-takes to be any other [defined] thing but is a higher account [explaining] what-it-takes [to be that higher thing]. This is what Aquinas’ text is saying, if it is read with penetration.⁵

Point-by-point

viii. Now we are ready to dispose of the arguments in objection. In answer to argument (1): the reasoning in this inference is not arguing from how-it-is with things to how-it-is with words independently [of this or that use of them]; rather, it is arguing from diversity of the explanation conveyed by the word in this or that [scientific]

⁵ The upshot is this. Let ‘ χ ’ convey a conception $|\chi|$. If ‘ χ ’ is true of a creature c , the *ratio* $R(\chi)$, = $|\chi|$ + how it has extension in creatures. Thus, it explains how c verifies ‘ χ ’ alone. But if ‘ χ ’ is true of God, the *ratio* $R(\chi)_{\text{God}}$ = $|\chi|$ – how it has extension in creatures, leaving an undefined makeup whereby $|\chi|$, $|\psi|$, $|\phi|$, etc. have extension in God. So the *rationes* differ.

use to a conclusion overthrowing univocity of the word [as between the two uses]. As emerges from what I have said already, the text of St. Thomas is not proceeding from thing-wise identity or diversity but from an understood identity-in-explanation or an understood diversity-in-explanation of the complicative traits *vis-à-vis* each other. And even from an explanatory identity of the traits [in the one case], he could not validly have overthrown the *word’s* univocity [as between the two cases], if he had not seen that, from an identity-in-explanation of two traits that *of themselves are not one in explanation*, it follows that there is a third explanation higher than all such diverse ones. For what emerges directly from the fact that there is no alternative to a third explanation is this: there lies a distinction-in-definition between the higher complicative trait and the lower, that is, between the complicative trait χ identical-in-explanation with other such traits and the same trait χ not identical in explanation with others.

Against argument (2), I say it *assumes that the word* ‘wisdom’, taken independently [of any given use], so that it does *not* mean a species of quality [which is only what it means when used of creatures] but [means what it means when it is] taken across-the-board, *implies some one explanation* (simply one unqualifiedly). But that is precisely what is in question and under dispute here, and our inquiry is concluding that the assumption is false. ‘Wisdom’ taken across-the-board implies an explanation that is *one by analogy*, not simply one unqualifiedly. Well, how an explanation/definition that is one by analogy is applied [across the board] to many things has been treated by me at length in my *De analogia nominum*.⁶ Meanwhile, to answer [the four-part conundrum], ‘wisdom’ means both [finite and infinite wisdom] *but not after the fashion of a univocal term*; and so the conclusion drawn from this part [that both

⁶ This important work, first published in 1498, has been reprinted many times in collections of Cajetan’s *opuscula*. A modern study with English translation and commentary is Joshua Hochschild, *Cajetan on Analogy*. Cajetan’s monograph was accepted among paleo-Thomists as an optimal guide through the thickets of analogy theory, and it continued to be so accepted among neo-Thomists until Ralph M. McInerney published an influential critique, titled *The Logic of Analogy* (The Hague: Nijhoff, 1971). McInerney accused Cajetan of making analogy too ontological, losing sight of the fact it is first-off a “logical,” i.e. semantic affair.

The present writer sees no evidence in Cajetan of a forgetfulness of semantics (quite the contrary). Hochschild’s work has already gone a long way towards vindicating Cajetan; but while this is not the place to assess the whole of McInerney’s critique, I must add a point which, I believe, is fundamental. McInerney saw no difference between ‘*ratio*’ and ‘*significatio*’, so that the *ratio* of a term ‘ ϕ ’ became for him nothing more than the definition laying out its sense. He thus failed to distinguish dictionary-definition from scientific definition/explanation (which is what ‘*ratio*’ really means), and so he failed to distinguish analogy in every-day parlance, where analogous uses arise from relations accepted in folk belief, from analogy in scientific discourse, where uses are judged analogous on the basis of scientific *rationes*. Perhaps McInerney failed to realize that a theory of analogy in scientific discourse sets *more demands on the ontological situation* than a commonplace theory does.

'God is wise' and 'Man is wise' would be false] is invalidly drawn.⁷

Against the confirming argument: when I say "God is wise," the word 'wise', as far as its form-wise sense is concerned,* means a wisdom that is the same-in-explanation as fairness, *etc.* — indeed, to speak more exactly, it doesn't mean a wisdom at all but something pre-containing the makeup of wisdom in a higher manner. But when I say, "A man is wise," the word 'wise' predicates just exactly the makeup of wisdom. This came out already in the answers we would give to the questions, "What is God insofar as He is wise?"; "What is man insofar as he is wise?" For what a term 'φ' "form-wise means" is what answers the question,

what is *x* insofar as *x* meets the description 'φ'? So Aquinas did not go wrong but grasped very "formally" indeed the formal explanation of what it takes for terms to be univocal, according to Aristotle's account.

Conflict with Scotus over the conclusion itself

ix In his comments on *I Sent.* d.3, qq.1, 3 and d.8, q.3,

⁷ A modern reader will have expected Cajetan to say "or" here: 'wisdom' taken independently means finite (distinct) wisdom or infinite (indistinct) wisdom, and thus both 'God is wise' and 'man is wise' would have come out true. But that move would have given 'wisdom' taken independently a "formally" disjunctive meaning, like the word 'grue' made up to mean 'green or blue'. The genuine solution, as Cajetan understood it, was more subtle and can be explicated as follows. Suppose [wise] can have extension in different manners, and suppose these manners are such makeups as a *ratio* would lay out: distinctly/finally as a habit, distinctly/finally as an act, distinctly/finally as substance, indistinctly/infinally, *etc.* Now take the uses of 'wise' that result in true sentences and quantify over the manners just proposed and also over these veridical uses. The following proposition,

(1) For every veridical use of 'wise', there is a manner in which [wise] has extension,

must come out true, but the manner need not be the same for every use. Hence (1) protects the analogical character of 'wise'. A generalization of (1), namely,

(2) For every veridical use of 'x', there is a manner in which [x] has extension,

will apply to any analogous term, to make a general statement about how such a term functions across-the-board, independently of this or that use, explained in this or that *ratio*. To reach this level, one does not prescind from the manners (as the Scotist solution proposes to do). One abstracts without prescinding, in modern jargon, one makes 'manner' a variable having the several manners as its values, so that 'wise' across-the-board means 'wise in some manner'. Thus 'God is wise' and 'a man is wise' come out true, the former with one value of 'manner', and the latter with another. In short, the sense of an analogous term taken independently "contains" the *rationes* of its several analogates, not as a disjunction contains its disjuncts, but as a variable "contains" its values.

The reader must now recall that the problem addressed in this footnote is not the one over which Cajetan is mainly exercised at this point. Here in § viii, the issue is not yet what 'wise' might mean across all its applications, but how two of its applications compare, the one in 'a man is wise' and the one in 'God is wise'.

Scotus advances many arguments against the conclusion itself [that descriptions of the sort discussed are not used univocally of God and creatures].

(1) For one thing (he says), such descriptions have a clear-cut common understanding,* independent of any problems we have about how to understand God and creatures.

(2) For another thing, exercises of metaphysical reasoning use a single formal definition[†] in such cases and, after removing from it all conditions of incompleteness, apply that definition to God.

(3) Then, too, if there were no univocity in play, God would not be naturally knowable by any simple concept, in that the concept [by which we are supposed to know Him] would not be available, essentially or virtually, in anything reflected in a phantasm.

(4) And also every comparison of more and less is made in a regard that is somehow univocal, as one can see from *Physics VII*. Yet clearly enough, God is a "more complete being" than a creature. [Ergo 'being', at least, is used univocally.]

I have dealt with these arguments at length in my comments on *De ente et essentia*, but I will answer them briefly now.

As to (1): that argument establishes only that the general understanding of (say) wisdom is other than [that of] God's wisdom or a creature's wisdom. But to infer from that otherness the conclusion that, therefore, the general understanding is a univocal one is invalid — a fallacy of the consequent.⁸ For an analogical understanding or concept is also other than its applications. It is just not other in the way in which a [more general] univocal concept is other than [the applied] univocal concepts. A general univocal concept differs from its applications by being [a part] cut away from [the rest of what is in] them; but a general analogical concept differs from its applications by containing them, as I wrote at length in *De analogia nominum*.

As to (2): exercises of metaphysical reasoning use a definition that is unqualifiedly one at the outset of the inquiry; but by the end, they are using a definition that is one only by analogy; that is what is happening to the definition of 'wisdom' when it is expurgated of all incompletenesses. This is why, *pace* Scotus, there is no parallel between 'stone' and 'wise'. Neither at the outset of the inquiry nor at the end can the scientific definition of stone remain one by analogy, so as to be satisfied formally in God and in a stone. For what it takes to be a stone always includes incompleteness [matter, potency, limitation].⁹

⁸ Scotus thought that when a general notion was applied to different cases, analogy arose between the different applications. These were thus distinct from the general notion, which had been univocal. Cajetan is accusing Scotus of leaping from 'if the general notion is univocal, it is distinct from the applied ones' (schematically, if *p*, then *q*) to get 'if the general notion is distinct from the applied ones, it is univocal' (if *q* then *p*).

⁹ Scotus' first two arguments for his position, and Cajetan's replies to them, are crucial to getting a perspective on this de-

* *ex formalis suo significato*

* *conceptus*

† *ratio formalis*

c.4, 248b 7-12

c.2, q.3

c.4

As to (3): God is knowable by a simple concept contained *participatively* or *imitatively* in an object reflected in a phantasm. It doesn't have to be contained there essentially or virtually; there is this third way.

As to (4): comparison is also made in an analogical regard, which is intermediate between the univocal and the equivocal; so I deny Scotus's assumption. When it is said that God is a more complete being than a creature, the comparison is being made in regard to what it takes to be a being, and this what-it-takes is one by analogy and thus analogously "common" to both [God and a creature], as I have maintained elsewhere.

Analysis of the article, II

xi. As to job (2), the conclusion is negative: such terms are not used of God and of other things purely equivocally. — The support goes as follows. If they were just used equivocally, nothing could be known or demonstrated about God from creatures; but this goes against

bate — I mean, a perspective from which one can finally come to see what is at stake.

If one thinks of a branch of knowledge as a finished product, and especially if one thinks of the finished product as Scotus did — *i.e.*, as a successfully axiomatized deductive system in which all the truths of the science appear — then the Scotist theory of meaning is entirely plausible. A basic term starts with a meaning in the axioms. As various theorems apply the axioms in various ways, the term is applied in various ways and picks up qualifiers. If the differently qualified uses of the term are compared to each other (say, if 'finite being' is compared to 'infinite being'), they can be called analogous to each other; but the qualified uses all emerge as applications of the univocal core meaning the word had in the axioms. (If one imagines further that the axioms are ordinary-language definitions, so that all branches of science follow as diverse chains of deduction from such definitions, one will also have the Scotist conviction that a word's pre-theoretical meaning is itself the univocal core meaning it carries in the axioms of any science in which it appears.)

The Thomist theory of meaning will become plausible only as one begins to see that, in any branch of science, the axiomatized formal system is a thoroughly secondary affair, put together (if and when it can be put together at all) after the uncertainty has gone out of the inquiry. A formal deductive system is an artifact contrived to confirm results already secured otherwise. Though fun to contrive in its own way, the system is not in any wise an image of the discovery process in which the science came to have results in the first place. That discovery process was a history of confused debates, uncertain conjectures, tentative refutations, *etc.*, in which clarity was hard won and late in coming. In such a process, one may indeed begin with everyday ideas, but then new conceptual possibilities are recognized; one discovers that the words already in use may be stretched or purged in meaning, if the discoveries are to be expressed; and one discovers that stretching the meaning in the way needed is a matter of relaxing a previously adequate definition in some way. Thus univocity is broken as the inquiry proceeds. And if one ever does hit upon a fully general definition (of 'being' or 'spin') suitable to appear in powerful axioms from which one can deduce all the results that one has struggled to secure otherwise, then that definition will be (a) very far from a pre-theoretical one, and (b) one by analogy (because it was won by analogy).

both philosopher and Apostle: ergo [it is false.] — Drawing this inference is supported on the ground that one would keep on falling into a fallacy of equivocation. How he attacks the point inferred is obvious.

Two points to bear in mind

xii. Two features of the text need to be noticed here. The first is the word 'purely'. The text of this article does not say flatly that these terms are "not equivocal": it makes the more limited point that they are not "purely equivocal." The limitation is added because, in fact, analogous terms are included under the equivocals defined in the *Categories*. For equivocal uses turn up in many ways. In some of them, the same term is used, but the definitions going with it are utterly diverse; these cases are called pure equivocals, and these are what the text is talking about here. In other cases, the same term is used and the definitions going with it are only different in some qualified respect; such cases also turn up in many ways, and they include the cases where the term is used analogously, as I have shown elsewhere [*De analogia nominum*, cc.1-3].

The second feature to notice is the word 'nothing' in the point inferred [that nothing could be known or proved, *etc.*]; it does not stand for *nothing at all*. For if all the terms under discussion here were [purely] equivocal, we could still know [from creatures] that God is the Creator, that He is above all things, that He is not a body, *etc.* Rather, the word 'nothing' stands for *nothing form-wise common to God and creatures*, such as that He is a being, that He is act, that He is good, wise, *etc.* None of these points could be secured about God; one would be falling into a fallacy of equivocation time after time, as is obvious.¹⁰

Analysis of the article, III

xiii. As to job (3), the conclusion giving an affirmative answer is this: certain terms used of both God and creatures are applied to them by an analogy of one to the other, *i.e.* of creatures to God. — Analogy "of one to the other" is marked off by distinguishing two cases of analogous use:

¹⁰ Ever since a.2, the only terms under discussion in this inquiry have been positive, non-relational ones, such as can describe a thing in its substance; and ever since a.3, the only terms under discussion have been those that convey a collective trait (like 'being', 'good', 'wise'), such as can describe God in His substance. So Cajetan is being a faithful interpreter in saying that the knowledge-of-God that would be lost, if these terms were pure equivocals, would be the knowledge that just these terms convey about His substance — not the knowledge that we have from negative terms (like 'not composed') or relational terms (like 'cause of'). Aquinas has said nothing up to this point about the semantics of such terms, when taken from created cases and applied to God. But it is hard to be convinced that the knowledge-loss would be contained as well as Cajetan thought. If God were just equivocally "a being," it is hard to see how He could fail to be just equivocally a "cause." See Germain Grisez, *Beyond the New Thomism* (Notre Dame, 1975), cc.15-17.

* *proportio* (1) [one arising] by the fact that there is a relation* of the one to the other, and this is called analogy "of one to the other" [*unius ad alterum*],

(2) [the other arising] by the fact that there is a relation (not of the one to the other but) of both to a third, and this is called analogy "of both to a third" or "of many to one" [*multa ad unum*].

The examples are clear in the text. — Then the conclusion is supported. As to its first part [that these terms are used by analogy], the support is by process of elimination. So, the text says, "The thing to say, then ..." As to the conclusion's second part [that the analogy is of one to the other], the support goes like this: we can only describe God from creatures; so, the terms applied to both are used according to an order-relation of the one to the other. As to the third part [that the analogy is of creatures to God], the support is this: God is *that cause* of all things in Whom their complete traits pre-exist.

xiv. Bear in mind here that the reason we give examples is not because they fit perfectly, but so that students may understand. The description 'a being' is not in fact common to God and creatures the way 'healthy' is common [to medicine and animal, or to animal and urine], *i.e.* by extrinsic denomination.¹¹ Rather, the force of the example lies in this: with both 'being' and 'healthy' the analogy arises because of the [direct] relation of the one [analogate] to the other [so that both are examples of the *unum ad alterum* type of analogy], despite their being so in different ways. For between God and a creature there is formal, imitative resemblance (touched on in the text, where it says creatures are ordered to God as to a Cause in Whom all their complete traits pre-exist). But between a healthy animal and its urine-sample there is no resemblance; there is just a relation of indicating.¹ And so in the one case [that of God and creatures as beings], the sharing of the term used analogously comes from predication to *both form-wise*, while, in the other case [sample and animal as healthy], what is going on is a sharing of attribution coming from predication *somehow or other to one of them*, be it extrinsically or intrinsically, *etc.*¹²

† *significatio*

¹¹ Extrinsic denomination was the naming of something after an outside factor. When a drug was called healthy, it was being named after a factor outside of it, *i.e.*, the health in an animal. Ditto when a urine-sample was called healthy.

¹² The "healthy" urine-sample was the clearer case of extrinsic, *i.e.* non-form-wise, predication. But calling a drug "healthy" was also extrinsic. For even the drug did not have in itself that smooth-running state of tissues which is "health" form-wise. Yes, every cause produces something similar to itself, so that every effect resembles its cause in some respect χ . Yet just as that resemblance need not be "up to isomorphism" (where " χ " would apply univocally to both), so also the resemblance need not be up to formal imitation (where " χ " would apply form-wise to both). When the resemblance was not up to formal imitation, the cause was said to pre-contain χ -ness only virtually, and the analogy between 'the effect is χ ' and 'the cause is χ ' was called analogy of attribution; when the resemblance was up to formal imitation, the cause was said to pre-

Analysis of the article, IV

xv. As to job (4): the conclusion is that this type of predication [*i.e.* by analogy] is intermediate between univocal predication and equivocal. — The support takes the form of going from the definition to the thing defined: what we have in play here is not one definition unqualifiedly, nor wholly diverse definitions, but definitions that are in one respect the same and in another respect different. The [analogous] term conveys different relations [*proportiones*] to one thing. Because of the different relations, the definitions are different in that respect; but because of the one thing to which, or thanks to which, the several relations hold, the definitions are one in another respect, as is clear enough in the example of 'healthy', *etc.* Ergo [this type of predication is intermediate]. — If you want to understand this material more fully, see the monograph I have already mentioned often, *De analogia nominum*.

Understanding the answer *ad* (1)

xvi. In the answer to the first objection, doubt arises because the end of the answer conflicts [it seems] with the beginning. At the beginning of the *ad* (1), he says that equivocal predications depend on a univocal one; at the end, he says univocal predications depend on one that is not univocal.

xvii. Two responses are given to this. The first is that two comparisons between predications are being made in this answer. The one is between univocal uses and purely equivocal uses, and it is being made at the beginning. The other comparison is between univocal uses and non-univocal uses; it is the one being made at the end, and so there is no contradiction. — But this response labors under the difficulty that, if it is right, Aquinas' answer does not meet the objection. The force of the objection, after all, lay in the point that univocal use stands to equivocal use as one stands to many. Well, this point is sound not only for purely equivocal uses but also for those which are equivocal in any way — in short, for all non-univocal uses — for [what is] one is not only prior to [what is] plural outright but also prior to [what is] plural in some respect. And so univocal use remains prior to all non-univocal uses, since the latter all have a pluralness about them one way or another.

So the right way to respond seems to be a second way: one and the same comparison is being made both at the

contain it formally-eminently, and the analogy between 'the cause is χ ' and 'the effect is χ ' was called proper proportionality. This is how God stood to the complete traits in creatures. He was form-wise good, wise, a being, *etc.*, but in such a higher way that creatures were only remotely imitating Him in being themselves good, wise, beings *etc.* form-wise. Analogy, then, just as such, was a fully semantic affair for Cajetan, extending far beyond the case of formal imitation. But that case *was* ideal: it alone gave rise to the name-borrowing in which an ontological situation between cause and effect was called "analogical," and it alone supported metaphysics, in which 'being' had to apply form-wise to items in all the categories and had to apply to incorruptible things as well as the corruptible ones with which we are familiar.

beginning and at the end — a comparison between univocal and equivocal uses in general (hence between univocal and non-univocal uses). But there is still no contradiction, because at the beginning of the answer, the talk is about what depends on what in resolving *each predicate into itself*, while the talk at the end is about which depends on which in the resolution of *different predicates*. After all, resolving different predicates back into one [prior] predicate is one affair, and resolving some one predicate [differently used] into its own [prior] use is another. In the former business, one predicate depends on another; in the latter, the one predicate is distinguished into its own [uses], as one sees clearly in the case of natural predicates [like 'healthy'].

In the context at hand, then, when the dependency-order is between different predicates, he says that the non-univocal predicate comes first because 'being' comes first, and the other predicates depend upon it. But when he is talking about the resolution of some one

predicate into its own [prior use], he says that the univocal use of it precedes the non-univocal, as the one precedes the many. Thus 'being' itself, used analogously of a man and a case of whiteness, is resolved into 'being' used univocally of [various] men and 'being' used univocally of [various] cases of whiteness. And this is the point that the force of the objection was getting to.

The conclusion you should draw, then, is this: when you are comparing diverse predicates to each other, one used analogously comes first; but when you are resolving the same predicate into its own first use, its univocal use comes first, as [what is] one comes ahead of [what is] many.

The remaining points made in this answer *ad* (1), having to do with the order among causal agents, will be cleared up below, when God's active causation outside Himself [*ad extra*] comes up for discussion.

Do the terms used analogously apply to creatures prior to applying to God?

1 ST q.13, a.3; In 1 Sent. d.22, a.2; 1 CG c.34; Compendium Theologiae c.27, In Epist. ad Ephes. c.3, lectio 4

It seems that the terms apply first to creatures, and only then to God.

(1) We can only describe things as we come to know them, because, as Aristotle says in *Peri hermeneias I*, words are “signs of understandings.” But we come to know creatures prior to knowing God. Ergo, the terms we introduce have application to creatures before they have application to God.

(2) Besides, “We describe God *from* creatures,” as Denis said [in *De divinis nominibus*, c.1]. But when descriptive terms are transferred from creatures to God, they apply to creatures ahead of applying to God, as one sees with ‘lion’, ‘rock’, and the like. Thus, all the terms applied to both have their first application to creatures, then to God.

(3) Furthermore, all the terms that have shared application to God and creatures apply to God as the Cause of all things, as Denis says [in chapter 1 of *De mystica theologia*]. But what describes something thanks to its being a cause applies to it secondarily. Thus ‘healthy’ applies first to the animal and only secondarily to the medicine that makes it so. Therefore, such terms have their primary application to creatures and only secondary application to God.

ON THE OTHER HAND, there is the statement in Ephesians 3:14-15, “I bow my knees unto the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, from whom all fatherhood in heaven and earth is named.” And the same point would seem to apply to the other terms used of God and creatures. Therefore, such terms apply first and primarily to God, then to creatures.

ANSWER: every term used analogously of many items is so used thanks to their relation to some one item, such that this one has to be mentioned in what accounts for* the other uses. And since the scientific account† that a word conveys is what explains [why a thing is so called], as Aristotle says in *Metaphysics IV*, it must be the case that the word is applied first to the item mentioned in what explains the others, and then to those others, thanks to the relation by which they are tied (more or less closely) to that first item. Thus “healthy” as a way an animal is described occurs in what explains “healthy” medicine (so called because it causes health in the animal) and occurs in what explains “healthy” urine (so called because it is a sign of health in the animal).

So, then, all the terms that are applied to God figuratively have their first application to creatures, then to God, because when they are said of God they indicate nothing but relations of similarity to such creatures. When a meadow is said to smile, for example, it is just thanks to a similarity of relation:* it means that when the meadow has flowers, it shows its attractiveness, as a person shows attractiveness when he or she smiles. In the same way, when God is called a lion, it just means that God shows might in His deeds, as a lion shows might in his. And thus it becomes quite clear that the meaning of any such term, as it is applied to God, can only be defined through what that term says about the relevant creatures.

Now, as to the terms that are not applied to God figuratively: the story would be the same for them, if they were applied to God in their purely causal sense, as some have maintained they are. For if, when we said “God is good,” the sense were just, “God causes creatures to be good,” our understanding of the word ‘good’ would include the goodness of creatures even as the word was being applied to God.

It was shown above, however, that such words are not only used in a causal sense when applied to God but describe His essence. When we say that God is good or wise, the sense is not just that He is a cause of wisdom or goodness but that these pre-exist in Him in a higher manner. So, following this account, the thing to say is as follows. *With respect to the trait conveyed in the sense of such words,*† they apply first to God and then to creatures, since these complete traits flow out from God into creatures. *But with respect to the introduction of such words into our language,*‡ we make them up to apply first to the creatures that we know first. That is also why they have the manner of signifying that suits creatures, as I said above.

TO MEET THE OBJECTIONS — *ad* (1): this objection works for the introduction of terms into our language. [But that is not in dispute.]

ad (2): words applied figuratively to God are a different story from those applied literally, as noted.

ad (3): this objection would work if these terms were applied to God in a purely causal sense, the way ‘healthy’ is applied to medicine, and did not describe God’s essence. [But such is not the case; so, the objection fails.]

* *similitudo proportionis*

a.2

† *quantum ad rem significatam*

‡ *quantum ad inpositionem*

aa.1, 4

c.1,
16a.3

PG 3, 596

PG 3, 1000

* *definitio*
† *ratio*

c.7,
1012a.23

Cajetan's Commentary

The title question is to be taken in all its breadth, as it reads, and as the answer shows.¹

Analysis of the article, I

In the body of the article, four jobs are done: (1) a rule is set down for determining which application of a word has priority, and which is secondary; (2) he answers the question for figurative terms; (3) he answers it for terms used literally, following an account of them rejected in article 2; (4) he answers it for literal terms following the right account of them.

ii. As to job (1), the rule is this: a term used analogously applies first to that item whose mention is put into what explains the other uses; secondarily, it applies to those others. — The support goes as follows. [*Antecedent:*] In every case of a term analogously used, there is some one item related to others; [*1st inference:*] so that one item is mentioned in what explains the others; [*2nd inference:*] so that one item has priority over the others for purposes of what it takes to fit that analogous term. This is illustrated by the example of the analogous term 'healthy.' — The antecedent and first inference are not otherwise supported. The second inference is supported on the ground that the scientific definition a term conveys is what explains [its use]; hence what comes first in explaining why an item is called by that term comes first for purposes of meeting its definition — which is just to say that an analogously used term applies first to the item that defines the others, and then to those others.

Doubt about this rule

iii. About this antecedent and the first inference from it, doubts arise that should not be covered up.

(1) A *first* is about Aquinas' own consistency. In the Disputed Questions *de Veritate*, q.2, a.11, he said it is *not* true in every case that the first analogate has to be mentioned in the definitions of the other analogates [but here he says the opposite].

(2) The *second* is about the merits [of what he says here]. [It seems wrong]

— because it is plain from points made earlier that 'wise' is said analogously of God and other things, yet a creature is not called wise by a relation that it has to God (nor that He has to it, of course); each is called wise independently.*

* *absolutè*

— because the definition laying out a man's makeup as wise does not mention God's wisdom, nor does the definition laying out what God is as wise mention man's

¹ He means that the title question is to be taken as asking about all terms used analogously of God and creatures, not just those that describe God literally and in His substance. The latter terms ('wise', 'good', 'alive', 'a being') were the sole focus of article 5, because they were the ones thought by some to apply univocally to God and creatures. They are no longer the sole focus of article 6.

wisdom. Ergo [the alleged rule fails to hold good for all terms analogously used].

iv. The SHORT ANSWER to this is that analogous terms can work in two ways.

(1) Some of them convey [in the sense that fits the secondary analogates] the very *relations* that they have to the first analogate, and this is what one sees with 'healthy'.

(2) But others convey [in the sense that fits the secondary analogates] only *the basis* for those relations, and this is what one finds in all cases where the genuinely analogous term is verified literally and form-wise in every analogate.

So, then: the universal rule adopted in the antecedent is to be understood as holding good for every case of an analogous term that works the first way — so that the sense of it is this:

every term 'φ' used analogously of many items, *i.e.* thanks to their various relations [to some one item], is such that the one item has to be mentioned, *etc.*

But in the discussion in *de Veritate*, he was talking about analogous terms that work the second way, and he said the opposite.

This answer to the problem is more general than the one I gave elsewhere, when I was basing myself on the Questions *de Veritate*, because this answer holds good even for terms analogous by proportionality, provided they are figurative. For in these cases, too, the one thing is mentioned in the explanation of the other for the reason given above.²

*in De analogia
nominum, c. 7*

² Go back to fn. 3 on q.13, a.5. There it was suggested that a term 'χ' is being used analogously of φ-things and ψ-things just in case $R(\chi)_{\phi} \neq R(\chi)_{\psi}$, but there is an expected relation between the two, thanks to which, when one hears these things spoken of as being-χ, one's mind goes in a rule-governed way from understanding one of them, say, $R(\chi)_{\phi}$, to understanding the other. Now we encounter an important distinction. There are really two ways, Cajetan says, in which this term 'χ' could be working.

If it is working the first way, then one of the explanations, say, $R(\chi)_{\phi}$, actually mentions a relation to some item involved in the other explanation, $R(\chi)_{\psi}$. 'Healthy' is the classic example. $R(\text{'healthy'})_{\text{animal}}$ = 'has properly functioning organs', the chemical structure in a drug bears a causal relation to properly functioning organs (it restores them to function), and thanks to this expected relation we understand what is meant when a drug is called healthy; we understand that $R(\text{'healthy'})_{\text{drug}}$ = 'restores proper function to organs'. This latter mentions the relation ('restores') to an item in $R(\text{'healthy'})_{\text{animal}}$. Hence $R(\text{'healthy'})_{\text{animal}}$ has explanatory priority over $R(\text{'healthy'})_{\text{drug}}$; in simpler words, $R(\text{'healthy'})_{\text{animal}}$ has to be understood before $R(\text{'healthy'})_{\text{drug}}$ can be understood. And hence, in keeping with Aquinas' rule in this article, 'healthy' has to have its primary application to animals. Figurative analogues also work this way, but with extra steps. To see what $R(\text{'lion'})_{\text{God}}$ means, one must first understand $R(\text{'mighty'})_{\text{lion}}$. One needs to know that $R(\text{'mighty'})_{\chi}$ = 'the deeds of x show might', in which 'show'

The other line of doubt, on the merits of what Aquinas is saying in this article, I shall address below, in connection with job (4).

Analysis of the article, II

- v. As to job (2), the conclusion reached in answer to the title question is this: terms that are figuratively used have application first to creatures, then to God. — The support goes thus. [*Antecedent:*] The explanation* of these terms as applied to God is unintelligible without the explanation of them as they apply to creatures; [*inference:*] so [their application to creatures has priority]. — The antecedent is made evident by examples: 'smile' makes it evident in general, and 'lion' makes it evident in the subject matter at hand. The inference then holds thanks to the rule set down.
- vi. As to job (3): the conclusion is a [counterfactual] conditional: if shared terms that are used literally were applied to God in the causal sense only, they would have

bespeaks a relation between the deeds and the might. Next, one needs to know that lions are proverbially mighty, so that R('mighty')_{lion} = 'a lion's deeds show might' is familiar, background knowledge. With these understandings in place, when one hears something else called a lion, one expects the meaning to be that this other thing is like a lion in what lions are proverbial for. Hence, when one hears 'God is a lion', one understands that R('lion')_{God} = 'God acts like a lion in that His deeds show might'. Such is Aquinas' explication of the metaphor, and notice that the *ratio*, R('lion')_{God}, mentions two relations: a show-relation between deeds and might, as in R('mighty')_{lion}, and a similarity-relation between God's acts as showing might and a lion's acts as showing might. Similarity between relations (in this case, show-relations) was called *proportionalitas*, and so 'lion' here is a figurative case of analogy of proportionality. But what makes 'lion' like 'healthy' in *working the first way* is that the similarity relation is explicitly mentioned in R('lion')_{God}, so that one cannot understand it without first understanding the creature to which God is being compared. So again, by the rule Aquinas sets down, 'lion' must have its primary application to the created. Notice, finally, that in both examples, what causes the rule to apply is the fact that the analogous term becomes a relational term in its secondary application; the term does not become relational in its surface grammar, but it becomes such in its *ratio*.

If the analogous term 'χ' is working the second way, then neither explanation mentions a relation to some item involved in the other, but one of the explanations, say, R('χ')_v, provides a basis for a relation to the other, e.g. by mentioning an item A that grounds a relation to some item B mentioned in R('χ')_b. The important cases of 'being', 'good', and 'wise' will turn out to be examples. In such cases, 'χ' does not become a relational term in either of its *rationes*, and the rule set down here is blocked from applying. Cajetan promises to return to the discussion of such cases below.

As to the comparison between his account here and his earlier one in *De analogia nominum*: they are really much the same; he has just succeeded in saying more clearly here that there are the two ways in which analogies can work, and why the primary-application rule is tied to the first.

prior application to creatures. — The support goes thus. [*Antecedent:*] The sense* these terms get as said of God would be unintelligible apart from the sense they have in creatures; [*inference:*] so [the application to creatures would have priority.] The antecedent is made evident by the example of 'good'. The inference holds thanks to the rule set down.

vii. As to job (4): the conclusion in answer to the title question is this: [*first part:*] such terms have prior application to God as far as the trait conveyed in their sense is concerned; but [*second part:*] they have prior application to creatures as far as their introduction into our language is concerned.

The support for the first part of this conclusion goes thus. The sense of these terms [for completive traits φ, ψ, etc.] is not just that God causes other things to be φ, ψ, etc., but that He is also φ, ψ, etc. in His own essence; and the completive traits of other things flow out from God; ergo such terms apply to God ahead of the others as far as the trait conveyed is concerned.[†]

The support for the second part is this: we get to know creatures first and describe them first; so [the application to creatures comes into use first]. A second line of support is drawn from an indication: these terms have the manner of signifying that suits creatures; ergo [their application to creatures came first as far as their introduction into the language was concerned.]

Trouble with the first part of the conclusion

viii. In the support for the first part of the conclusion, doubt arises about one of the claims made, i.e.,

such words are not only used in a causal sense when applied to God but describe His essence.

For if the sense of 'good' in 'God is good' is that God is cause-wise and form-wise good, it follows that 'good' applied to God has not a single [but a double] sense, contrary to what Aristotle says in *Metaphysics IV*. And the opposite of what Aquinas was trying to prove will also follow. For the meaning will be that

God causes goodness in other things and has goodness in Himself,

in which it is perfectly obvious that the goodness of other things gets mentioned in the explanation of how God is "good."

ix. The ANSWER to this is that the claim cited can be taken two ways.

(1) It can be taken first in terms of separate possibilities, i.e. that such terms can be said of God and verified of God either way, cause-wise or form-wise, but separately. Then 'God is good' is true taken cause-wise, and it is also true taken form-wise, but it does not mean both together. The double meaning posited by the objection disappears, because the objection was alleging two meanings together.

(2) It can also be taken in terms of both senses at once. One would have to say that such terms are said

* significatio

* ratio

† quoad rem

c 2;
1003a33

* *fundamentaliter*
† *ratio bonitatis talis*

of God form-wise and cause-wise but [are said the latter way] *basis-wise*.^{*} Then 'good', for example, in 'God is good' doesn't just mean that God has goodness but also that He has *such* a makeup for goodness[†] as is ready to be the basis for causing the goodness of other things — where the 'such ... as ...' is not adding some mode or further makeup to God's goodness but is just a round-about way of describing that one explanatory makeup thanks to which 'God is good' is true, form-wise; after all, it has already been settled that His explanatory makeup as "good" is not the same as ours, but only analogous. Well, this explanatory makeup does not include His causality but supplies the proximate basis for it. Ditto for the other terms. — Thus, too, the threat of double-meaning disappears. On this reading, such terms do have a single sense, and there is no need to co-understand a creature's goodness, because the sense of 'good' is not conveying causality form-wise but basis-wise.

Both these answers are good, but the first is more in line with the text, since Aquinas was speaking against the opinion he had rejected earlier, and that opinion was certainly not proposing a basis-wise causal sense but a formally causal sense.³

Understanding this part

x. Concerning the same support for the first part of the conclusion, and indeed concerning that first part itself, take note that, when he says such shared terms have their primary application to God "as far as the trait conveyed in the sense of the term is concerned," you are not to understand this materially but formally, because it has to be a true statement about the form-wise sense. Two points are needed for this, and the reason he gives in the text covers them both:

- (a) the term as used of God applies to Him form-wise,
- (b) what explains its form-wise application [in that use] is prior in the real to what explains its form-wise application in its other uses,

and the proof of the latter is: because it is the cause of the others. Taken separately, neither of these points would suffice to conclude that the terms have prior application to God, as you can see by taking particular cases. Take 'healthy': what explains "healthy" in a cause of health is prior in the real to what explains "healthy" in an animal, and yet because what it takes to be healthy is not present form-wise in the cause, 'healthy' applies only secondarily to the cause. Or take 'good': what explains 'good' is present form-wise in man, and yet 'good' does not have prior application to man than to other things [because the

above point (b) fails to hold].

And do not let yourself be upset by somebody who comes along and says, "Well, then, not all the descriptions shared between God and other things work the same, because some of them are such that, although what explains them is present in God form-wise, it does not cause other things to fit that description, because their form-wise explanatory makeup has no causal character." Keep in mind the authoritative quote from the Apostle, cited in the article, from Ephesians 3: "I bow my knees unto the Father of my Lord Jesus Christ, from whom all fatherhood in heaven and earth is named." For if the divine fatherhood (which is a relation and hence poles apart from causing other things) is the cause of the other fatherhoods, then *a fortiori* divine goodness is the cause of every other goodness. His knowing is the cause of every case of knowing, and so on, trait by trait. If you ask: what kind of causing [makes this true?], the answer need not be efficient causing; there are always two other kinds to fall back on: a purpose and a formal exemplar.

Another problem

xi. Concerning the same first part of the conclusion, another doubt arises, this time from Aquinas' own remarks elsewhere. On one hand, he seems to say the opposite in a. 2 of this inquiry, where he says that when we say, "God is good," the meaning is that what we call goodness in creatures pre-exists in God in a higher manner. If that is so, you can plainly see that the goodness of creatures is included in the sense of 'good' applied to God; and in that case, 'good' has to be said first of creatures [as far as the trait conveyed in its sense is concerned]. — On the other hand, he said in a. 5 that these terms are said of creatures in relation to God; in that case, God is included in the explanation of these terms as they apply to creatures; and in that case, they apply first to God in such a way God occurs in the definition of their other uses — contrary to what he holds here.

xii. The SHORT ANSWER is that, in truth, these terms are used analogously, *i.e.* by proportionality, and of God ahead of other things, because, although they apply form-wise in both uses, what explains why they are form-wise true of God is prior, in the real, to what explains why they are form-wise true of other things. It is not prior in the way that a *definiens* is prior to what it defines; rather, it is prior as an (at least) *exemplary cause* is prior to what is patterned after it. Thus, as all things patterned after a given *case-of-φ-ness* are φ in relation to that case, so all creatures are called "good," for example, in relation to God's goodness. And just as the sense of a term describing things-patterned-after-a-case need not convey them *with* their relation to that case, even though they have it, so also the sense of "good" does not have to convey a creature's goodness *in relation* to divine goodness, even though the latter is always there, standing as its exemplar ontologically.*

³ In this passage, '*formaliter*' is an adverb close to our 'explicitly', and '*fundamentaliter*' is an adverb close to our 'implicitly'. It must have been maddening work to learn and distinguish (a) the semantic use of these words as naming *kinds* of sense (form-wise sense vs. basis-wise), and (b) their use as semantic adverbs qualifying how a word *had* one of those senses.

So the words used in a.5 (and the similar ones elsewhere) are not being overthrown here but expounded.

They should be understood as talking about the ontological situation, not the semantic situation* — unless it be basis-wise, in that the form-wise explanations conveyed by the terms as applied to creatures provide the basis for a relation to God as their cause.

The words used in a.2 were not brought in to *define* the sense that the term ['good'] conveys in the case of God, but to expound that sense from things better known

to us. And so the words in a.2 pose no difficulty. No comparison with another, no reference to another, occurs in the explanation of such terms, either when they are applied to God or when they are applied to creatures; they really are said independently [*i.e.* non-relationally], because they convey completive traits that are non-relational.

These remarks also disclose the solution to the objections made in connection with job (1) in the body of this article.

* *non secundum significari*

Do the terms implying a relation to creatures describe God from time?

1 ST q.34, aa.2-3, In I Sent. d.30, n.1, d.37, q.2, aa.2-3

It seems that terms implying a relation to creatures do not describe God from time.¹

De fide I. c.1
PL 16, 553

(1) It is commonly held that all such terms indicate the divine substance. This is why Ambrose says that 'Lord' names *power* (which is substance in God) and 'Creator' names *action* (which is His essence). But God's substance is eternal, not in time. Such terms are not describing God from time, then, but from eternity.

(2) Besides, whatever acquires a trait in time can be said to have "become" so: e.g. what is white *since yesterday* has become white. But God does not "become." So, nothing can be ascribed to Him from time.²

(3) Also, if the reason some terms describe God from time is supposed to be because they imply a relation to creatures, then all terms implying such a relation [will describe Him from time]. But there are terms implying relation-to-creatures that describe God from eternity: from all eternity He has *known* His creation and *loved* it, says Jeremiah 31:3, "Yea I have loved thee with an everlasting love." So [one should admit that] other terms implying a relation to creatures, like 'Lord' and 'Creator', describe God from eternity.

(4) Furthermore, such terms convey a relation. This relation must be either something in God or something in the creature alone. It cannot be just in the creature, because then God would be named 'Lord' after a relation *converse* to the one in creatures.³ No name holds because of a converse! By elimination, then, the relation is also something in God. But there can't be anything from time *in* God, because He is above time. So evidently such terms do not describe God from time.

(5) Furthermore, when a thing is described relatively, it is thanks to a relation: when someone is described as a lord, say, it is thanks to his lordship-over-something, as someone is described as white thanks to his whiteness. So, if the relation of lordship-over is not in God by a real factor,⁴ but arises only in how human thought expresses things,⁵ then it follows that God is not really the Lord — which is blatantly false.

* secundum rem
† secundum
rationem

¹ A description is "from time" when it holds true only "as of" or "since" some time. As God is changeless and time is a measure of change, time has application only if creatures exist. It seems to follow that 'Creator' and 'Lord', describing God in relation to creatures, apply only when creatures exist, so only "since a time." But some authorities held otherwise.

² The force of objections (2)-(5) depended on the medieval theory of relations. Relation was one of Aristotle's categories of accident. If x bore a relation R to y , the accident R was not thought of as simply "between" x and y but as "in" x (its subject relatum) and "towards" y (its terminal relatum). So a relation of God to creatures would be a real factor in Him, and so acquiring it seemed to conflict with changelessness.

³ Whenever x bears a relation R to y , y bears a converse relation R back to x .

(6) Moreover, when things are described as related but they do not have to occur together by nature,⁶ the one can be described as so related while the other does not exist. Take "object of" knowledge: it exists when the knowing does not, as Aristotle says in the *Categories*. Well, when God and His creatures are described as related, they do not have to occur together by nature. Hence a name can be applied to God that relates Him to a creature, even when the creature does not exist. And this is exactly how such names as 'Lord' and 'Creator' describe God from eternity, not from time.

* simul natura

c.7, 7b 30

ON THE OTHER HAND, Augustine says in *De Trinitate I'* that the relational title 'Lord' accrues to God out of time.

c.16;
PL 42, 922

ANSWER: some of the terms implying relation to a creature describe God from time, not from eternity.

To get clear on this, one needs to know that [there is debate over if and when relatedness is real:] some have claimed that relatedness is not a real factor⁷ at all, but a product of thought.⁸ Their view is seen to be false from the fact that real things have natural ordering and bearing towards one another. But that is not the end of the story. One also needs to know that, since relatedness requires two relata,⁹ three situations arise as to whether relatedness is real or thought-produced.

† res naturae

‡ res rationis

§ extrema

* Sometimes relatedness is just a product of thought from both relata. This happens when the order or bearing cannot hold except as a result of how the mind takes the relata. When we say, "A thing is identical to itself," for example, thought is treating that thing as two relata because it is taking one thing *twice* and thus apprehending a bearing of the thing to itself. The same goes for all relations that thought posits between a being and a non-being (where thought takes the non-being for a relatum). The same goes, too, for all relations that arise from acts of reason classifying (like A is "the genus of" B , B is "a species of" A , and the like).

* [An opposite situation arises when] relatedness is a real factor from both relata. This happens if a bearing between two things results from some basis really present in both — e.g., all relations arising as a consequence of real size,¹⁰ like larger than, smaller than, twice as big as, half as much as, etc., because real size is in both relata. The same holds for all the relations arising in consequence of acting and being acted upon, like x induces change in y , y undergoes change by x , x is father of y , y is son of x , and other such.⁴

* quantum

⁴ In the second situation, two relata (x and y) are real and so are two relations. For thanks to the sizes in x and y , x is really twice as big as y (xRy), and y is really half as big as x ($yR'x$). When R is asymmetrical (as in Aquinas' examples), R and R' have opposed names; but when R is symmetrical (like "is equal to" or "is a cousin of"), R and R' have the same name; only the subject and terminus are reversed.

* But sometimes [a third situation arises:] relatedness is a real factor from one of the relata, a product of thought from the other. This situation occurs whenever the two relata are not of the same order. Thus perceiving is related to an object-of-sense and knowing to an object-knowable, but these objects, insofar as they are such-and-such *things* enjoying natural existence, lie outside the order of being-a-sense-object or being-an-object-of-intellect. The result is that the relation by which a knowing or perceiving depends on the *things* is a real relation. But those things themselves, considered just in themselves, are outside such an ordering [*i.e.* have no dependence on being sensed or known], and so no relation to knowing or perception is really in them; the relation arises from thought alone, inasmuch as the mind apprehends them as terminating relations of knowing and perceiving. This is why Aristotle says in *Metaphysics V* that things are not described as “objects-of-_____” because they bear relation to something else, but because something else bears relation to them. Likewise, “on the right of” does not describe a column unless it is on the right *side* of an animal; the relation has no real status in the column, but in the animal.⁵

c. 15,
1021a 29

Given that God is outside the whole order of creation, then, and that all creatures are ordered to Him, while He has no ordering to them, it is plain to see that creatures are really related to God, while in God there is no real relation of Him to creatures. His relatedness to them is just a product of thought, arising from the fact that the creatures are related to Him.

Thus there is no reason why the terms under discussion here, the ones implying God’s relation to a creature, should not describe Him from time. They do not apply to Him because of some change in Him, but because of a change in the creature — as a column becomes “on the right of” an animal without any change in the column; the change is in the repositioned animal.

⁵ This third situation was lost on the inventors of metaphysical idealism. They claimed that any relatedness in which a thing stood was intrinsic to its identity (a doctrine known as “internal relations”), and they applied this claim to the objecthood whereby a thing, say this cloud, is an object-of-awareness. Being an object-of-awareness thereby became not only a real factor in the cloud but one essential to its identity. It followed that the cloud could not exist without being such an object, so that it (and every other material thing) was necessarily related to consciousness; and since what is so related to consciousness is an idea in a mind, it was seriously maintained that every alleged “thing” is an idea in a mind (if not mine, then God’s). Moore, Russell, and the New Realists, who rebelled against this idealism at the end of the 19th century, had to recover both the general point that relations are accidents (external to a thing’s essence), and the specific point that objecthood is not a real trait in the thing known, even if knowing it really relates a knower to it.

For Aquinas, the third situation is crucial because he will put all relations between God and His creatures into it. Then God and creation will lie in different “orders”: any real R of a creature to God will have a converse R of God to the creature, but R will posit nothing in God. Cajetan will explain further.

TO MEET THE OBJECTIONS — *ad* (1): the standard use of some relational terms, such as ‘lord’, ‘servant’, ‘father’, ‘son’, and the like, is to convey the very status of *being-related*, and these are said to relate things “by their being so.”⁴ But the standard use of other relational terms, such as ‘moving’ and ‘moved’, ‘the chairman’¹ and ‘the chaired’,² is to convey things whence a relation follows as a consequence, and these are said to relate things “by their being so called.”⁵ This difference needs to be taken into account in deciding how relational terms describe God. Those that convey the very status of being related to a creature, like ‘Lord’, do not convey God’s substance directly but indirectly, as something presupposed. (Lordship presupposes power, and that is God’s substance). But the terms that directly convey God’s essence and imply a relation as following from it, like ‘Savior’, ‘Creator’ and the like, convey an action of God’s, and His action is His essence. Both kinds of terms do imply a relation (the one, first-off; the other, in consequence), and insofar as they do so, they describe God from time. But insofar as they convey His essence (the one, directly; the other, indirectly), they do not describe Him from time. [So, the objection fails because it is only half right.]

* secundum esse

† caput

‡ capitulum

§ secundum dict

ad (2): since the relations attributed to God from time are only in Him as products of thought, the talk of His “becoming” or “having become” only applies as a product of thought, without any real change taking place in Him; so it is with the verse, “The Lord is become my salvation.”

ad (3): an act of intellect or will terminates within the one doing it; hence terms that convey in their sense relations arising from God’s acts of intellect or will describe Him from eternity [even insofar as they are conveying a relation]. But those [that convey in their sense relations] that arise from actions terminating at effects outside God (as the term is understood), describe Him from time [insofar as they are conveying the relation], such as ‘Savior’, ‘Creator’, and the like.⁶

ad (4): the relations conveyed in the senses of these terms describing God from time are only in Him as products of thought, but the converse relations are in creatures as real factors. There is nothing problematic about God’s being *named* after relations really existing in other things, as it happens thanks to the fact that converse relations are co-understood by our minds in God. God is described as related to a creature, because the creature is in fact related to Him [conversely], as (to take Aristotle’s example from *Metaphysics V*) the “object” is so called in relation to knowing, because the knowing is in fact related to it [conversely]. [So, ‘object’ is a counter-example, and the objection fails.]

⁶ When God knows *x*, the “finished product” at which the knowing terminates is *x* known, *i.e.* *x* as an object, and *x* is an object not because it exists but because its intentional likeness is included in God’s essence (1 *ST* q.14, a.5). Ditto for God’s love. So since ‘knows *x*’ and ‘loves *x*’ relate God to *x* independently *x*’s existing, they can describe God from eternity.

ad (5): the reason God is related to a creature = the reason the creature is [conversely] related to God; so, since the relation of being subjected is really there in the creature, it follows that God is not just Lord in thought but in reality. The manner in which He is called Lord = the manner in which a creature is subject to Him [and that manner = really].⁷

ad (6): to determine whether relational names are co-occurrent by nature, you do not have to look at the order between the things to which the names are applied; you just have to look at the senses* of those names. If each name is included in the understanding of the other,[†] then their senses go together by nature, as is the case with 'double' and 'half', 'father' and 'child', and the like. If one sense includes the other,

⁷ Compare. the tree I see is *really* an object seen, because I *really* see it, and for no other reason.

but that other does not include the one just mentioned. The senses do not go together by nature. Such is the case with 'knowing' and 'the knowable' [*scibile*]. A thing is called a knowable thanks to a potential [to become known], while a person is called knowing thanks to a habit or an act. So an "object-knowable," thanks to the sort of sense this description conveys, exists ahead of the "knowing." But if the "object" is taken as such in act, then it goes together with the "knowing" in act, because a thing is not [an object actually] "known" unless there is a knowing of it. So while it is true that God is prior to creatures, it is still the case that, because the sense of 'Lord' includes the fact of having a servant and *vice-versa* [the sense of 'servant' includes the fact of having a Lord], the relational descriptions 'Lord' and 'servant' go together by nature. Hence God was not "the Lord" before He had created things "subject to" Him.

Cajetan's Commentary

The title question is clear from the examples of 'Lord', 'Savior', 'Creator', etc.

Analysis of the article, I

In the body of the article, he does five jobs: (1) he advances a conclusion answering the question; (2) he closes off an easy way to support his conclusion; (3) at the words, 'But that is not the end of the story', he begins the right way; (4) at the words, 'Given that God is outside ...', he supports his conclusion, and (5) at 'They do not apply to Him because of some change ...', he heads off an implicit objection.

ii. As to job (1): the conclusion answering the question is affirmative and particular: some of the terms implying relation to creatures describe God from time.

iii. As to job (2): you need to know that the reason there seems to be a problem with this conclusion is because no new, real trait can come to God. If such terms do not posit a real trait in God, there is no problem; but if they do, quite the opposite. Since this article intends to reach its conclusion by this means (that they posit in God nothing but a thought-produced relation*), the easiest way to get there fast would be to say that no relation is a real factor[†] [*i.e.* that they are all thought-produced]; and since this route is wrong, he closes it off without delay. This is his first concern.

One can read how Averroes attacks this error in his comment 19 on *Metaphysics XII*. Aquinas refutes it here as follows. [*Antecedent:*] Natural things have natural ordering and bearing to one another. [*inference:*] so [they have these as natural, *i.e.* as real factors.] The inference is obvious, and the antecedent is taken as self-evident (passing over the arguments for it in *Metaphysics XII*, comment 52, where everything is said to have an ordering to its good). — This would be a fine

place to thrash out the whole question of whether there are real relations, but it would take us far beyond the intended limits of this commentary; so, let it be handled on its own somewhere.

iv. As to job (3): the right route to getting the conclusion is to see that relatedness is sometimes a real factor, and sometimes not, and on what basis it gets to be the one or the other. Aquinas takes this route and proceeds as follows. [*Antecedent:*] Relatedness requires two relata: [*inference:*] so it can be found to be real or a product of thought in three ways — *i.e.*, it may be a product of thought from both relata, or it may be real from both, or it may be real from one but a product of thought from the other. — The antecedent is obvious. The inference is supported as follows. The situation with the relata can be one of three: (1) between some of them there is no bearing except as a product of thought; (2) between others there is a real factor in both of them whereby each has a bearing to the other; (3) between still others one of them has a bearing to the other, which does not have the same reason [to have a bearing back to it].

Situation (1) is illustrated by three types of cases contained under it: relations of identity, relations to a non-being, relations arising from second intentions.* Note here that in the first case [identity], the mind makes relata — not beings but relata — when it distinguishes one thing into two; in the second case, it makes one of the relata both a being and a relatum.

Situation (2) is illustrated by two cases contained under it: relations coming from quantity, and relations coming from acting and undergoing, as is clear from *Metaphysics I* [c.15].

Situation (3) is likewise illustrated by two cases under it: [relations] from sensation or knowing, and [relations like] being-on-the-right of a column. The third

* *significationes*

† *in sui intellectu*

* *relatio rationis*

† *res naturae*

* cf p 250, footnote 1

102ub26ff

situation is also confirmed by the authority of Aristotle.

v. In this part of the article many points are stated — that there is no real relation between a being and a non-being; that there is a real relation between the inducer of a change and the thing undergoing it; that one's knowing bears a real relation to the object knowable — to which other writers take exception. But since these points are incidental here, let them be handled in separate inquiries.

Termini and converse relations

vi. But there is one topic of controversy, very difficult. That must not be passed over here. It arises over the wording of this article at the point where it says the relation "object of" in cases of sensing or knowing arises from thought alone, "inasmuch as the mind apprehends them as terminating relations of knowing and perceiving." The doubts are (1) about the meaning of the text, and (2) about the truth of the matter.

* As to the meaning of the text, does Aquinas intend to say that, in order for the other relatum [say, the master] to be understood to have what it takes to terminate this relative item [servanthood], the converse relation thereto is required? For example, given that a creature serves God, is the [converse] relation of lordship required, in order for God to be understood as the creature's Lord? Or does he rather intend to say that the converse relation is a by-product of understanding the other relatum to have what it takes to terminate [the relation of serving] — so that the relation of Lordship is just concomitant upon God's being understood as the terminus? It makes a large difference which meaning he intends. On the first construal, the converse relation is put into the intrinsic makeup of a terminus; indeed, it is put *as* the terminus. On the second construal, the converse relation is put as a consequence of having what it takes to be a terminus. Thus, on the first construal, Aquinas is holding that the terminus of a relation has to be a relative factor; on the second, he is holding that the terminus is an absolute factor.

* Hence this difficult question arises about the truth of the matter: Is the terminus of a relation, *as* its terminus, an absolute factor or a relational one?¹

vii. As this question is needed here and has not been handled by anyone except Scotus, who seems to have defined it badly, there is nothing to do but have at it.

Dispute with Scotus

In his remarks on *I Sent.* d.30, q.1 (where he was moved, I think, by the words of this article to bicker in his usual way), Scotus supports on many grounds the view that the terminus of a relation, *qua* terminus, is an absolute thing. And thereby he contends that no con-

¹ Given that *x* bears *R* to *y*, the question being raised is not about the terminal relatum, *y*, itself (for it is typically a substance or other absolute entity) but about the reason why it terminates *R*. Does *y* do so because of its absolute character, whatever it is, or does *y* do so because it bears *R* back to *x*?

verse relation needs to be posited, either as a real factor or as a product of thought, to terminate a relation. And this he supports on four grounds.

(1) [*Antecedent:*] The intrinsic difference between relations in situation (3) and other relations is that the others are mutual, while those in situation (3) are not mutual.² [*Inference:*] So the terminus of a relation in situation (3) is an absolute thing. — The antecedent is clear from the chapter on relations in *Metaphysics V* [c. 15]. The inference is obvious from the fact that a relation in situation (3) has a terminus but has no [real] converse; ergo an absolute thing is what terminates it.

(2) [*Antecedent:*] A potency [so relates to its act that it] gets definition from its act, and not *vice-versa*. [*Inference:*] So the act as a terminus is an absolute thing. — The antecedent is clear from *Metaphysics IX*. Drawing the inference is supported thus. Its act gives definition to a potency insofar the act terminates the potency's relation to it, and it gives definition to the potency insofar as it is prior to the potency; hence the act, as a terminus, is prior to the potency. But as conversely related to the potency, the act is not prior to it, because correlated items define each other, as Porphyry says. So, the act is not the terminus in its status as correlated. Ergo it is the terminus as an absolute item.

(3) [*Antecedent:*] A relation, as such, is defined by its terminus; [*1st inference:*] so the terminus is prior to the relation; [*2nd inference:*] so the terminus is not the converse relation. — The antecedent is obvious. The first inference holds good on the basis of *Metaphysics VII* [c. 1], where the priority of substance over accident is derived from the fact that the former contributes to defining the latter, and *Metaphysics IX* [c. 8], where the priority of act over potency is derived on the same basis. The second inference is then obvious, because otherwise there would be a circle in priority-and-posteriority-in-defining, which is impossible.

(4) [*Antecedent:*] Where related things are in situation (3), the one relatum bears no relation unless the relation is being thought up, and yet it terminates the other relatum's relation to it when no mind is considering it (indeed, when no mind exists); [*inference:*] so it terminates by reason of being an absolute, and not by reason of a co-understood relation.

These are the arguments that persuade Scotus, and subtle enough they are. Indeed, he thinks them so strong that he asserts their conclusion as *true*.

Cajetan's rejoinder

viii. To see how far from true it is, the place to begin is the text from *Metaphysics V* on which Scotus based his view. He made two mistakes in reading it.

² How was Scotus using '*mutua*' here? To mean real both ways? As Cajetan will read him, he is calling relations mutual when the implication, '*x R y* \supset *y R x*', is true. In that case, Scotus is saying that this implication fails in situation (3). He may have thought that if *R* is real and *R* is a product of thought, then '*x R y* \supset *y R x*' fails to correspond to the realities and hence fails to be true.

c.8;
1049b 12ff

*Isagogē, c. de
specie*

1028a 31ff

1049b 12ff

c.15
1020b 26ff

(a) His first mistake is to think that the text is talking about the *relata* or the bases [*fundamenta*] of relations,³ so that Aristotle would have meant to say this: there are *some relata* that are called related because of relations that they have to each other, while some *others* are so called because of a relation that is in just one of them.

That this is against the intent, nay, the words of Aristotle becomes plain as follows. Aristotle explicitly says here that he is positing a difference between items that are relational in and of themselves [*secundum se*]. But it is well known that the bases of relations are only incidentally relational, as he says expressly in the same passage. So the text is not to be taken as talking about things that get relational names but about relations themselves. There is no other way to salvage the text.

(b) Scotus' second mistake concerns the difference drawn [between other relations and those in situation (3)]. Aristotle does not say in this text that some relations are mutual, and some are not, as Scotus fancied. The difference is rather in the cause or reason for being related. The text affirms that there is relation both ways, even in the third situation; but it locates the difference in this: for relations in situations (1) and (2), the reason that the *relata* are related is, both ways, what-it-is-to-have-bearing-towards-another; but for relations in situation (3), from one *relatum*, the reason it is related is not what-it-is-to-have-bearing-towards-another but that-another-has-bearing-to-it. There it is plain as day that the whole difference lies in the reason for being related, not in being mutual or non-mutual.

ix. That text is the basis used by the theologians who write speculatively on the topic of this article; so, to get more clarity on it, it needs to be discussed further, as follows. [*Antecedent:*] [On our interpretation, people think] the text implies both sides of a contradiction; [*inference:*] ergo [it has to be read differently]. — The antecedent is brought to light as follows. [*Premise:*] The text is talking [says our interpretation] about things that are relational in and of themselves, and yet it denies of some of them what-it-is-to-have-bearing-towards-another. [*Sub-inference:*] Ergo [people say] the text is denying that the category defined (or a proper part of it) meets its own definition! Both halves of the premise are plainly there in the text. It says being an object-of-knowledge and being an object-of-sense, etc., are intrinsically relational, and it says they are not called relational because they are towards another but because other things are said to be towards them. The sub-inference is obvious from the definition of relation given by Aristotle himself in the *Categories*. And

³ Suppose that a column is on my right. The *relata* are me and the column; the *basis* for the relations is my right hand (or, perhaps, the asymmetry of a human body, whereby a right hand differs from a left); the *relations themselves* are to-the-right-of (which the column bears to me) and to-the-left-of (which I bear to the column).

since this contradiction is obvious, the thing to say [they think] is that Aristotle is talking about the *bases* of relations at the point where he says, “they are not towards another, but others are towards them.”

x. This invalid inference, I think, has stuck in people's heads and deceived everyone who has gone wrong on this text. To break its hold, you need to know that a metaphysician treats relations insofar as they are a category of being, *i.e.* as real beings; hence the difference drawn [in *Metaphysics V*] between other relations and the ones in situation (3) should be taken as applying to relations insofar as they are real beings. It does not apply to them as they abstract from real being, as they just involve a “towards” with no attention paid to their being, which is how they were defined in the *Categories* — which is why there is no mention of this difference [between situation (3) and the others] in that work. Among relations themselves, then, a difference is drawn as to the real being they impart (never mind the being they presuppose). It is that there are some relations that are real beings, because they are in the furniture of nature as such beings (they relate to another); but other relations are not real beings because they are towards another in the furniture of nature; rather, they can be counted real solely because other things, real things, are described as towards them. In sum, the difference lies in this: among relations, some are *real* by intrinsic denomination or predication, while others are such only by extrinsic denomination; the latter are counted among real relationals only [by being named] after the relational realness of something else. With this interpretation in place, the text is in harmony with a remark that we and the Scotists both make: that from this text you get the point that not all relations are mutual as to realness.

Is it a problem that the text itself makes no mention of real being? No, because it is presupposed that such being is what is being talked about, given that a metaphysician's *job* is to discuss things as they are parts of real being — hence it is his job to talk about relations as they are *in the real* towards something, and not as they are *understood* towards something.

From there it is clear that there is no contradiction [in the *Metaphys. V* text]. It is not denying that the thing defined fits its definition; it is implying that the definition fits “a relation” *whether it is a real being or a product of thought*. The point that Aristotle is denying is not that some of them “are relations” but that they posit *in the real* a towards-another (which is consistent with saying that what those items formally “are” is “towards-another,” as their definition demands). So the case above [in section ix] labours under an equivocation [between ‘R is a relation in the real’ and ‘R is really a relation’].

The singular feature, then, of relations in situation (3) is that the only reason one of them is “really a re-

lation” is because the other one is towards it.⁵

xi. Now, from these remarks, it is easy to see how to answer the question on the table, as far as relations in situation (3) are concerned. But in the interest of having a fully general doctrine, you need to know how the word ‘terminus’ is understood in this context.⁶ It means that which a relation is said to be towards and which has to be put into the relation’s definition. Even Scotus agrees that these two points characterize a terminus. With that said, one argues as follows. If an absolute factor *as such* were the terminus of a relation, four false points would follow.

– First, it would follow that the word ‘another’ in [Aristotle’s] definition of a relation,

relations are those items for which what it is to be them is bearing towards another,

would refer to an absolute item [as such, not as conversely related], and then “double,” in what it is to be it, would not be towards another which is “half,” nor “servant” towards “lord,” nor “father” towards “son,” *etc.* Well, the *Categories* and its expositors confirm that this is false. They all say that the word ‘another’ refers to the terminus, and when they say what it is, they give the correlative. The text itself says that ‘lord’ is said towards nothing in the servant but what falls under the definition of ‘servant’. And Averroes says on the same passage that what a relation is said to be towards has to be in the category of Relation.

– Secondly, it would follow that God would have to be mentioned under His distinctive absolute makeup in the real definition of “a creature.” Since this is impossible, it would follow that [what it takes to be] a natural creature would remain naturally unknowable. This consequent clearly holds good for passive creation [the relation of being-created], for the universe’s relation to God as its ultimate Purpose, *etc.*

– Thirdly, it would follow that a relation would need in its definition, for its terminus, two items: a correlative and an absolute. And since it is clear from the *Categories* that the correlative is needed as what the relation is said to be towards, there is no explaining what the absolute item is needed for.

– Fourthly, it would follow that relations within God

⁵ To paraphrase this upshot and anticipate where Cajetan is going next, let us say that a relation R not only terminates at an item x but also terminates there *with* a factor whereby x is its terminus. Then one can say that Cajetan analyzes situation (3) as follows. If I bear the knowing-relation R to x, the only reason x’s converse \bar{R} of objecthood to me is “really a relation” is because my R terminates with \bar{R} (at x). If I bear the subjection-relation R to God, the only reason God’s converse \bar{R} of lordship over me is “really a relation” is because my R terminates with \bar{R} (at God). In short: the only reason one of the relations is “really a relation” is because the other one is towards it.

⁶ He means: in the context of relations, rather than the context of operations, changes, comings-to-be, *etc.*, each of which was also said to terminate at a (material) terminus x *with* some (formal) factor whereby x was its terminus.

could not be salvaged in the case of the divine Persons except by claiming that the Persons are really distinct from one another by absolute factors. This consequent holds because a real relation needs a terminus really distinct from it; so if the terminus of divine Fatherhood is an absolute item, then some absolute item in God is really distinct from the Father.⁷

The thing to say, then (along with the Peripatetics and as many other sorts of philosophers as I recall having read), is that the terminus of a relation and its correlative are the same; indeed, to terminate a relation is in the defining makeup of each correlative.

Point-by-point against Scotus

xii. [The arguments of Scotus can now be answered.] *ad* (1). The answer to Scotus’ first argument is already evident: the terminus of a relation in situation (3) is its correlative. The text from *Metaphysics V* explicitly says as much at the point where it is talking about the terminus and claims that it is inherently relational and that something else is said to be towards it. These claims can only be true of the correlative. Ergo [the text is saying that the terminus is the correlative]. How it can also be true [in the third situation] that this terminus is not said to be towards another [in its own right] has already been explained.

ad (2). His second argument makes a false assumption, namely, that Aristotle is talking there about an act as it terminates a potency’s relation to it. In fact, he is talking about the nature of potency and the nature of act, set by the transcendental “relations” by which a potency essentially concerns* an act, and certain acts pertain to a given potency. Aristotle wants to say this: because “a potency” cannot be understood without understanding its act, while an act can be understood (and can exist) without understanding a potency (as one sees in the case of Pure Act), act is prior to potency [in the order of explanation]. So, Scotus’ argument proceeds from a bad understanding of that text.⁸ — One can also say that as-

* *respicit*

⁷ The consequent is unacceptable in theology, because (a) nothing in God is allowed to be really distinct from a divine Person except another divine Person, and (b) such Persons, being subsistent Relations of origin, are distinct from one another solely by relational opposition (conversehood).

⁸ If x was actually a dog, that act-state was in the category of substance, and the potency to it was (reductively) assigned to the same category. If x was actually so-big, the act-state was in the category of quantity, and the potency to be so was (reductively) quantitative. Being tame and its potency were in the category of quality, *etc.* Because act and potency were thus assigned to all the categories, ‘act’ and ‘potency’ were treated as transcendental terms, and the conceptual connexions between them were called transcendental relations. When existence was called act, and essence was called potency to it, they were being described as “transcendental relata.” It did not follow that inside each thing there was a real relation between these “factors.” Real relata were always *things* in a category; if it was not thought that made them relata but a real factor, that factor was a categorial relation, *i.e.*, a *thing* in the category of Re-

signments of relations in which one of the alleged relations involves an act and the other a potency are badly made, so that they are neither simultaneous by nature nor contribute to defining each other, etc. So Averroes noted in his comments on the *Categories*.

De praedicamentis
tract 4, c.9

ad (3). As to his third argument: strictly speaking, one ought to deny his antecedent because (as Albert the Great taught), a relation is not defined by its terminus but *towards* it; after all, there is no line of causation in which a relation has being thanks to its terminus, but towards it. In any case, Scotus' inference is flatly false, because it is well established that the definiens [in this case] and what it defines are *together by nature* and in understanding. — As to the quotes from Aristotle that seem to say the opposite, they hold good because they are talking about a subject matter in which there is an *order* between the definiens and the thing defined. Wherever there has to be an order between the definiens and the thing defined, the inference ergo the definiens is prior

is validly drawn. But where there is no order, one cannot infer priority. Well, there is no order between correlatives. They are flatly simultaneous, as you can see in *Postpredicamentals* [end of c.5 in the *Categories*]. Ergo [the other quotes are irrelevant]. — And notice, by the way, that this argument of Scotus cuts against the hand that fashioned it. To see how, reason as follows. [*Antecedent*:] Whatever is the case with a terminus, it is clear as a bell that, in any pair of mutual relations [R and α], each is definitive of the other; [*inference*:] ergo prior and posterior in definition [are going in a circle], etc. The inference is known. The antecedent is Porphyry's point, cited by Scotus for his own case [in argument (2)]. Ergo [this argument turns against its maker].

ad (4). As to his last argument, which terrifies beginners: the solution to it is patent from Aristotle's own words. One denies Scotus' antecedent [namely, that in situation (3) the one relatum bears no relation unless the relation is being thought up]. In relations in situation (3), both relata bear relation at once, but in dissimilar ways: the one [x] is relational because of the relation [R] that is *in it* towards the other; the other [y] is relational because of the real relation [R] of the other towards the [converse] relation itself [R]. No other existence is needed for it [y] to be a correlative [to be y with R] beyond the existence of its counterpart [x with R], because it is from the latter, by extrinsic denomination, that it, too [R], is said to "be." This is what is peculiar in the relations in situation (3): that a real relation is said towards a terminus not form-wise real except by extrinsic denomination, but which is still basis-

lation. Hence no *thing* was a transcendental relation, and conversely. Well, the topic of a.7 plus the debate in this commentary about the termini of relations in situation (3) has been about categorial relations (and the products of thought that imitate or complete them). So, a passage about transcendental relata can have no bearing on it.

wise real (or real as to the substrate or thing denominated).⁹

xiii. Meanwhile, these points disclose the answer to the doubt raised above [in § vi] about what Aquinas intended to say in this article. From the established fact that God terminates the creature's servanthood just as "the Lord" formally, because "Lord" is the distinctive terminus of "servant," it is obvious that his instinctive here is to say that the converse relation has to be co-understood in any item, if that item is supposed to be understood as meeting the definition of a terminus.

No objection to this can be drawn from St. Thomas' words in the D.Q. *De potentia Dei*, q.7, a.10, ad 4.

⁹ On this note, the current quarrel with Scotus ends. To see what it has amounted to, I venture the following. Scotus takes

$$(1) x R y \supset y R x$$

as a *metaphysical* claim, talking about ontologically real factors, so that it must come out false when R is in the real but R is a product of thought. Cajetan takes (1) as a *logical truth*, talking about purely conceptual issues, so that it comes out true whatever the ontological status of R and R. Suppose Cajetan is right about that. He still has to answer a metaphysical question. Where the quantifier '∃x' expresses second-order ontological commitment, does this second-order implication,

$$(2) \exists x(x R y) \supset \exists x(y R x),$$

hold good? I think Cajetan agrees with Scotus that (2) does not hold; relations in the third situation falsify it. But he and Scotus disagree over the status of a weaker implication, which Cajetan is resolved to defend, and which goes (I suggest) thus:

$$(3) (x)(y)((\exists x(x R y)) \supset (y R x)).$$

The antecedent of (3) contains a second-order quantifier (∃x) and so states a commitment to the existence of a non-substance (i.e., the relation R), while the consequent of (3) contains no such quantifier; as a pure first-order formula, the consequent states no commitment to the existence of any non-substance. Scotus cannot derive (3) because he lacks (1) as an exception-free logical truth. Cajetan has (1), and it validly implies (by universal generalization in first-order logic)

$$(1a) (x)(y)(x R y \supset y R x).$$

Cajetan can also use an uncontroversial formula whose antecedent is a second-order ontological commitment and whose consequent is a first-order formula:

$$(\exists x(x R y)) \supset (x R y);$$

and from this (by the same rule of first-order logic) he can get

$$(1b) (x)(y)((\exists x(x R y)) \supset (x R y)).$$

From (1b) and (1a), (3) follows validly (by transitivity of implication). If the reader is a little in the dark as to what (3) says, it comes into English thus:

- (3) For all real relata x and y: if there is a relation in the real which one of them (say, x) bears to the other one (y), then y is conversely related to it, without any commitment being stated as to whether y's converse relation is in the real.

Given the view of Aristotle and Aquinas that commitment to the reality of a relation is positing a real factor in the relatum that bears it, this (3), with its commitment to R and its non-commitment to R, is exactly what Aristotle needed for his discussion of knowers and objects-knowable, what Aquinas needed in this article for his discussion of creatures and God, and what Cajetan needed in this debate about termini.

where he says that it suits God to do what is contained in the definition of a lord, namely, terminate a created thing's relation of servanthood, and where he intends to say that this suits God "by a real factor" [*secundum rem*], as emerges from the argument he is answering. This text poses no problem. I am saying, because in it, 'terminate' is being understood *basis-wise*; the basis belongs to God as a real factor, like His power to compel His subjects. That this is what Aquinas had in mind is made evident by the fact that [in the same passage] he denies that it suits God to bear a relation to His subjects, on the ground that neither form-wise nor basis-wise does God have what it takes to bear an order-relation to His subjects.

Analysis of the article, II

xiv. As to job (4): Aquinas supports the conclusion he is after as follows. [*Antecedent:*] God is outside the entire order of the universe, such that creatures bear an order-relation [dependency] to Him, while He bears none to them; [*1st inference:*] so creatures are really related to God, while there is no relation in Him to them, except as a product of thought. [*2nd inference:*] Ergo there is no reason why certain terms involving a relation should not describe God from time.

The antecedent is left as evident. The first inference is supported, however, by the general principle laid down in the previous paragraph of the article: whenever the two relata are not of the same order, and relatedness is a real factor in one of them, it is a product of thought in the other. So, if God is not of the same order, *etc.* The second inference is self-evident.

Scotus calls the support fallacious

xv. Against the argument used in this article to support this conclusion, Scotus objects along two lines in the passage I cited before [on *1 Sent.* d.30, q.1].

(1) His first line of objection is that the argument begs the question. Since God is obviously prior to the creature and thereby stands in an ordering relation (as prior to posterior), claiming that he has no such relation in Him [as Aquinas does] is nothing but *assuming* that He stands in no real ordering relation to the creature — which is the very point that needed proving.

(2) Scotus' other line of objection is that the argument commits a fallacy of the consequent. After all, the point that God bears no relation of one kind, *i.e.* no ordering relation, does not imply that He bears no relation of any kind; *e.g.* it does not imply that He bears no equivalency* relation. But in this article, Aquinas moves from denying an ordering relation to denying any real relation.¹⁰

Aureol. too, complains about this argument, as Capreolus reports at *1 Sent.* d.30. But since his com-

plaints either assume premisses that Aquinas explicitly rejected, or else put into Aquinas' mouth a different argument from the one he actually made, I have decided to omit them.

xvi. My RESPONSE to Scotus' objections is that we are labouring under an equivocation here. At this point in the article, the talk is not about "order" form-wise (which is indeed a relation) but *basis-wise*, so that "being of the same order" is nothing more than "having the same makeup for explaining why relatedness arises," and "not being of the same order" is just "having a different makeup [for explaining that]." The upshot is that there is real relatedness both ways only *between things in which the same makeup is present* for relating the one to the other. Well, this happens in several ways. In relations of the first type [in situation (2)], *i.e.* those pertaining to [real] quantity, the sameness-of-reason is specific.¹¹ In relations of the second type, *i.e.* those pertaining to inducing change and undergoing it, the sameness-of-makeup is quasi-specific or "formal," because the reason each way is the thing's own completeness — though in the thing undergoing change, the reason is to achieve this, and in the agent inducing the change, the reason is to conserve it, as Averroes taught in his remarks on the Intelligences in *Metaphysics XII*, comment 36.¹² But in the relations in situation (3), *i.e.* those having to do with the measure and the measured, in one of the relata there is no reason for it to be related to the other, and hence it is said to be "of another order" as regards explaining relatedness.

Thus it becomes clear that there is no begging of the question. It is one thing to say,

In God there is no reason for Him to be related to creatures, while there is a reason in a creature for it to be related to God,

and it is quite another to say,

¹¹ He seems to mean that the quantity in x is of the same kind as the quantity in y, where the kinds of quantity are "kinds" like length, volume, number of legs, *etc.*

¹² To make sense of this remark, one needs to realize that the "reason" in question here is not anything's motive (conscious or unconscious) for inducing or undergoing a particular change. Rather, the "reason" in question is the reason anything is *open* to becoming related to anything else by causal interaction in the *first place*. Averroes' theory is that the pressing reason any creature is primordially open to causal inter-relation with any other is developmental: to conserve or achieve its finished state. Once open to inter-relation on this basis, creatures are also vulnerable, of course, to destructive changes (and the more complexly they develop, the more vulnerable they are). On this theory (and here is why Cajetan endorses it), God alone is different. He is the only being who does not *induce* changes for this reason. He never acts upon another being "to conserve His completeness." He acts for no pressing reason at all. In sheer generosity, He manifests His glory. So, if all pairs of beings open to causal inter-relation with one another on the basis of conserving/achieving their completeness are "of the same order" basis-wise, God is "of another order" basis-wise.

¹⁰ Scotus assumes that Aquinas has in mind a valid implication (if God bears no relation, He bears no ordering relation) and is illicitly trying to reverse it.

in God there is no real order-relation to a creature . . . ;

in fact, the former is the reason for the latter. Hence Aquinas' reasoning is from cause to effect [*i.e.* from the reason to what it explains].

Nor does his reasoning commit a fallacy of the consequent. The talk is not of "order" form-wise but basis-wise, and even equivalence-relations have to have a basis; two white things have the same makeup, after all, for explaining why they are similar to one another (both in general and in being white); and this is being "of the same order."¹³

Analysis of the article, III

xvii. As to job (5): notice that the conclusion Aquinas is after [that some relative terms describe God from time] could be blocked by two obstacles.

(1) One would be the form-wise sense of the terms in question, *i.e.* if their sense conveyed a real factor in God. This would block the conclusion because no real factor can be posited in God "as of a time."

(2) The other would be the basis for the <relation>* conveyed. Suppose 'Lord' does not add to 'God' anything beyond a thought-produced relation (and thus far can describe Him from time); still, if that thought-produced relation could not come to describe a thing "as of a time" without a change in the thing described [as of a time], one would have to say that no such term is describing God from time, because no change is possible in God; He is utterly changeless, as said in q.9.

¹³ In this brief mention of equivalence relations [*aequiparantiae*], several important points are implicit.

First, equivalence relations do not differ from ordering relations [*ordines*] in ontological status (either can be real or a product of thought); nor do they differ in what they need to be real (both need real relata and a real basis therein).

Second, they differ in certain "formal" properties (as they are called today). Equivalence relations are reflexive, symmetrical, and (given a constant basis) transitive. Examples include identity, similarity, congruity, being as old as, *etc.* Ordering relations are asymmetrical or anti-symmetrical and transitive. Examples include less than, ancestor of, prior to, cause of, *etc.* Thanks to its formal properties, an equivalence gathers everything between which it holds into an unordered class, while an *ordo* throws the things between which it holds into a partially or linearly ordered class; hence the names.

Thirdly, the names can be used in the two ways Cajetan mentions: form-wise (to convey the very relation between things), or basis-wise (to name a class of things having the same basis for being related in a certain way). This duality of senses is especially important with '*ordo*'.

Fourthly, if there were a descriptive term ' ϕ ' used univocally of God and a creature, God and the creature would be called ' ϕ ' under the same real definition of what it takes to be as ' ϕ ' says, and so the same real basis would exist in each for a relation of similarity, and so God and that creature would be "of the same order," and so God would bear a real equivalence relation (of ϕ -similarity) to that creature. Having eliminated precisely this possibility in article 5 of this inquiry, it remained for this article to eliminate real ordering-relations.

Well, then, since the text of this article had already excluded the form-wise sense as a potential obstacle, the thing to do was to nail down the conclusion's support by excluding the other obstacle. This Aquinas does (answering an implicit objection, as I mentioned above): he says that God is called "Lord," for example, from time, not because of any change in Him, but because of one in the creature. This is supported by a similar case [of the column becoming "on the right"].

Understanding the answer *ad* (4)

xviii. In the answer to the fourth objection, use your powers of insight to notice that a converse relation in situation (3), like being an object-knowable or (in the context at hand) being "the Lord," can be judged to "be" under two tests for being:

- (1) to be unqualifiedly "a being,"
- (2) to be "a being" with a qualifier, *i.e.* a thought-produced being.

If we are talking about these converses under the test for unqualified being, then the only reason they "are" is because their opposite relations, which terminate formally with them, really "are" in the furniture of nature — so that this suffices for their extra-mental existence: they are contented, after all, with this very weak manner of being. And thus, setting aside any mind thinking about it,

— *being the Lord* posits nothing in God except terminating form-wise the relation of His servant to Him (God in Himself terminates this subject-wise, *i.e.* as the quasi-subject having the form-with-which-He-terminates it); but *being the Lord* does indeed posit or presuppose something in the creature as His servant, *i.e.*, a relation of subjection towards God:

— *terminating form-wise the relation of servanthood* also posits nothing beyond the existence of the relation terminated (though it would posit that in another way).

And thanks to this, God starts to be the Lord given only the creature's servanthood, without any mind thinking about the matter — because *being the Lord* posits no *being* in the furniture of nature but the *being* of its converse. And in the field of relations, there is nothing wrong with one "opposite" existing *because* the other one does — as Aristotle taught [in the chapter of *Metaphysics V* already discussed]. And the reason there is nothing wrong with this is because relational opposites [converses] differ from other opposites in this: they posit each other simultaneously, and neither arises with the destruction of the other — as St. Thomas taught [in *De potentia Dei* q.7, a.8 *ad* 4; cf. *De quatuor oppositis*, c.3].

If you object that extrinsic denomination [naming after an outside factor] does not occur in the field of relations, as Aquinas determined in 2 *CG* c.13, my answer is that this is true of form-wise naming but not of thing-wise* naming. After all, God is not called "the Lord" form-wise from servanthood but from a lordship

* The text corruptly has '*rationis*' here for '*relations*'

* *realiter*

which is “as if” inherent in Him. And yet *God* is called “the Lord,” and thing-wise “the Lord,” from the thing-hood* of the servanthood — because being the Lord does not posit any being except being-the-terminus of a real servanthood. So this case of naming is form-wise from an inside factor and is thing-wise from an outside one.

* *realitas*

But if we are talking of these converses under [the test of qualified being, *i.e.* under] their status as beings produced by thought, then *being the Lord* posits in God a thought-produced relation. And thus it is said (and truly said) that God is called the Lord from lordship, which is a thought-produced relation. It is not the case that there are two lordships here, one extra-mental and the other mentally produced. The situation, rather, is that the one relation of lordship, which is called “a being” in such a weak manner, is judged in two different ways by the doctors [of the Church]. Sometimes they judge it in terms of its own being, and so taken it is called a relation and a mere product of thought, because it has no being of its own except thanks to thought. Other times they judge it in terms of another’s being (its converse’s), from which it somehow gets to be, and so taken it is called “a being” and is counted among the parts of being in *Metaphysics V*, because the other is said towards it. Since, so taken, it posits no being in the thing named after it, but only in the thing terminated by it, the doctors always and unqualifiedly say as follows about these relations:

they posit in the thing named after them (be it God or a knowable) *no being but thought-produced being*

(for purposes of being distinctively such [*i.e.* the Lord or an object]). Note carefully: we do not say, “They posit no being.” We say, “They posit no being in the thing named after them” (which is what suffices for them to be outside factors) — because they do posit

being in the terminated converse.

xx. Once you have gotten to the bottom of these two tests and have learned how to apply them, you will see the truth in the contrasting sayings of the doctors, *e.g.*

“These relations are not beings outside the mind,”
(which is true in terms of their own being)

and

“These relations exist because their converses do,”
(which is true in terms of another’s being).

You will see St. Thomas giving a nod to both tests in this answer *ad* (4), and you will see Augustine doing the same in the last chapter of *De Trinitate V*. — Notice, too, that Aquinas talks in a way helpful to beginners: he talks of these relations more in terms of thought-produced being than in terms of that diminished sort of being that is hard to understand. — It is clear from these points, too, how one can say that (when no mind is thinking about it) God is the Lord form-wise, and how one can say that (when no mind is thinking about it) He is only the Lord basis-wise, *etc.*, distinguishing His own being from another’s being. — You see, too, where Scotus fell short (in those remarks on *I Sent. d.30, q.1*) by thinking that God is called the Lord *solely* from the relation that is in the creature. Scotus was positing a formal effect (being the Lord) without a formal cause (the relation of lordship), which is unintelligible.¹⁴

¹⁴ At the end of this commentary, the reader should be told that the strengths of the Thomistic position can be had without its difficulties by adopting a view of Russell’s, to the effect that real relations exist entirely *between* the relata and not *in* either. Then situation (3) need no longer cover the case of God and time, since God would acquire real converse relations to creatures without any accident arising “in” Him. The downside is that one has to conceive a categorial accident whose whole *esse* is *esse inter* and in no wise *esse in*. The tenability of adopting this view will be discussed below, in q.28, a.2.

article 8

Is the term 'God' a nature name?

In I.Sent. d.2, *expositio litterae*

It seems that the word 'God' is not a name conveying a nature.¹

c.9;
PG 94, 835-838

(1) Damascene says in book I [of *De fide orthodoxa*] that '*theos*' [God] comes from '*thein*', which means 'to superintend' everything, or from '*aethin*', which means 'to burn' (for our God is a consuming fire, burning up every wickedness), or from '*theas-thai*', which means 'to consider' everything. These are all words for activities.* Hence the word '*theos*' conveys an activity, not a nature.

* *operatio*

(2) Besides, a thing is named by us as it is known by us. The divine nature is unknown to us. Therefore, the word 'God' does not convey the divine nature.

c.1;
PL 16, 553

ON THE OTHER HAND, Ambrose says in book I of his *De fide* that 'God' is the name of a nature.

of a.2 ad 2 and
footnote 3 on p. 245

ANSWER: what a term is derived from is not always the same as what it is standardly used to mean. We come to know the substance of a thing from its distinguishing properties or activities, and so we often name its substance from an action it does or a distinctive property it has. Thus we name the substance of stone [*lapis*] after an action it does (it injures the foot [*laedit pedem*]); but 'stone' is not standardly used to mean this action; it means the substance. Of course, if there are certain items known to us in and of themselves,¹ like heat, cold, whiteness, and the like, they are not named from other factors. In such cases, what the term means is the same as what it derives from.²

† *secundum se*

Since God, then, is not known to us in His nature but comes into our awareness from His activities or effects, we are able to name Him from these latter, as I said above. So, as far as its derivation is concerned, 'God' is an activity name. It comes from foreseeing everything. All who speak of God intend to name Him on the basis of exercising an all-embracing providence. This is why Denis says in c.9 of *De divinis nominibus* that "deity is what sees all things with

PG 3, 969

¹ The issue here is the sense, the descriptive force, that 'God' conveys. Initially, this is a question of ordinary language, arising out of worship. Let Lucy worship the object *x*: when she calls *x* a "god," is she describing *x* as having a certain nature? As filling a certain function? As doing something? Subsequently, the question turns to theoretical language. Let Lucy use 'God' as a term belonging to a theory \mathcal{T} , with what definition is it used in that theory?

² Aquinas talks of "derivation" so broadly here as to blur over the difference between the etymological history of a word ' ϕ ' and the cognitive history of how the nature of ϕ -things was learned. The etymological history of ' ϕ ' is specific to the language *L* in which ' ϕ ' is a lexical item. (The only exceptions are the cases where ' ϕ ' is a loan-word or where it is cognate to a word in another language. Cognates will

complete foresight and goodness." But once derived from this activity, the word 'God' is used to convey the divine nature.³

TO MEET THE OBJECTIONS — ad (1): all of Damascene's etymologies pertain to providence, whence the term 'God' is derived.

ad (2): thanks to the fact that we can come to know a thing's nature from its distinguishing properties and effects, we can indicate its nature with a name. Thus, because we can come to know (from a distinguishing property it has) the substance of stone in itself, grasping WHAT STONE IS, the word 'stone' means the nature of stone as it is in itself: for it conveys the explanatory makeup of stone, through which we know WHAT STONE IS. For the scientific definition* that a term conveys is the explanatory makeup,⁴ as Aristotle says in *Metaphysics IV*. But from God's effects we cannot come to know the divine nature as it is in itself, so as to grasp its WHAT IT IS; we have to proceed rather by way of [judgments of] eminence and causality and negation, as stated above. That is how the word 'God' conveys the divine nature: its standard use is to mean something existing above everything, the *causal origin*⁵ of everything, and very far apart from⁶ everything. This, after all, is what those who use the word to name God intend to convey about Him.

* *ratio*† *definitio*

c.7,

1012a.23

q.12, a.12

‡ *principium*§ *remotum ab*

have a common etymological history in an ancestral language. It is still uncertain whether '*deus*' and $\theta\epsilon\acute{o}\varsigma$ are cognates. Damascene's etymologies (the first as old as Herodotus) are specific to $\theta\epsilon\acute{o}\varsigma$. Despite his own appeal to a folk etymology of '*lapis*', Aquinas had no interest here in word histories. His interest was in cognitive history, i.e., in how the nature of things comes to be known from their first noticed traits. This is not a language-specific history, though it could go differently in separated cultures in which the history of science had gone differently. Aquinas assumed (not wholly wrongly but too simply) that the word-history of ' ϕ ' in his language derived from (and so ran parallel to) the cognitive history of ϕ -things in his culture.

Like the positivists, Aquinas thought a cognitive history could begin with "observational" qualities. But he differed from them in three respects. (1) He did not think the observational *qualia* were the only primitives with which a cognitive history began. (2) He did not think the ordinary or theoretical sense of ' ϕ ' had to be reduced to words for the observational *qualia*. (3) He did not think the reference of ' ϕ ' in \mathcal{T} was determined by its theoretical sense in \mathcal{T} . So the empirical data did not have for him the desperate importance they had for a Heilmholz or even a Carnap.

³ He means that the sense of 'God' is 'one having divine nature'; thus the sense alludes to a nature. This is broadly correct. Apart from recent and artificial attempts to give 'God' a "functional" use, the word has always meant a being of an exalted nature.

 Cajetan's Commentary

In the title question, the phrase 'nature name' is used to contrast not only with an activity name but also with a name conveying a completive trait added onto the nature like a distinguishing mark of it.*

** proprius* *ii.* In the body of the article, one conclusion answers the question with a distinction: [*first part:*] 'God' is a nature name as far as what it is standardly used to mean is concerned, but [*second part:*] it is an activity name as far as its derivation is concerned. — This conclusion is supported in the text in two respects: the distinction it involves is supported, and its second part is supported. The first part is left as evident.

The support for the distinction goes as follows.

† per se [*Major: 1st part:*] Words for items directly[†] known are used to mean the same as what they are derived from; but [*2nd part:*] words for items known only through other items (as through their effects, activities, or distinguishing traits) are used to mean something other

than what they are derived from. [*Minor:*] The words for God are words of the second sort.* Ergo there is a difference between what they are derived from and what they are used to mean. Thus, 'God' is derived from one item and used to mean another. — The major is supported on the ground that things are named as they come to be known. The second part of the major is illustrated with the example of stone [and the word for it]; the first part is illustrated with the sense qualities [and the words for them]. The minor is evident from points made in inquiry 12 [a.12].

The support for the second part of the conclusion is this. [*Antecedent:*] 'God' is derived from all-embracing providence; [*inference:*] ergo [it is an activity name in its derivation]. — The antecedent is supported in two ways: (1) from the common usage of speakers; (2) from the authority of Denis. This is confirmed in the answer [*ad 1*] by the authority of Damascene.

* ardo

Is the name 'god' one that can be shared?

1 ST q.39, a.4 ad 1; In I Sent. d.4, q.1, a.2 ad 3, d.21, q.2, a.1 ad 4; De potentia Dei q.7, a.3 ad 1

It would seem that 'god' is a term which can be shared.¹

- (1) After all, when the item conveyed in a term's sense is shared with something, the term is shared, too.
 a.8 Well, 'god' conveys the divine nature, as I just said, and this is can be shared with others according to 2 Peter 1:4, "whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises, that by these we might be made partakers of the divine nature." Therefore the word 'god' can be shared.

(2) Besides, only proper names are not shareable.
 * *appellativum* 'God' is not a proper name but a title or epithet,* as one sees from the fact that it has a plural, as in Psalm 81:6, "I have said: ye are gods." So the word 'god' can be shared.

- (3) Moreover, the word 'god' is derived from an activity, as said above. Other words standardly applied to God, derived from activities or effects, can be shared, like 'good', 'wise', and the like. So the word 'god' can be shared, too.
 a.8

ON THE OTHER HAND, there is what Wisdom 14:21 says, "They took mine incommunicable name and gave it to sticks and stones," and the passage is talking about the deity's name. Therefore the word 'God' is a term which cannot be shared.

ANSWER: a term can be shareable in two ways: literally or by simile. It is shareable literally if it can be shared by many with its whole sense;[†] it is shareable by simile if it can be shared thanks to a part of what is included in its sense. Thus 'lion' is shareable literally by everything in which one finds the whole nature that 'lion' conveys, while it is shareable by simile with the things that share something lionish (like boldness or strength) and so are called lions figuratively.

Now, to determine which words are shareable literally, one needs to consider [the following rules.]

† *in supposito singulari existens per quod individuatur*
 Every form existing in a particular referent through which it is individuated[‡] is "common to many" either in the real or at least in thought.² Thus human nature is common to many both in the real and in thought,

¹ A shareable word was one whose sense permitted it to have more than one individual case as its extension: so only a proper name or definite description was unshareable or (as the Mediaevals said) "incommunicable."

² The forms discussed in this paragraph are those that structure matter. A form is individuated when a case of the form arises. For every form ϕ that structures matter, a case of ϕ -ness arises only with the matter structured, because only the matter and form together yield a value of an individual variable, $V(x)$. For all such forms, then, some $V(x)$ is not only the referent but also that through which ϕ -ness is individuated. Cf. 1 ST q.3, a.3. In second-order logic, one quantifies over cases of a form. So the talk of a form "existing" in a referent is second-order talk. It does not change the fact that in first-order talk, a form is not *what* exists but just *how* something is.

while the sun's nature is not common to many in the real but only in thought (the sun's nature can be understood, at least, as existing in many referents).³ From the sheer fact that the mind understands any species' nature by abstracting from the particular, it comes about that whether the nature is in one referent or many falls outside our understanding of that nature; and hence one can consistently keep the same understanding of it while thinking of it as existing in many.⁴

A particular, on the other hand, by virtue of the very fact that it is particular, is divided off from all others. So every word standardly used to convey a particular is unshareable in the real and in thought (for not even in thought can there occur many cases of *this individual*). Thus no word conveying an individual is shareable literally to many. It can only happen by simile: one can be called "an Achilles" figuratively because one has a hallmark of his, like bravery.⁵

Turning now to forms that are not individuated through another as their referent but through themselves, because they are subsistent forms:⁶ if we understood them for what they are in themselves, [we would see that] they cannot be shared either in the real or in thought (though perhaps they could be by simile, as just said about individuals).⁷ But since our understanding is such that we cannot grasp simple forms subsisting on their own for what they are, but grasp them on the pat-

³ Medieval astronomy treated the sun as unique, different in nature from the fixed stars. To replace this obsolete *hapax* with a current one, think of "the background radiation."

⁴ The result of grasping a form ϕ by abstracting from individuals is a concept, $|\phi|$: the point here is that, thanks to its abstracted status, $|\phi|$ can always be thought of as having an indefinite number of individuals in its extension.

⁵ It is still controversial how the sense of a proper name, as literally used, can contain the individual who bears the name. Figurative use is easier: it turns the name into a description whose sense is what the bearer was famous for.

⁶ The topic turns now to those forms that do not structure matter but specify immaterial beings. Each such form ψ has, in and of itself, what it takes to be a case of ψ -ness; and since a case of ψ -ness needs no matter to form an individual $V(x)$, each such form has what (or nearly what) it takes to be a referent. This privilege belongs both to angelic natures and to God's. (His also has in itself what it takes to exist).

⁷ When a form ψ is a referent, it is a value of an individual variable, so that some $V(x) = \psi$ -ness subsistent. Since $V(x)$ is such, no other can have ψ -ness as its whole nature without being $V(x)$, and none can have it as part of its nature without being of another nature. So if we knew an angel as he is and could name him accordingly, the only way to conceive a second referent for his nature name would be to resort to figurative speech. E.g., the bearer of good news to any woman could be her Gabriel.

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† *secundum totam significationem*

‡ *in supposito singulari existens per quod individuatur*

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in a.1 ad/2 term of composed things having their forms in matter, the result is what I said earlier: for such forms, too, we use concrete nouns conveying a nature-in-a-referent. So, as regards what it takes* to be *nature names*, the what-it-takes is the same whether we use the word to convey the nature of a composed thing or to convey a simple, subsistent nature.⁸

a.8 Therefore, since the word 'God' is standardly used to convey the divine nature, as said above, but the divine nature cannot have many cases, as was shown above, it follows that the word 'God' is indeed unshareable in the real but is shareable in thought or opinion, as the word 'sun' would be shareable in the thought of those who posit many suns. This is how Galatians 4:8 says, "ye served them that by nature are no gods," and the [Interlinear] gloss says: "they are not gods by nature but by human opinion."

q.11. a.3 Even so, if the issue is not the whole sense of the word 'God' but a part of it, the word is shareable by simile. This is how those who share by likeness in something divine can be called "gods," as in the verse, Ps. 81:6 "I have said: ye are gods."

If, however, there were some word whose standard

⁸ We semi-understand immaterial natures by assimilating them to the case of material natures; we treat them *as if* they were specifying forms abstracted from individuals. Hence the result of our attempt to understand an immaterial nature ψ -ness is again a concept $\{\psi\}$ that works as an abstraction; what is crucial for present purposes is that $\{\psi\}$ works as an abstraction in providing the sense of our nature name ' ψ '. Thus ' ψ ', too, is permitted by its sense to have an indefinite number of individuals as its extension, though this permission is wholly a matter of thought. So ' ψ ', too, is communicable literally (though only in thought, not in the real). What it takes to be a nature name is thus the same, whether the nature named is really abstracted from individuals or not.

use was not to convey God as having this nature but as being this referent (taking Him as "this something"), that word would be unshareable in every way (as is perhaps the case with the Hebrew Tetragrammaton). The situation would be similar if someone introduced 'Sun' to mean this individual.

TO MEET THE OBJECTIONS — *ad* (1): God's nature is not shareable except by sharing in a likeness of it.

ad (2): the word 'God' works as a title or epithet and not a proper name, because it conveys the divine nature as in a haver of it, despite the fact that God Himself, in the real, is neither a universal nor a particular.⁹ For words do not follow the manner of being that is in *things* but the manner of being that is in our cognition. Even so, 'God' is unshareable according to the truth of the matter, as I said about the word 'sun'.¹⁰

ad (3): although 'good', 'wise', and the like are derived from competitive traits flowing out from God into creatures, their standard use is not to convey the divine nature but to convey those competitive traits themselves, wherever they may be found.* So they are words shareable by many even according to the truth of the matter. But the word 'God' derives from an operation unique to God (which we experience continually), to convey in standard use the divine nature. [So the objection overlooked a semantic difference.]

* *absolutè*

⁹ This eye-opening statement comes from the fact that God is outside all the categories, even that of substance (I.57 q.3, a.5). He is merely analogous to a particular substance.

¹⁰ The assumption again is that the sun has a nature unique in the cosmos, so that those who think there are many suns are just wrong. To update the example: if there has been in fact just one Big Bang, the background radiation left by it is unique in physical reality, and those who think that other cases of such radiation have preceded it are just wrong.

Cajetan's Commentary

The title question is clear.

Analysis of the article, I

In the body of the article, four jobs are done: (1) he subdivides 'shareable'; (2) he lays down certain rules; (3) he answers the question; (4) he rounds out the topic of the shareability of divine names.

ii. As to job (1): he posits that being shareable is twofold: literal and figurative. The text is clear both in defining each and in using 'lion' as an example.

iii. As to job (2): he lays down four rules for sorting out shareable terms from others and for distinguishing the different ways in which they are shareable. Two of the rules apply to sense objects; two, to forms separate [from matter]. Thus nothing in the world is left out.

* *Rule* (1): every name conveying a nature distinct from the individual is shareable literally, in the real or at least in thought.¹ — This is supported *a priori* [i.e. by an argument going from cause to effect], as follows.

[*Antecedent:*] Every form existing in a referent individuating it is common in the way just stated; [*inference:*] ergo [a name conveying it is shareable in the way just stated]. — The antecedent, as far as commonality in the real is concerned, is supported by human nature; as far as commonality in thought alone is concerned, by the sun's nature, as follows.

¹ Cajetan phrases the rule this way because Aquinas said in q.3, a.3 that a nature/form and its referent are always distinct when the referent includes both the nature and a further factor (e.g., this matter). If $\forall(x)$ is a material individual, it "really" differs from its own case of its nature by properly including it.

[*Sub-antecedent*.] A specific nature is abstracted by us from the particular; [*sub-inference 1*.] ergo whether the nature is in one or many particulars is outside our understanding of that nature; [*sub-inference 2*.] ergo we can think of the sun as existing in many cases, consistently with our understanding of its specific nature.

Note here that, in this rule, literal shareability is implicitly subdivided into
 – shareability both in the real and in thought
 – shareability in thought alone.

At the same time, it is insinuated that the basis for real shareability is the nature's turning up in many things. This is found to occur in three ways, as Avicenna says [in his *Metaphysics*]: in act simultaneously, as one sees with human nature; or in act successively, as they say of the Phoenix (the life of the next one requires the death of its predecessor); or else in mere potency, like a house with a thousand corners, if none is ever built. Then the basis for shareability in thought alone is assigned, arising from our understanding; it is said to be the grasp of a nature apart from a grasp of the things individuating it. This, too, occurs in many ways, as will come out below [in § vii].

iv. • *Rule (2)*: every name conveying a particular is [*first part*.] unshareable literally in the real and [*second part*.] unshareable literally in thought, although [*third part*.] it is shareable figuratively. — The support for the first part is an *a priori* argument: a particular as such is divided off from all others [so a name conveying it is inapplicable to others]. The support for the second part is the point that many cases of *this individual* cannot come into the mind's apprehension. The support for the third part is the example of 'Achilles'.

v. • *Rule (3)*: Every name conveying a form not individuated through another as its referent but individuated through itself — if the name conveys it for what it is — is [*first part*.] unshareable literally in the real and [*second part*.] unshareable literally in thought, although [*third part*.] it is shareable figuratively. — The supporting argument is *a priori* for the first part: because such forms subsist on their own.* For the second part: because [with such names in hand] these forms would be understood for what they are. — But one needs to know that our language has no such names; we lack them because we are not able to understand such forms for what they are.

vi. • *Rule (4)*: Every name we possess to convey such self-subsisting forms is shareable literally, not in the real, but in thought alone. — The support for the last part of this is *a priori*. [*Antecedent*.] We do not grasp such forms in their own manner of being but in that of composed things, *i.e.* those having their form in matter; [*inference*.] so as regards what it takes to be a [nature] name, the same judgment applies to all names conveying forms, be they separate or in another. — The antecedent is supported by linguistic evidence:† [*sub-antecedent*.] we use concrete nouns standardly to convey

these forms; [*sub-inference*.] so we understand them after the manner of composed things. — The [sub-] antecedent is obvious, and the [sub-] inference is supported by the fact that concrete nouns convey a nature as *in something*. Ergo, if [these forms are conveyed by such nouns, they are not being understood in their own manner of being] *etc.*

Shareability in thought alone

vii. Observe here the range of cases implicit in a name's "shareability in thought." Take 'sun' and 'Gabriel'. They are shareable in thought but differently so. 'Sun' is called shareable because its nature abstracts from *this*, and hence its having one or many particulars falls outside its scientific definition. 'Gabriel', on the other hand, is shareable because it is understood on the pattern on which the natures of composed things are understood. To understand this more plainly, you need to know that generally and properly speaking, the phrase 'in thought' [*in ratione* = 'in scientific definition'] does not have quite the same force in this context as 'in its explanatory makeup' [*in definitione*] but implies the mode of [being which is] being-in-our-thought.² Thus the meaning is that every specific nature *as it is an object of our understanding* is common to many, because how it is entertained as an object* is not as *this* but as a specific nature — regardless of whether, in the real, it is a *this* thanks to another factor (as is the case with the sun's nature and with the natures of all the things we can sense) or is a *this* thanks to itself (as is clear already for God, and as will be proved below for the angels).³ The fact that there is this range of cases arises from the following.

– Since the sun's nature is not a *this* of itself, that nature has both on its side and on the mind's side what it takes to be an object for our mind as a non-*this*; and hence the commonness [of 'sun'] in thought [*i.e.* in scientific definition] has a double basis;

² This is a valuable comment on the shade of difference between *ratio* of ϕ and *definitio* of a ϕ -thing. The *definitio* "marks off" the factors making up the why (or how) a thing is ϕ , but this talk is simply neutral between real makeup (factors in the thing making it ϕ) and conceptual makeup (ingredients in the scientific explanation of being- ϕ). The *ratio* is the same makeup but is not neutral: it is unambiguously *conceptual* makeup. Aristotle's dictum "the *ratio* which a term conveys is the *definitio*" could thus be taken on two levels. On one level, it was a simple statement about scientific discourse: in a sentence, a term is so used that the technical sense it conveys = the science's account of what it takes to be as that term says. But on a second level, it was an ideal set by the goal of science: when a science succeeds, each term used in its technical vocabulary conveys a scientific concept that *captures* the real structure of a thing verifying that term.

³ The talk of "being a *this*" expresses in non-technical language the same point that I have been making in the jargon of models for formal logic: to be a *this* is to be a value of an individual variable.

Tract. 5, c.1

* *per se*

† *a signo*

* *obicitur*

— since Gabriel's nature is a *this* of itself, his nature acquires solely from our mode of understanding what it takes to be thought of by us as a nature and not as a *this*; and so the shareability [of 'Gabriel!'] has a basis on our side alone.

There you have the points you need to understand how it can be true that [Gabriel] is a universal and is predicable of many and is a species, *etc.* For these and similar claims are sufficiently verified for such forms not [as they are] independently but as [they are] objects, or as "knowns" to us. Since I have written at length on these matters in my comments on *De ente et essentia*, I do not need to repeat them here.⁴

Analysis of the article, II

viii. As to job (3): he answers the question with a single three-part conclusion: the term 'God' is [*first part:*] unshareable in the real but [*second part:*] com-

⁴ The Thomists have always said that the status of being "a universal," "predicable of many," *etc.*, was a mind-dependent status, held by a form insofar as it was an object understood in abstraction. But that was not the whole of their position. As Aquinas implied in this article and Cajetan made explicit above, it was mind-independently true in their view that the forms of material/sensible things did not have in themselves what it takes to be individuals. This lacking was universality *fundamentaliter* (basis-wise). It was the reason these forms could be abstracted without being falsified. To abstract them was to understand them in their real character as non-individual structures, open to be found in more than one case, structuring an indefinite number of individuals in the same way. Thanks to this part of their position, the Thomists deserve to be called "immanent realists" (though of a more nuanced type than the Scotists) rather than what they are sometimes accused of being (particularists with a dash of concept-nominalism). This assessment will be more widely accepted, when Cajetan's commentary on *De ente et essentia* enjoys a better translation than the existing English version (Marquette U. Press, 1964).

municable in opinion and [*third part:*] by simile. — The first part is supported on the ground that the divine nature conveyed by this term is unshareable in the real; ergo [there can be no other thing in the real to which 'is God' would apply truly]. The second part is illustrated with the example of the "sun" and confirmed by authority, the gloss on Galatians 4.⁵ The third part is illustrated by those participating in the divine nature, together with the authority of the Psalm text [81/82:6].

Notice that this conclusion follows so obviously from the rules discussed above that there was no need to add further support. Ditto for the next point.

ix. As to job (4): the conclusion set down is this: if there were a name for God conveying His nature in its status as a *this*, it would be entirely unshareable literally to anything outside God. This is shown by the made-up example of [such a name for] the sun, and he inserts an uncertainty about the Tetragrammaton.

This conclusion is not only put in to round out the teaching on this subject, but also (I think) to express a real uncertainty about the name held in so high honor among the Hebrews. Though that name in signified act is called the Tetragrammaton, in exercised act it is hidden to us.⁶ Hence the text speaks dubitatively.

⁵ The second part of the conclusion means that there is nothing grammatically or syntactically aberrant about speaking of many gods. Polytheism cannot be refuted by claiming that 'God' has no plural. It takes a metaphysical argument to show that, in the real, there is at most one God, just as it would take a physical argument to show that there has been at most one Big Bang, *etc.*

⁶ The Hebrew divine name in "signified act" is just יְהוָה mentioned as a name. The name in exercised act would be יְהוֹה doing its job as a name, *i.e.*, designating God in the manner it was revealed to do. This manner may have been clear to Moses, but it is "hidden to us."

Is 'god' used univocally as between a god by participation, God by nature, and a god in opinion?

1 ST q.29, a.4; In II Sent. d.35, a.4, 1 CG cc.33-34; De veritate q.2, a.11; De Potentia Dei q.7, a.7

It seems that the word 'god' is used univocally as one speaks of [Him who is] God by nature, [those who are] god by participation, and [the supposed entities that are] god in someone's opinion.

(1) After all, where the meaning varies, persons affirming and denying do not contradict one another. Equivocation blocks contradiction from arising. But a Catholic who says, "That idol is not God," contradicts a pagan who says it "is a god." Therefore 'god' is being used univocally as between their two utterances.

(2) As an idol is God in some people's opinion but not in reality [*secundum veritatem*], so also enjoying fleshly pleasures is happiness* in some people's opinion but not in reality. Well, the word 'fulfillment' [*beatitudo*] is applied univocally to the supposed happiness and the real one. So the word 'God' is also applied univocally to the real and the supposed one.

(3) In addition, univocal words are those used with a single definition. Well, when a Catholic says there is one God, he understands by 'god' an all-powerful thing that is to be revered above all else, and that is just what a gentile understands when he says that some idol is a god. Therefore, the word 'god' is being used univocally as between their two utterances.

ON THE OTHER HAND, (4) what is in the mind is a likeness of what is in the real, as it says in *Peri hermeneias I*. But when 'animal' is applied to a real animal and to a picture of an animal, it is being used equivocally. Thus the word 'god' is being used equivocally when it is applied to the real one and a supposed one.

(5) Furthermore, a person cannot mean what he does not know. A gentile does not know God's nature, and so when he says, "The idol is a god," he does not mean real divinity. But real divinity is precisely what a Catholic means when he says, "There is one God." So, the word 'god' is not being used univocally of the real God and the supposititious one, but equivocally.

ANSWER: in these three cases, the word 'God' is being taken neither univocally nor [purely] equivocally but analogously. This emerges from the fact that, between univocal uses, the definition stays exactly the same; between equivocal uses, the definitions are entirely different; but between analogous uses, the sense which the term conveys in one use has to go into defining the sense it has in the other uses. For instance, the sense 'a being' has when used of a substance goes into defining the sense 'a being' has when used of an accident.¹ The sense 'healthy' has when used of an animal

goes into defining the sense it has when used of a urine sample or a medicine. The sample is so called because it is "a sign of health" in the animal, and the drug is so called because "it causes health" in the animal.

Such is the case here, too. The sense of 'god' as used to mean [one who is] true God goes into defining the sense it has when used for a supposed god or for a god by participation. After all, when we call anything "god" by participation, what we are understanding by 'god' is "something having resemblance to the [one who is] true God." And when we call an idol a god, what we are understanding by 'god' is "something people think to be [one who is true] God." So it is obvious that, while the sense of the word is different in each case, one of those senses is included in the others; hence the word is clearly being used analogously.

TO MEET THE OBJECTIONS — *ad* (1): what raises the count of a word's uses is not what it is predicated of but the sense it has. The word 'man' is being used in just one way, after all, no matter whom it is predicated of, truly or falsely. It would be used in many ways if we intended to convey diverse things by 'man' — say, if one person intended to convey by 'man' what is in fact a man, while another intended to convey a rock by it, or something else. From there it is easy to see that a Catholic saying the idol is not God contradicts a pagan who says it is, since both are using the word 'god' to mean "[one who is] true God." When a pagan says his idol is a god, he is not using the word to mean "a supposititious god." If he did, he would be saying the truth (as a Catholic does when using the word in that sense to say, "All the gods of the gentiles are devils").

ad (2), (3): the same answer meets the second and third objections. They too proceed from different predications of the name, not another meaning.

ad (4): when 'animal' is applied to a real animal and to a picture of one, it is not being used *purely* equivocally. Aristotle uses 'equivocal' broadly, so as to include the analogous. For instance, he says 'a being' is used analogously but also says sometimes that it is predicated "equivocally" of the different categories.

ad (5): neither the Catholic nor the pagan knows God's nature for what it is in itself. Both know it under a definition of *causing* something, *surpassing* things, or being *apart* from them. So when a gentile says an idol is a god, he can be taking 'god' in the same sense as a Catholic does when he denies it. By contrast, if there were a person who did not know [any word for] God under any definition, he would not be making any claims about God either — unless he were bandying words about in ignorance of their meaning, as people sometimes do.

¹ A substance is a being in the sense of something that exists; an accident is a being in the sense of how something that exists is. This is the *analogia entis*.

* *felicitas*

16a.5

Ps 95.96, v. 5

Categories I,
1a.1

Cajetan's Commentary

In the title question, note that the word 'god' is sometimes used veridically of these three referents: the true God, a participative god, and a supposed god. Thus Moses was called [participatively] "the god of Pharaoh," and Beelzebub was [suppositively] "the god of Ekron." But sometimes 'God' is used veridically of the true God alone, as when it says there is just one God. What is in doubt in this article is not whether 'God' is being used univocally so long as it means "one having true divineness." That much is obvious; the name with that meaning is not only univocal but unshareable, as just established [in a.9]; and so [if used veridically,] 'god' with that meaning is predicated negatively of everything else. What is in doubt here, rather, is how 'god' is being used when it is *affirmed* truly of these three (i.e. when it says, "The Lord, He is God," and says Moses is "the god of Pharaoh" and says Beelzebub is "the god of Ekron"). Is it being used univocally, equivocally, or analogously — that is, with one or many meanings; and if many, are they unqualifiedly many or just many in some respect? Thus the title becomes clear, as does the answer *ad* (1).¹

Ex 7. 1
2 K 1. 6
Dt 6. 4
Ps 99. 100, v. 3

¹ If the reader will review the first three objections and Aquinas' answer *ad* (1), the reader will see how nicely Cajetan has put the matter into a nutshell. The objector (better informed than certain modern writers) correctly observes that a Catholic and a pagan contradict each other when they quarrel about the divinity of, say, Zeus, and that they share a common understanding of 'god', as people have a common understanding of 'fulfillment' and yet quarrel over whether sensual enjoyment is *it*. The objector's problem is that he keeps thinking this evidence is relevant to the question of whether 'god' changes in sense as it appears in these different predications. It is not relevant. For when a Catholic quarreled with a pagan (or a sage with a sensualist), their assertions did not *both* have to come out true; hence the meaning of 'god' (or 'fulfillment') did not have to change as first the one spoke, and then the other; and hence they succeeded in contradicting

Analysis of the article

ii. In the body of the article, there is one conclusion answering the question: 'God' is not said univocally of these three, nor equivocally, but analogously. — The support for this is drawn from the definitions of the three options. [*Major:*] Univocally used terms are used with entirely the same definition; equivocal ones, with entirely different definitions; analogous ones, with a first definition included in the others; [*minor:*] 'God' is not used the first way in these cases, nor the second, but the third; [*conclusion:*] ergo its use is analogous.²

The major is evident of itself (and you will do well to pay attention to it, if you and others are to escape the ignorance that goes with bad preparation in the area of analogy, etc). The minor is supported by induction on the three cases. It is obvious, after all, that "a participative god" and "a supposed god" are unintelligible apart from the notion of a real god. In much the same way, "a pictured lion" and "a fake lion" are unintelligible unless you are co-understanding "a real lion."³

one another. No, the question is whether the sense of 'god' has to change when all the predications are supposed to come out true.

² So the answer is that the sense of 'god' has to change if 'Beelzebub is the god of Ekron', for example, is to come out true. It has to change from meaning 'one having divine nature' to meaning 'one thought to have divine nature'. But the change is not total, because the new definition includes the former. In terms of the taxonomy worked out above, in a.6, the participative and supposititious senses of 'god' are secondary analogates.

³ The same form of argument has been used effectively in some modern responses to skepticism. The skeptic tries to insinuate the doubt, "Perhaps nothing is real." The insinuation is meaningless unless 'real' contrasts with 'fake', and yet the insinuation undermines that contrast. The skeptic is trying to have his cake and eat it.

article 11

Is the term 'He who is' God's most proper title?

In *I Sent.* d.8, q.1, aa.1 and 3; *De potentia* q.2, a.1; q.7, a.5; q.10, a.1 ad 9;
 In *Dionysii De divinis nominibus*, c.5, lectio 1

It seems 'He who is' is not God's most proper title.

(1) After all, the word 'God' is an unsharable title, as already discussed, while 'He who is' is not unsharable. So 'He who is' is not God's most unique title.

(2) Meanwhile, Denis says in c.3 of *De divinis nominibus* that the title 'the Good' is the one that manifests all the processions from God. That suits God best, since He is the universal causal origin of things. So 'the Good' is the title most appropriate to God, not 'He who is'.

(3) Moreover, every term for God seems to involve a relation to creatures, since God is only known to us by way of creatures. But the name 'He who is' involves no bearing towards creatures. Therefore 'He who is' is not God's most distinctive title

ON THE OTHER HAND, there is Exodus 3:13-14, where Moses asks God, "If they should say to me, what is His name? what shall I say to them?" and God answers him, "Thus shalt thou say to them: HE WHO IS hath sent me to you." Ergo 'He who is' is God's most proper name.

ANSWER: the name 'He who is' for three reasons is God's most proper title. The first is because of its sense. It conveys not a form but existing itself. So, since God's existing is His very essence, and such is not the case with anything else, as shown above, it is clear that this expression names God more deeply than any other. After all, each and every thing gets a name from a "form" it has.

The second reason is because of its generality. All other terms are either less general or, if they are coextensive with 'being', still add something to it in their definition; thus all other terms specify being or narrow it down.* In this life our understanding cannot come to know God's very essence for what it is in itself; rather, every "how" which our mind thinks is "how" a trait it grasps "is there" in Him falls short of how God in Himself is.¹ For this reason, the less a name nar-

rows a being down, and the more general it is and the more independent [of any limited subject matter], the more properly it is applied to God by us. Hence Damascene also says [in book I, c. 9 of *De fide orthodoxa*], "the chief among all the names applied to God is 'He who is'; for by encompassing the whole of all things* in Himself, He has being itself [esse] as an ocean of substance, boundless and not narrowed." By any other name, a thing's substance is narrowed down to some "how" [it is]; but 'He who is' does not narrow down to any mode of being. It stands open to all modes and thus names Him as "a boundless ocean of substance."

The third reason is its [ense] connotation.[†] It conveys existing in the present tense, and this is most properly said of God, whose existing knows no past or future, as Augustine says in *De Trinitate* V.

TO MEET THE OBJECTIONS — ad (1): 'He who is' is a more distinctive title than 'God' in some respects, i.e., in what it is derived from (it comes from 'being') and in the generalness of its sense and in its [ense] connotation, as I just said. But in another respect, i.e., in what the name is standardly used to convey, 'God' is the more proper title, because it is used to convey the divine nature. The Tetragrammaton is still more distinctive as a name, because it is used to convey the very substance of God that is unsharable and (in whatever sense it may be allowed to say so) singular.

ad (2): the epithet 'the Good' is not God's chief title overall, but in one respect, i.e. insofar as He is a cause. For God's standing to something as its cause presupposes His existing on His own.[‡]

ad (3): a term for God does not have to include [in its meaning] a relation to creatures; it need only be derived from completeness flowing out from God into creatures. Among these, the very first is existing itself, and the title 'He who is' is derived from that.

is, how the content we conceive actually exists in God. As Aquinas said above in a. 5, because we can only understand these traits as distinct from one another, we cannot understand the extension or mode-of-being that they actually have in God, where they are not distinct but *one, infinite* completeness.

Cajetan's Commentary

In the title question, the word 'proper' can be taken three ways:

- (1) [to mean unique] as opposed to 'common'
- (2) [to mean literal] as opposed to 'figurative'
- (3) [to mean inward] as opposed to 'extraneous'.

Here the direct way in which it is being taken is the third, so that 'proper' means *intimate* here, and 'most proper' means *most intimate*. Among the non-figurative terms that are applied to some *x*, there is a certain latitude, after all; the form-wise definition of one term may

PG 94, 836

* totum

† connotatio

c.2. cf Peter Lombard, *I Sent.* d. 8

‡ absolute

* determinare

¹ What our mind grasps of God will be a conception [q], such as [wise]. The mode which is "how" God verifies this conception is the "how" of how [q] has extension in God, that

be more intrinsic to *x* than that of another.

The word 'most' bespeaks comparison to the other terms for God, whether they be terms common to Him and others (like 'good', 'wise', *etc.*) or terms unique to Him (like 'God', 'Creator', *etc.*). It is not clear whether this comparison is meant to be extended to compound terms for God as well; no mention of them is made in the article: he only talks about simple terms. So it will remain in doubt whether 'He who is' is a deeper name for God than 'highest good' or 'infinite being' [which was Scotus' choice], or the like.

Analysis of the article, I

ii. In the body of the article, there is one conclusion, answering the question with yes. But notice that there are two ways this conclusion can be formulated.

(1) The first goes like this: "the name 'He who is' is God's most proper name for three reasons," so that "for three reasons" is part of the conclusion and restricts "most proper". The claim is that this name is God's most proper one in *three respects* (in sense, broadness, and tense connotation), as said in the answer *ad* (1).

(2) The other way to formulate it is without such a restriction. Then it says: "the name 'He who is' is God's most proper name." Period. The "for three reasons" is not part of the conclusion but a transition to the supporting arguments, as if he said, "and this is supported on three grounds."

Construal (1) has two things going for it: (a) the fact that he wrote "for three reasons" between the subject and the predicate in his initial statement of the conclusion, and (b) the explanation he made in the answer to the first objection. Construal (2) also has two things going for it: (a) in the body of the article, the conclusion is drawn without restriction after each supporting argument, and (b) the conclusion is true without the restriction. As it makes little difference which way you construe it, the reader may opt as he pleases.

iii. The support for the conclusion — as to its first part or on its first ground — is as follows. [*Antecedent*:] 'He who is' does not convey a form but existing itself; [*1st inference*:] so it conveys the essence of nothing but God; [*2nd inference*:] so it is the most intimate name for God. — The first inference is supported on the ground that only God's essence is existing. The second rests on the ground that each thing gets a name from a form it has.

Is the first reason probative?

iv. Doubt arises about this reasoning, on the ground that it does not reach the conclusion it was after. The second inference does not get to

so this name is more proper than the others but only to

so this name fits God better than it fits others, because the sense of it is salvaged in God as His essence, whereas it is salvaged in other beings as outside

their essence. Yet the conclusion that was supposed to be drawn (and the one the text does draw) was that this name is more proper than other names.

The SHORT ANSWER to this is that the argument in the text is reaching both conclusions. From the fact that the form-wise sense of 'He who is' is being itself, it follows perfectly well *both* that the name fits God better than it fits other things (because it fits Him essentially; others, non-essentially) *and* that it fits God better than other names do (because an essential name is prior to the others, since those others convey something posterior).¹ In the text, this comes across implicitly in 'existing itself' or in 'not a form' — as if he said,

'He who is' does not convey a form, as the other names like 'wise' and 'living' do.

As for transcendental names [like 'Good' and 'One'], however, it is well established that they are posterior to 'being' itself. So, there is no need to bother Aquinas about them.

Analysis of the article, II

v. As to its second part (or on its second ground) the conclusion is supported thus. [*Antecedent*:] In this life we cannot understand the mode [of being] which is how God's essence is in itself; [*1st inference*:] so everything we understand as narrowed down to some mode [of being] falls short of the mode which is how God is in Himself; [*2nd inference*:] so the less narrowed down a name is, the more properly we apply it to God; [*3rd inference*:] so 'He who is' is our most proper name for God.

Drawing the [third and] last inference is supported in the text on the ground that the other names are less general [than 'who is'] or, if coextensive with it, add something to it in their definition; then the inference is confirmed by the authority of Damascene. — The earlier inferences are not supported in the text.

— But the first of them is not short of grounding, because it is clear enough in itself: if God's mode is unknown, after all, it follows that every known mode falls short of God's mode.

¹ This last bit may not be quite so circular as it sounds. It may be deriving semantic priority from priority in the order of explanation. If the truth of "φx" explained (or was part of what explained) why "ψx" was true, φ had explanatory priority over ψ in x. Aristotle required that explanatory priority be taken into account in the selection of a thing's "essential" traits. Among all the traits without which x could not exist, the "essential" ones of x were just those over which no other had explanatory priority. Thus each *essentiale* of x was a "top" in that order, a "starting point" in explaining any constant trait of x. The idea at which Cajetan hints here may have been that explanatory order yields a semantic rule: a description of x that conveys a trait φ, explaining why x is ψ, is semantically prior (as a name of x) to a description conveying the fact that x is ψ. In that way essence-names would always have semantic priority. In the special case of God-talk, where accidents were lacking and the essence unknown, *essentia* were proxied by God's "attributes," among which being existence itself had explanatory priority. So, the rule I have conjectured would make 'He who is' a semantic "top" among His names.

— The second inference is then validly drawn as well: for if every known mode falls short of God's mode, then the more narrowed down the mode is, the more it falls short, because the falling short is coming from the maximally eminent *breadth*² of God's mode of being. So the broader or more independent a term's conveyed definition is, the less it falls short of that shoreless ocean of divine substance. And this is what it means to be "more properly" applied. To be sure, no name matches God's mode; but if it falls less short, it is more properly applied; and so the one among them that falls least short is the most properly applied. In this context, by the way, 'fall short' is taken quite broadly. Some names, like the not very narrow transcendentals, fall short negatively (though more or less so, as has been said); other names, the very narrow ones, fall short in the opposite way, like 'body', *etc.*

† *determinatio* Thus, every narrowing³ falls short, but differently so.²

vi. Notice here that 'is' can be narrowed down on two sides — on the predicate side and the subject side. It is narrowed on the predicate side when one says 'is wise' or 'is good', *etc.*: on the subject side, when one says 'a man is' or 'an ox is'. The name 'He who is' is rightly called the least narrowed down, because 'He who is' conveys what is not narrowed on either side. It doesn't mean "He who is good" or "He who is wise" or "He who is substance," but utterly independently "He who is," without any narrowing at all. As far as the 'He who' is concerned, it conveys no nature but is just a relative pronoun for a substantial antecedent; so it implies "a substance" in the most general sense, not the one in which 'substance' means a category but the sense in which every essence is called substance [*i.e.* the sense in which 'substance' translates 'ousia']. This is why Damascene said 'He who is' means "a boundless ocean of substance" — "of substance" because of the 'He who', "a boundless ocean" because of the 'is' without any narrowing down; for 'is' can be narrowed down by infinitely many specifiers.³ The name 'He who is' manifests as clearly as possible the fact that God is so eminent that He comprehends in the most eminent way infinitely many modes of being in infinitely many ways (including the just thinkable ones).³

‡ *determinationes*

² 'Being' is a positive and non-relational (absolute) term. It looks as though the other transcendental terms fall short "negatively" by *not* conveying a positive (like 'one') or *not* conveying an absolute (like 'good'), whereas non-transcendental terms will fall short "positively" by conveying being in a limited category or genus.

³ This is a crucial passage for interpreting the talk of "ways" or "modes" of being. In every judgment that is or could be true, every substantial subject mentions a what-is, and every predicate it can take mentions a how-it-is, and both the mentioned items are "modes of being." Thus each created or creatable *ens* is a mode of being, "just one way of being," whether it is in the category of substance or in one of the accidental categories. But a God who, in His own Mode pre-con-tains "every mode of being," *is* in a higher way what every possible subject/substance is (of which there are infinitely

Analysis of the article, III

vii. As to its third part or ground, the conclusion is supported from a connotation. 'He who is' conveys being in the present tense; ergo it fits God most properly. — The inference holds because presentiality is most proper to God, as is made clear by Augustine.

Ways of considering 'He who is'

viii. Observe now that 'He who is' can be considered three ways:

(1) The first way is independently [of subject matter] and form-wise, and that is how it is to be considered here. [So taken,] 'He who is' [*qui est*] does not differ from 'a being' [*ens*] form-wise but differs from it as to three conditions. First, 'a being' does not present so explicitly the *act* of being; second, 'a being' does not connote any tense; third, the relative pronoun implicit in 'a being' is neuter, as one sees when 'a being' is explicited as 'a what-is' (as Aristotle often did).⁴ As the neuter gender is indefinite, it smacks more of matter; as the masculine is definite, it suggests actuality. So saying 'He who is' suggests the actuality of the one existing better than saying 'what is'.

(2) Because of these conditions and the points made in the text, there is a second way to consider 'He who is', namely, as soundly appropriated to God.⁵ The reason for the appropriation is that He alone is in the full truth of the matter, while other things *are* and *are not* (since they can fail to be), and *are* only so long they *are*, and *are not* unless they are such-and-such (*i.e.* of so and so much completeness) and not apart from that. Hence, when 'He who is' is taken in this way, it implies (not from its sense but from the appropriation) the highest eminence in being. It is very much as if 'the knower' were appropriated to someone who had the most outstanding mind among all people, as if, in comparison to him, others "didn't know," *etc.*; for then, even though the sense of the phrase would not be changed, it would imply more than its form-wise sense, as it would point out the outstanding quality of *that person*, thanks to

many) and *is* in a higher way what every possible predicate/trait is (of which there are infinitely many). If one assigned number to the modes, His infinity of essence would have a non-denumerable cardinality. But one could only number them as they are distinct in creatures or in thought, in God they are one. Thus God's Mode is not just "another way to be" but is the fullness of being itself, subsisting.

⁴ In a famous appendix to his *Being and Some Philosophers*, Étienne Gilson claimed that in Aquinas the noun *ens* "signifies in *abstracto* the act signified concretely by *is*." (2nd ed., Toronto: PIMS, 1952), p. 232. Suffice it to say that the present translator has yet to find a passage where *ens* 'is' used as Gilson says. Nowhere is *ens* 'used like the French 'l'être' to mean the act of being; everywhere 'ens' has the meaning assigned here by Cajetan: it means "a being," "a what-is."

⁵ The talk here of the "appropriation" of a term or phrase means about the same as turning it into a special title or nickname for someone.

the appropriation.⁶ In the case at hand, then: when 'He who is' is taken form-wise, it is truly said of anyone existing and does not denote a boundless ocean of substance in any other way than 'a being' does; and yet, when it is taken as appropriated, it posits in God most eminently the existing which is God's very essence, and it posits in the divine existing that shoreless ocean. In this way, 'He who is' gives what it conveys in general (indefiniteness through lack of narrowing down) the sense of boundlessness by eminence, insinuating that the existing is eternal. Hence we have no name simple in concept that better expresses the divine nature for what it is than 'He who is.'

(3) The third way of considering 'He who is' is as the prime analogate of 'he who is'. So taken, 'He who is' is a proper name of God not by appropriation but by its own definition — and all the points I have been making about it still come out true, but for a new reason (because, as I just said, they are not made true by an appropriation but by the term's own sense). When an analogous term is brought forward without a qualifier, it stands for its prime analogate; thus, when 'he who is' is brought forward independently [of any particular subject matter], it is taken for its prime analogate and is supremely proper to God, for reasons stated above [in a. 6]. Stick to these points, because they are both true and harmonious with Aquinas, as he speaks in the independent and form-wise sense.

Understanding the answer *ad* (1)

z. In the answer to the first objection, doubt arises on the ground that a distinction drawn there is misplaced in the context at hand. What 'He who is' is derived from [*i.e.* being] is the same as the sense it is used to convey. So if it is more proper [than 'God'] in the former respect, it is more proper in the latter. Yet Aquinas says it is more proper in what it is derived from but not in what it is used to convey. How do these remarks hold together?

The SHORT ANSWER is that, although the derivation and sense of 'He who is' are the same, the terms of comparison are not. Both names, 'He who is' and 'God', have a derivation and a use. When they are

⁶ Cajetan could have picked the famous example from the New Testament. Christ made 'Rock' the special title of Simon bar-Jonah, and as so appropriated, 'Rock' conveyed (more than its form-wise sense) the outstanding role of that disciple as the "firm foundation." But the commentator probably wanted to avoid the extra complication of metaphor.

compared proportionally, *i.e.*, when the derivation of the one is compared to the derivation of the other, and the standard sense of the one to the standard sense of the other, the clear meaning of the text emerges:

- 'existing' is more proper to God than 'all-embracing providence', and
- 'divineness' is more proper to Him than 'existing', because 'divineness' conveys that nature as if with its specific difference, while ['existing' or] 'He who is' conveys it as if with its genus. Indeed, as regards what 'God' is used to convey, *we have no concept of it except in another*, whereas we do have concepts of what 'He who is' derives from and of what it is used to convey. As a result, while 'God' is His more proper and intimate name in itself, 'He who is' is the more informative name to us. It is more informative than 'God' for the reason just stated.⁷

Note on compound terms

x. You should know, by the way, that 'He who is', considered even as an appropriated term or as the prime analogate, conveys just one formal concept, so that [an understanding of] it is not composed of two concepts, as would be the case with 'the color white', or 'a being in its own right' [*ens per se*], or 'the highest good', or 'an infinite being'. And yet with all its simplicity, it lays out the boundless ocean of substance. Indeed, if 'He who is' is rightly and completely understood, it lays out the quasi-reason why God is an infinite being. It is not the case that, because He is an infinite being, He is "He who is"; rather, because He is "He who is," He is existence of infinite completeness. Scotus seems not have been thinking rightly, then, in his remarks on *I Sent.* d.3, q.1, where he said the simplest and most complete proper concept of God we can have is that of the term 'infinite being'. For it has already become clear that 'He who is' is simpler, more complete, and prior [in explanation].

⁷ A concept is an understanding, and the issue here is semantic concepts, that is, understandings of how words are used. We understand how to use 'is' to make correct sentences, and so we know what 'He who is' derives from. We also understand what it is used to convey in any of the three "considerations" discussed above, as soon as we understand the discussions. But we really do not understand what 'God' is standardly used to convey. We understand *that* it is a nature name, that it conveys a thing of an exalted kind, *i.e.* a thing with a superlative sort of nature, but we cannot say what that nature is specifically. We can only say hyper-generically: "being at its fullest," or the like.

Can true, affirmative propositions be formed about God?

In I Sent d 4 q 2 a 1, d 22, a 2 ad 1, 1 CG c 36, De Potentia Dei q 7, a 5 ad 2

It seems that [true] affirmative propositions cannot be formed about God.

PG 3, 140 (1) After all, Denis says in c. 2 of *De caelesti hierarchia* that denials are true of God, but affirmations are ill fitting.

PL 64, 1280 (2) Also, Boethius says in his *De Trinitate* [c.2] that a simple form cannot be a subject. God is utterly a simple form, as was shown above. So He cannot be a subject. But every item about which an affirmative proposition is formed is taken as its subject. Ergo an affirmative proposition about God cannot be formed.

* falsus (3) Besides, every act of understanding a thing otherwise than it is, is going wrong.* God has being without being composed at all, as proved above. Ergo, since every act of affirmation understands something *by composing*, it seems that an affirmative proposition cannot be formed about God and come out right.

ON THE OTHER HAND, the faith does not embrace a falsehood. But certain affirmative propositions are points of faith, such as that God is three and one, and that He is omnipotent. Therefore, affirmative propositions can be formed about God and come out true.

ANSWER: affirmative propositions about God can be formed so as to come out right. To see how, one needs to know that, in any true affirmative proposition, the subject and predicate have to be extensionally the same to some extent* and differ in what it takes to fit the terms [*ratio*]. This is clear both in propositions with an accidental predicate and in those with a substantial predicate. [In 'A man is white'] 'man' and 'white' are obviously the same in underlying subject and differ in what it takes to fit the terms (what it takes to be human is one affair, after all, and what it takes to be white is another). And when I say, "Man is an animal," the very thing which is a man is truly an animal; for in the same referent is present both the sense-endowed nature in view of which it is called an animal and the rational nature in view of which it is called a man. Again the predicate and subject are the same in referent[†] but differ in what it takes fit them.¹

* significant idem secundum rem aliquo modo

† idem supposito

¹ Taking a term's extension as the set of things to which it is normally used to refer, this remark clarifies the wording Aquinas used earlier (subject and predicate have to signify *idem secundum rem aliquo modo*) and justifies translating it as 'have to be extensionally the same to some extent'. What he meant was hard to see in his day, when the logical structure of a proposition was exhibited by just replacing definite terms with term variables, as in '*A* is *B*', 'all *A* is *B*', etc., in which nothing represents the reference of the terms. In today's symbolism, his point is perfectly visible. 'A man is white' will be '($\text{man } x \text{ \& white } x$)' which is true in case there is at least one referent, i.e. one value of '*x*'. $V(x)$, such that the extensions of 'man' and of 'white' have $V(x)$ as a common element. Likewise, 'Man is an animal' will be

This holds *in a way* even for propositions in which the same term is predicated of itself: the mind attaches what it puts on the subject side to the rôle of the referent but attaches what it puts on the predicate side to the nature of a form existing in the referent, in keeping with the saying that "predicates are taken form-wise; and subjects, matter-wise."²

To this difference in what it takes to be [a subject and a predicate] there corresponds the numerical difference between subject and predicate, while the mind conveys their referential identity by the very act of putting them together [the *ipsa compositio*].

Now God considered in Himself is entirely one and simple, and yet our mind comes to know Him thanks to differing conceptions, since it cannot see Him as He is in Himself. Yet even though our mind attains Him under differing conceptions, it still knows that one and the same Thing — without qualification, one and the same Thing — corresponds to all its conceptions. The subjects and predicates, therefore, by their numerical plurality, represent this plurality-in-definitions, while the mind represents the oneness [of the corresponding

'($\text{man } x \supset \text{animal } x$)', which comes out true in case each $V(x)$ in the extension of 'man' is in the extension of 'animal'. In either case there has to be some sameness of extension. The case is no different with the propositions Russell called atomic, such as 'This is green'. To come out true, there has to be a $V(x)$ such that $V(x)$ is the referent of 'this' and $V(x)$ is in the extension of 'green'.

² Take Burns's line, "A man's a man for a' that!": For Aquinas to be right, there must be some sameness of extension between the subject 'a man' and the predicate 'a man', along with a shade of difference between them in *ratio*. The sameness of extension is automatic in this case, as in any tautology; but what of the difference in *ratio*? Aquinas turns to the difference in semantic rôle between a grammatical subject and predicate. He says the semantic rôle of a grammatical subject is to present its referent(s), while the semantic rôle of a grammatical predicate is to elucidate the referent(s) of the subject. Thus the predicate is treated as mentioning a *form* (or quasi-form) which a referent of the subject *has*. Thence the dictum that predicates are taken form-wise; subjects, matter-wise. In the case of 'A man is a man', then, the duty of the subject is to direct attention to Tom, Dick, Harry, *et al.*, while the duty of the predicate is to convey some understanding of human nature, so that Burns's line reminds us that any Tom, Dick or Harry has what it takes to be a human. Well, so be it. The question that needs answering is how this difference in semantic rôle can be said to yield a difference in *ratio*. Perhaps Aquinas means that the predicate conveys a *ratio* of man while the subject does not. But the matter can hardly rest there. The subject conveys something, surely; and if it is not the *ratio* of man, what is it? The most plausible answer, given what he says the subject does, is that the subject conveys its condition of reference (a part of its sense and a preliminary to any *ratio*). On this condition and its importance, see Michael Devitt, *Realism and Truth* 2nd ed. (Princeton, 1997), p. 243.

thing] by the act of putting them together.

q 13, a.2
 TO MEET THE OBJECTIONS — *ad* (1): Denis says affirmations about God are “ill fitting” (or “unsuitable,” according to another translation) insofar as no term for God is satisfactory in its [grammatical] manner of signifying. This point was covered above.

ad (2): our mind cannot apprehend subsisting simple forms for what they are in themselves; it apprehends them, rather, after the fashion of composed things, in which there is something serving as a subject and something that is in it. So our mind (a) apprehends the simple form as having what it takes to be a subject* and (b) attributes something to it.

* *in ratione subjecti*

ad (3): the sentence, ‘every act of understanding a thing otherwise than it is, is going wrong’, is ambiguous because the adverb ‘otherwise’ can modify the verb ‘understand’ on either of two sides: the object understood or the subject doing the understanding.

• If it modifies on the side of the object understood,

the proposition is true and means that any act of understanding *that* a thing *is* otherwise than it is, is going wrong. But that is not what is going on here. When our mind forms a proposition about God, it does not say that He *is* composed, but that He is simple.

• On the other hand, if ‘otherwise’ modifies the verb on the side of the one doing the understanding, the proposition is false. For how the mind works in understanding is other than how the thing is in being. It is obvious, after all, that our mind understands *in a non-material way* the things below it that exist in a material way. This is not to say that the mind understands them *to be* non-material; it is simply to say that the mind has, in its act of understanding, a non-material way of working. So, too, when the mind understands simple Things that are above it, it understands them after its own fashion, *i.e., in a putting-together way*, but not with the result that it understands *them* to be put-together [composed]. No, our mind is not going wrong when it forms a propositional composition about God.

Cajetan’s Commentary

The title is clear. — In the body of the article, there is just one conclusion, answering the question with a yes: affirmative propositions can be so formed about God as to come out true.

The support goes as follows. [*Major:*] Every affirmative proposition conveys some extensional sameness of subject and predicate, together with a distinction between them in defining account; [*minor:*] these two [conditions] are found in [our talk of] God; ergo.

The major is supported on two grounds. First, inductively, taking accidental propositions and essential propositions in two kinds of cases, *viz.*, the cases where subject and predicate have inherently diverse defining accounts, and the cases where they do not. Secondly, by an argument. An affirmative proposition has a copula, a predicate, and a subject; so it involves a sameness by reason of the copula and a distinction by reason of the plural number of extremes.¹ — The minor is then supported. God is not known by us as He is in His own omni-modal one-

ness, but as one and simple under diverse accounts; ergo [He is known in a way suited to propositional expression].

ii. Pay attention, dear Thomist, to the fact that, from this text, you have it that, for St. Thomas, God fits just one, very high, form-wise defining makeup,* encompassing all [His attributes], *etc.* This is what he means when he says God is “entirely one and simple:” otherwise, the following adversative conjunction would be pointless: “and yet our mind comes to know Him thanks to differing conceptions, since it cannot see Him as He is in Himself.” So, if our mind *could* see Him as He is, it *would not distinguish* divineness from wisdom in His makeup, nor wisdom from goodness in His makeup, as it now does in saying, “God is wise” and “[Eternal wisdom is] good,” *etc.* Therefore there is in God’s case just one, unique form-wise defining makeup.²

* *ratio*

² Cajetan wants to see the wording he quotes as a confirmation that he interpreted Aquinas correctly in his commentary on I 57 q.13, a.5. There Aquinas said that ‘wise’ in ‘God is wise’ differs in *ratio* from ‘wise’ in ‘Tom is wise’ because it is meant in the former to convey a completeness indistinct from power, existence, *etc.*, but to convey in the latter a trait distinct from power, *etc.* In his battle to defend against Scotists the ultimacy of analogy, Cajetan took this to mean that God possesses all His traits under a single, higher explanation.

One can hardly disagree. But what the modern reader needs to ponder in this article is the clarity with which Aquinas rejected any pictorial account of truth. A true proposition is not a picture or diagram of the fact which verifies it.

¹ In Cajetan’s time, every affirmative proposition was analyzed as having some variation on a basic ‘A is B’ form, in which the A and the B were called the “extremes,” and the copula ‘is’ was interpreted not as part of the predicate but as the sign of the putting-together of subject and predicate. Hence he interprets Aquinas’ remark about putting-together as a remark about the work of the copula.



Treatise 3. On God's Operations

| | |
|--|--------------------|
| Inquiry 14: Into God's cognition | pp. 292–353 |
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Inquiry Fourteen: Into God's knowing

After treating topics on God's substance, it remains to treat those bearing on His activity [*operatio*]. Activity divides into the kind staying within the doer and the kind yielding an effect outside; we shall deal first with the former, knowing and willing (for knowing is within the knower; willing, within the willer) and then deal with God's power as the source of action with effects outside Him [q. 25].

As understanding is a way of being alive, God's life will have to be considered after His knowing [q. 18]. As knowing lies in knowing truths, the topics of truth and falsity will have to come up [qq. 16-17]. And as every object known is in the knower, and the definitive accounts of things as they are in God's knowing are called His "ideas," these will have to be taken up as an appendix [q. 15] to the discussion of His knowing. As to the knowing itself, sixteen questions are asked:

- | | |
|---|---|
| <p>(1) Does optimal knowing exist in God? (2) Does God understand Himself? (3) Does He fully comprehend Himself? (4) Is His act of understanding His substance? (5) Does He grasp things other than Himself? (6) Does He grasp them discriminately? (7) Is God's knowledge discursive? (8) Is His knowledge a cause of things?</p> | <p>(9) Does His knowledge extend to things not existing? (10) Does it extend to evils? (11) Does it extend to particulars? (12) Does it cover infinitely much? (13) Does it cover future contingencies? (14) Does God know propositions? (15) Is His knowledge changeable? (16) Is His knowledge of things theoretical or practical?</p> |
|---|---|

article I

Does optimal knowing exist in God?

In I Sent. d.35, a.1; *I CG* c.44; *De Veritate* q.2, a.1, *Compend. Theol.* c.28; *In XII Metaphys.*, lectio 8

* *scientia* It seems that optimal knowing* does not exist in God.

(1) Optimal knowing is [a proficiency, which is] an habitual state, and that does not suit God, because He is pure act, while habituation is midway between potency and act. So such knowing does not exist in God.¹

(2) Besides, optimal knowing reaches points as proved, and cognition of points as proved is caused by something else, namely, cognition of prior premisses.² But there is nothing caused in God. Hence optimal knowing does not exist in God.

q.13, a.9 ad 2 (3) Also, optimal knowledge of anything is universal or particular. But as came out above, there is no universal and particular in God. So there is no optimal knowing in God.

ON THE OTHER HAND, there is what the Apostle says in Romans 11:33, "O the depths of the riches, both of the wisdom of God and of the knowledge of God."

ANSWER: optimal knowing exists in utter completeness in God. To see this, one needs to realize that the difference between cognizant and non-cognizant things lies in this: the non-cognizant ones have only their own form, while a cognizant thing is of such a nature as to have another's form as well, as a likeness of the thing cognized is in the one cognizant of it. Thus it is clear that the nature of a non-cognizant thing is narrower and more limited, while the nature of things-cognizant has more of a

breadth* and reach.¹ This is why Aristotle says that the soul is "in some way all things," in *De Anima III*. Well, the narrowness of a form results from [its belonging in] matter. This is why we also said above that forms approach a certain unlimitedness in proportion as they are more matter-independent.² Hence it is clear that the matter-independence of a thing is the reason why it is cognitive, and that the extent [*modus*] of its matter-independence sets the extent of its cognitiveness. This is why *De Anima II* says that plants, because of their material character, do not cognize. But a sense-organ is cognitive, because it is receptive to likenesses lacking [bodily] matter; and an intellect is still more cognitive, because it is more separated from matter and less mixed with it, as it says in *De Anima III*. Therefore, since God is at the acme of matter-independence, as was established in prior inquiries, it follows that He is at the acme of cognitiveness.³

TO MEET THE OBJECTIONS — *ad* (1): the types of completeness flowing out from God into creatures are pre-

*nitio** and its cognates, reserving 'optimal knowing' and 'science' for '*scientia*' and its cognates '*Cognoscere*' meant a general achievement of taking in information; '*scire*', a special form of it. All animals could *cognoscere*; humans and higher spirits could also *scire*.

³ The argument does not prove much. It does not prove that God knows. It shows that the God reasoned to in qq.2-7 meets the conditions laid down in Aristotelian science for being a knower. So, when the Bible says that God knows, it is consistent with the Aristotelian *scientia* embraced by the best minds of St. Thomas' century (and many since).

¹ For the theory of *scientia* behind this objection and the next, see footnote 1 on the text of q.1, a.2 (p. 7).

² I shall often be using 'cognition', 'cognize', etc. for 'cog-

* *amplitudo*
 † *extensio*
 c.8, 431b 21

q.7, aa.1-2

‡ *immaterialis*

c.12;
 424a 22

c.4;
 429a 18

q.3, aa.1-2, q.7,
 a.1

† *species*

sent in God Himself in a higher manner of being, as I said earlier; as a result, whenever a term derived from a creature's completeness is applied to God, one has to remove from its sense anything that pertains to the less complete manner of being that goes with a creature. Thus "optimal knowing" is not a quality or habitual state in God, but is substance and pure act.⁴

q 13, a.4 *ad* (2): as I said above, the traits that are found divinely and as many in creatures exist simply and as one in God. In man, a difference in the points grasped gives rise to different acts of cognitive grasp:

- in grasping prior principles, we are said to have "understanding";
- in grasping points as proved, we are said to have "scientific knowledge";
- in grasping the deepest reason, "wisdom";
- in grasping things to do, "prudence."

⁴ What a term conveys as its general sense [*significatio*] is not only its sense but also some idea of how that sense is realized in creatures. The latter needs to be discounted when the term is ascribed to God in a theological theory \mathcal{S} . The result of the discounting is a technical force of the term ('optimal knowing') in \mathcal{S} . For a fuller explanation, see above, q.13, aa.2-5.

But God grasps all these things in a single and simple cognitive act, as will come out below. As a result, God's simple cognition can be described by all these terms — provided that, as each is used of God, there is removed from it any sense of incompleteness, while any sense of completeness is retained. Job 12:13 is speaking this way when it says, "with Him is wisdom and strength; He hath counsel and understanding."⁵

ad (3): knowledge exists in a cognizant being *C* after the fashion set by *C*; for the known is in the knower after the knower's own fashion. Therefore, since the fashion of God's essence is higher than the fashion in which creatures are,⁶ divine knowing does not have the style of created knowing, whereby it would be universal or particular, habitual or potential, or disposed in any other such way.

⁵ The objector knew this verse, plus Aristotle's account of simple understanding (*nous*), in which *nous* was a cause of *scientia/episteme*; he assumed the same would hold in God. Not so, if *nous* and *episteme* are not distinct acts in God.

⁶ *I.e.*, for all ϕ : how God is ϕ is higher than how any creature is ϕ .

Cajetan's Commentary

In the title is the phrase 'optimal knowing'. What we mean by it here is "intellective cognition that is fully warranted* and evident."

* *certa*

Analysis of the article

In the body of the article, there is one conclusion, answering the question with a yes: optimal knowing does exist in God, with utter completeness. — The support is this. [*Major:*] Independence of matter is the reason why anything is cognoscitive, and the extent of its independence sets the extent of its cognition. [*Minor:*] But God is at the acme of matter-independence. [*Conclusion:*] So God is at the acme of cognition (*i.e.* has knowledge with utter completeness).

The major has two parts, and each is supported. Its first part is supported in two ways: (1) One is by reason, thus, [*Antecedent:*] Being cognizant comes of having one's own form and that of another; [*1st inference:*] so it comes from breadth of nature; [*2nd inference:*] so it comes from matter-independence. The antecedent is supported on the ground that this is how a cognizant thing differs from a non-cognizant one. The first inference is evident of itself, since what is itself and another is broader than what is just itself, and it is also confirmed on the authority of *De Anima III*, "the soul is in some way all things." The second inference, meanwhile, is supported by remarks made in q.7, to the ef-

fect that restriction of form comes from matter, and form-infinity comes from remoteness from matter. — (2) The other way of supporting this part of the major is by Aristotle's authority in *De Anima II*, where he says that plants are non-cognizant because of their materiality.

As for the second part of the major, it is supported by the levels of cognizance found in sense and intellect. The former is cognizant because it receives likenesses without matter; the latter is more so, because it is separate and unmixed, as *De Anima III* says.

The minor is clear from points already established.

Where the difference lies

ii. As to where the difference is said to lie between cognizant and non-cognizant things, doubt arises. When you claim,

a cognizant thing is of such a nature as to be other things as well,
it is either the case that you intend the 'to be' to mean the 'is' of identity (and then your claim is false, since the intellectual soul is not of such a nature as to = a rock, = a cow, etc.), or else you intend 'to be' to mean the 'is' that comes of receiving a form.* In that case, either you mean that the cognizant thing "is" this other by an intensional form† (and then you are drawing the difference wrongly, as air is not cognizant but yet re-

* *per informationem*

† *per intentionem*

q 14, a.7

ceives colors intension-wise),¹ or else you mean that the cognizant thing "is" the other through a natural form (and then the claim is utterly false (a) because a rock is not in the soul in that way, and (b) because non-cognizant things are also "others" in that way).

Similarly, [when you claim that a cognizant thing is of such a nature as to be other things as well,]

it is either the case that you intend the phrase 'other things' to stand for *all* other things (and then your claim is false, because a sense is not of such a nature as to be all other things, but some), or else you mean it to stand for *some* other things (and then the difference you are drawing is zero, because it is a common trait of every-thing around us that it should be not just itself but *some* other things in some way, *i.e.* by form-reception:* after all, the things around us are not just substances in themselves but have at least the accidents that go with their own natures; even fire is not just fire but also light-weight, thin, lucid, hot. And just as these things have their accidents, so a cognizant thing has its distinctive accidents: intensional likenesses [*species*]. So no difference between cognizant and non-cognizant things seems to lie in the place claimed.

* per informacionem

iii. TO CLEAR UP this difficult and arduous foundation for a large part of metaphysics and philosophy of nature, two jobs need to be done: (1) the objections have to be met in formal terms, and (2) the root of them all has to be brought to light.

The objections themselves are easily answered: [in the claim challenged] 'to be' abstracts from being-by-identity or being-by-form-reception, and 'other things' abstracts from all or some, just as 'cognoscitive' abstracts from this or that kind of cognizant thing. For there is a cognizant thing (God) which is all things by identity.² There is another that is some things by identity and some by form-reception (an angel). Still another is all things by form-reception (our soul). And still another is *some* things by form-reception (a soul endowed with senses alone). The general difference abstracts from all these manners, excludes none, but contains them all vaguely.³

¹ This use of 'intentionaliter' came from the idea that colors are forms received in the air between the eye and a colored surface. Since the air was not being stained by the colors, it was not receiving them as natural forms. The alternative, alas, was receiving them as intensional forms: *intentionaliter*. Now that colors are known to be wave-lengths of a radiation that passes through the air, the objection is obsolete.

² This is not ordinary identity but eminent containment. With His limitless being, God "is" all things in His own higher manner and so knows them all in knowing Himself, without receiving any forms from them as "information."

³ Abstraction without exclusion (*abstractio absque praecisione*) was the normal mode of abstraction in Thomist theory, and the vagueness in which it resulted could be found in any common, concrete noun ('a man' was called *individuum vagum*). Ordinary-language vagueness (as here) goes beyond what Russell recovered in his theory of variables.

iv. The root of the matter comes to light, if we look at the intrinsic difference between

- how a cognizant thing *is* the object it cognizes, and
- how matter has a form

and likewise at the difference between

- how knower and known make "one," and
- how matter and form make "one"

(for one judges [the talk of] "one" the same as one judges [the talk of] "being," since they indicate the same nature, as it says in *Metaphysics IV.*)

c.2, 1003b 23ff

What you need to know, then, is that the intrinsic difference lies in the fact that the knower "is" the known itself (in act or potency), whereas matter never "is" the form itself. From this difference as to being, the difference as to oneness follows, *i.e.* knower-and-known are "more one" than matter-and-form, as Averroes stated quite well in his comment 5 on *De Anima III*. And he gave the reason I have just stated, *i.e.*, that out of the intellect and what it understands there does not arise a third [composite] thing, as there does out of matter and a form. By making the exclusion of a third thing the reason for the greater oneness, he was clearly teaching that the oneness of knower-and-known lies in the fact that the one *is* the other. Aristotle anticipated the same teaching in *De Anima III*, by saying that the soul "is" all objects sensible and intelligible.

c.8, 431b 20f

One shows that this is the genuine intrinsic difference from the fact that all of our common notions and inferences agree with it. For instance:

- any diversity between the cognizer and the object cognized is purely incidental [to the fact that he cognizes it], as is any composition between them;

• the object cognized has intentional being* in the one cognizing it;

* esse intentionale

• there is no nature up to which matter and a form, a subject and its accident, can be so elevated that the one would just *be* the other while each kept its own defining makeup, and yet that is what we experience in the case of the cognizer and the object cognized.

v. The need to posit this arises from two points that we hold. One of them comes from *Physics III*: each thing operates according as it is in act.

c.1; 201b 6ff

The other is from *Metaphysics XII*: specification of cognizance arises from the object cognized.

c.7, 1072a 30

What follows is this: since the cognizer has to be the sufficient source⁴ of his own operation, which is cognizing (that the doer is the sufficient source of his doing is a trait common to all complete natures), he must be the source of its specification, *i.e.* he must *be* the object cognized. And if you throw in a point from *De Caelo II*, text 17, to the effect that

† sufficientis principium

c.3; 286a 9

each thing is for the sake of its operation, it will follow that a cognoscitive nature, just by virtue of what it is,⁵ is such as to be the object known, actually or potentially — *i.e.* such as to be not just itself but other things, too, as the text says.

‡ secundum se

vi. By comparing these points to how other beings are,

you will see the difference between cognizant and non-cognizant things. For other beings either

- (a) receive forms for the sake of the operations of those forms, or else
- (b) receive them for the sake of the operation of a third thing, the composite of the receiver and the received.

An example of (a) is heat in water — or any accidental form in its subject — for the warming-up of things is not the water's distinctive doing, but the heat's. (In this respect, one would say the same about cold water; for even though it is a natural potency of water to be cool, the cooling-down of things is the cold's distinctive doing, not the water's.) You see examples of (b) in substantial forms: the matter does not receive the form for the sake of the matter's own operation, but for the operation of what is composed of it and the form. But now look at the cognizer taking in the object: the former is not receiving the latter for the sake of the operation of any composite arising from the two of them, nor for an operation of the object itself, but for the specification of the cognizer's own distinctive operation. Take the faculty of eyesight: it receives the visible object for the specification of the seeing, and the seeing is eyesight's own distinctive operation.

It does not matter that the visible object, as received in the eyesight, is there as an accident, and eyesight is its subject; this is incidental, arising from the needs of matter, not from the defining makeup of cognition.* For it is not *qua* accident that the form, intention, or "visible species" impacts the eyesight and does the specifying, but *quia* visible.⁴ The only reason the intention concurs as an accident is because the nature of a sense-power does not undergo specification except through the *being* of the *intentio* [its being a physical accident], on account of the matter. This does not destroy the makeup of cognition but puts it at a lower level of completeness.

* non est per se
primo intentionum

⁴ Suppose I am seeing a blue box two yards away. What determines that I am now seeing *this* is not just the blue box, nor the light reflected by it, but also a modification in my visual equipment. This last can be considered two ways, physically or functionally. Physically, it is a set of electro-chemical accidents in cone cells and neurons. Functionally, it is a homeomorphism of the box at that distance in this light. Cajetan's point is that the modification in me serves as "visible species" (specifying my seeing to be a seeing of *this*) solely in its functional aspect. Its physical side has to be there, given the material nature of my sensorium, but falls outside the explanation of cognition. The point is nicely confirmed by robotics. When an artificial sensor detects the blue box, the modification within the sensor is physically/chemically/electrically different from anything in human cells but is functionally the same. Artificial sense cognition is possible because one and the same "visible species" can be realized in different physics. But it is a long step from this functional sense of "matter-independence" to the medieval Aristotelian sense ("immateriality") and thus to the view that, in higher forms of cognition, the "species" can be a pure specifying act with no material side at all.

For as we shall have reason to discuss elsewhere, and as you can learn from Averroes' remarks on *Metaphysics XII* [comment 51] and on *De Anima III* [comment 8], knower and known are not *one* with the same thoroughness in all cases. But are more or less one, so that they are utterly the same in God alone.

vii. Thus the sense of where Aquinas drew the distinction becomes clear, and one sees how subtly St. Thomas has portrayed the nature of cognizant things. That their nature lies where he claimed is shown not only from the words of Aristotle and Averroes (that much came out in previous remarks) but also from the words of Albert the Great in his treatise *De Intellectu et intelligibili*.

You must take all pains to have this foundation in place whenever the talk turns to cognitive understanding: the results of many inquiries depend on it, e.g. inquiries into how object and intellect work together to yield the act of understanding, how the intensional species* comes into it, etc. And it will become clear how ignorant have been the writers who, in treating sensation and its object, intellect and its object, understanding and perception, have thought of them along the same lines as non-cognizant things. And you will learn to raise your talent to a higher level, so as to enter another order of things.⁵

q 55, a.3

* species
intelligibilis

⁵ Current philosophers also say that cognition raises extremely difficult problems, not encountered elsewhere in the workings of nature. But comparison between the Aristotelian approach to solving these problems and the leading contemporary approaches would be premature. For the latter have yet to resolve some fundamental issues. Suffice it to say that, of the two main ideas advanced in this article, one is in good favor today, while the other is not. The one enjoying current favor is the idea that, in order to be cognitive, a thing must have a special breadth or openness to its nature, whereby it can have within itself a homeomorphism of something else, by which it perceives or grasps the something else as an object. The idea not in current favor is that more such breadth or openness accrues from immateriality. A special complexity of structure (e.g. neural complexity) is the modern theory of what it takes to have this breadth/openness, so that the higher the degree of complexity, the higher the level of cognizance. And since God is not supposed to be complex neurally or in any other way, few current philosophers would value Aquinas' argument in this article. Still, it is fair to say that neural complexity is *known* to be necessary only for sense-awareness. Its use to explain higher forms of cognition is still controversial, because the tendency of such explanations to identify physical brain-states with the conscious acts that we call acts of understanding, believing, etc., is still widely (and convincingly) combatted. See Karl R. Popper and John C. Eccles, *The Self and its Brain* (London: A Routledge, 1977); Lynne Rudder Baker, *Saving Belief: A Critique of Physicalism* (Princeton, 1987). What is even more controversial is whether a disidentity of conscious mind and brain creates enough opening for the return of an appeal to immateriality to explain mind. If it does — and David Chalmers thinks it does, in his *The Conscious Mind* (Oxford, 1996) — the Aristotelian approach begins, at least, to come back to life.

Does God understand Himself?

1 *CG* cc 47-48; *De Veritate* q.2, a.2; *Compend. theol.* c. 30;
In XII Metaphys., lectio 11, *In librum De causis*, lectio 13

It looks as though God does not understand Himself.

Proposition 15

(1) It says in the *Liber de causis*, "Every knower who is knowing his own essence is turning back [*reditus*] to his essence by complete return [*reditio*]." But God does not go out of His essence, nor change in any other way; so the talk of turning back to one's essence has no application to Him. Therefore, He is not a knower of His own essence.

c.4: 429b 24

(2) Besides, understanding is a case of undergoing and being changed, as it says in *De Anima III*; even just knowing is being assimilated to the thing known, and the thing known is a completion of the knower. Well, nothing undergoes itself; nothing is changed or completed by itself, and "there is no 'assimilation' to oneself," as Hilary noted [in *De Trinitate III*]. Therefore, God is not a knower of Himself.

PL 10, 92

(3) Moreover, we are mainly like God by virtue of our intellect, because it is thanks to the mind that we are "in God's image," as Augustine says [in *Super Gen. ad litteram VI*, c. 12; *De Trinitate XV*, c. 1]. But our intellect does not understand itself except as it understands other things, as Aristotle says in *De Anima III*. So, God does not understand Himself either, except perhaps in understanding other things.

PL 34, 348
 PL 42, 1057

c.4: 430a 2

ON THE OTHER HAND, there is what 1 Corinthians 2:11 says: "So the things also that are of God no man knoweth, but the Spirit of God."

ANSWER: God understands Himself through Himself. To get this clear, one needs to know the following.

- In activities that yield an outside effect, the *object* which we speak of as the operation's terminus is an item outside the doer;
- but in activities that are within the doer, the object we speak of as the operation's terminus is within the doer; and to the extent that *it is there* in him, the operation is actual.¹

c.2: 426a 16

This is why it says in *De Anima III* that the sense-object in act is the sense in act, and that the object-understood in act is the intellect in act. For the fact that we actually perceive or understand something arises from our intellect's or sense's being actually informed by a sensible or intensional form [*species*]. And the only reason the sense or intellect is other than its object is because the two are in potency.²

¹ The terminus of an act of understanding is the thing understood, not as just existing outside the mind, but as an object expressed within the mind. So *x*'s being understood by *me* = *x*'s being an object in *me* = my understanding *x*.

² The identity, my understanding *x* = *x*'s being-an-object in *me*, holds if I have and express in myself a *species* of *x* (p. 295, fn. 4) and fails if I just potentially have or express it.

Well, then: since God has no potentiality but is pure act, it must be the case that, in Him, the intellect understanding and the object understood are the same in every way — *i.e.*, they are the same in that

- the intellect does not lack an intensional form* (as ours does when just potentially understanding);
- the intensional form is not another thing from the divine intellect's substance (whereas it is another thing in our intellect, when the latter is doing the understanding); but rather
- the intensional form = the divine intellect itself.

* *species intelligibilis*

And thus He understands Himself through Himself.³

TO MEET THE OBJECTIONS — *ad* (1): a thing's "turning back to its essence" is nothing but its subsisting in itself [rather than in matter]. If a form *f* completes matter by giving it being-*f*, the form is poured out (so to speak) upon the matter; but if a form *f*' has being-*f*' in itself, it "turns back" into itself. Thus, cognoscitive powers which are not subsistent but are acts of one or another organ do not cognize themselves; one sees this with each of our senses. But cognoscitive powers that subsist on their own do cognize themselves. This is why the *Liber de causis* says a thing knowing its essence "turns back" to its essence. Well, 'subsists on its own' is a supremely apt description of God. So in the idiom under discussion, He supremely "turns back to His essence" and cognizes Himself.

ad (2): 'changing' and 'undergoing' are used equivocally when understanding is called a case of changing and undergoing, as in *De Anima III*. For understanding is not the sort of "change" that is motion passing from one thing into another. Being changed in that way is the actualizing of an incomplete thing, but understanding is the act-state of a complete thing, existing within the thing doing it. Likewise, the talk of an intellect's being "completed" by its object or being "assimilated" to it applies to an intellect that is sometimes in potency; it is by being in potency that the intellect

- differs from the object and
- is assimilated to it *via* an intensional form (which is a likeness of the thing understood) and
- is completed by it as potency is completed by act.

But the divine intellect, which is not in potency in any way, is not completed by the object it understands, nor assimilated to it; rather, that intellect is its own completeness and its own object.

³ Suppose a thing *x* is pure act; call its intellect *U*. Then *U* is not a "faculty" but an act of understanding, and the object understood (since it gives the act its species) is not an accident to *U*. What is not an accident is substance; so the object is *U*'s substance. So *x*'s act *U* = *U*'s being understood, and the *species* by which *x* understands *U* = the substance of *U*. God, says Aquinas, is such an *x*.

ad (3): prime matter, which is in potency, does not have natural being* except by being brought into an act-state through a form. Well, as prime matter stands to natural things, so our possible intellect stands to intensional objects, in that our possible intellect is in potency to intensional objects as prime matter is in potency to natural things.⁴ So our possible intellect cannot have an operation it understands, except by being completed through the inten-

sional form of something or other. Thus how it understands itself is how it understands other things: through an intensional form. But clearly our intellect, by virtue of the fact that it cognizes an intensional object, understands its own act of understanding, and then, through its act, becomes aware of itself as a potency-to-understand. God, however, stands as pure act in both regards [natural and intensional] and so understands Himself through Himself.

⁴ A human intellect was distinguished into two aspects: a passive one (*intellectus possibilis*), put into the act of understanding data, and an active aspect (*intellectus agens*) rendering data understandable. The present discussion is on the former aspect. As prime matter only exists by becoming- ϕ ,

and only becomes- ϕ by receiving a form, so also man's possible intellect comes into act only by understanding something, and understands something (even itself) only by receiving an intensional form which it does not natively possess

Cajetan's Commentary

Analysis of the article

The title is clear. — In the body of the article, there is one conclusion, answering the question with a yes: God understands Himself, through Himself.

The support goes as follows. [*Antecedent:*] God is pure act, without any potentiality; [*1st inference:*] so His intellect and what it understands are the same thing in every way; [*2nd inference:*] so He understands Himself through Himself.

The antecedent is well known. Drawing the first inference is supported by two claims.

- (a) The object understood has to be in act within the intellect, if the latter is to understand it.
- (b) Any difference between the intellect and its object [as object] is because potency is involved.

Claim (a) is supported by the difference between a transitive activity and an immanent one, *i.e.*, that the latter has its terminus within the doer. Claim (b) is supported from the *De Anima* as follows. The sense in act is the same as the object-sensed in act, and the intellect in act is the same as the object-understood in act; such is not the case with [the sense or intellect] in potency; so identity [between either and its object] is a consequence of their state of being-in-act, while their disidentity is a consequence of being in potency. From these points, the soundness of the first inference becomes obvious, as follows. The object to be understood has to be in the intellect doing the understanding, and it is no wise distinct from it except by reason of potency; ergo the object to be understood by an intellect in which there is no potency is in no wise distinct from it; so if God is without potency, *etc.*, then [His intellect = its object], *etc.* — Then the text explains 'same thing in every way' by excluding two modes of diversity: that between act and potency, and that between substance and accident.

The second inference is then obvious.

Clearing up claim (b)

ii. Look at how the supporting claim (b) is actually worded in the text:

"the only reason the sense or intellect is other than its object is because the two are in potency,"

and observe that this can be interpreted two ways:

- (1) One way takes 'the two' to refer to the faculty and its object.
- (2) The other way takes 'the two' to refer to the two faculties mentioned, sense and intellect.

If sense (2) is adopted, no problems arise, and the full meaning of the text is preserved. But if sense (1) is picked, the claim needs crutches. For then it would be saying that a distinction between the cognizing faculty and the object cognized requires potentiality not only in the cognizing faculty but also in its object — and that is not true on every plausible interpretation. For there are two such interpretations. The first would require potentiality *in both* in such a way as to make each have it in its own right, and so as to make this twofold potentiality the root of distinction. This is false, as emerges when God is seen by a created intellect: for then the object understood is pure act, and yet distinction between our intellect and that object remains. The other interpretation would require there to be a potentiality *of both* with respect to *this* act of understanding, *i.e.* that the object is potentially intelligible by this intellect, and that this intellect is in some potency or other to understand it. This is true but, in my opinion, is not what Aquinas meant. For one thing, a single potentiality, that of the cognitive faculty, suffices. For another, the potentiality that an object has (not in itself but) for this act of understanding is not the kind we are talking about here, namely, the kind of potentiality that entails incompleteness. For another thing, for purposes of yielding the effect that the object and the cognitive faculty are distinct, these two cases of potentiality boil down under analysis to just the

potentiality of the cognoscitive ability itself.¹ For yet another thing, the plain meaning of the text readily accepts sense (β), which meets the needs of the argument. We therefore follow the (β) construal.

How far does God's intellect = its object?

iii. Let us turn now to the exposition of the first point inferred [*i.e.* that in God's case, the intellect and the object understood are the same in every way], where their being "the same in every way" is explained

- by excluding potentiality, and
- by excluding diversity between His intellect and its intentional form.

Doubt arises about this, because these two exclusions do not seem to suffice to explain an all-around identity between the intellect and the object understood. Take the case of an angel understanding himself. He is not in potency, and the intentional form through which he understands himself is not other than his substance; yet his intellect and the object it understands are not "the same in every way," even if he is understanding himself. Why not? Because such sameness holds for God alone, and because the concept that the angel forms about himself, whatever it may be, is not his substance.

iv. There are two answers to this. The first is to take the words, "*i.e.*, they are the same" in such a way that

- the intellect does not lack an intentional form and

- the intentional form is not another thing, *etc.* as limiting the overall claim. In other words, 'the same in every way' would be limited to these two features, as if Aquinas had said, "they are the same in every way as regards these two aspects." And thus there would be no room for the doubt just raised.

I admit that this interpretation harmonizes with the text, since article 4 will take up as further business the question of whether God's act of understanding is identically God Himself. But [this evidence is not decisive;] bear in mind that the topic here in a.2 is sameness of the intellect and its object; their sameness allows plenty of room for further difficulties [to come up

¹ Let the object *O* be the thing *x* as understood. Since *O*'s coming to be the object of a given intellect is not a real change in the thing *x*, the object's "potency" to be understood by that intellect is not a real potency in *x* but an artifact, so to speak, of the language expressing the intellect's real potency to have *x* within itself as *O*. The peculiarities of the knowing subject's cognitive relation to the thing known were discussed in Cajetan's extensive commentary on q.13, a.7.

in article 4] about the act of understanding itself, as distinguished from the intellect [or from the object understood]. So it seems to me that another solution is possible, taking the words quoted above not as limiting the overall claim but as explaining it.

Resolving this doubt

v. MY ANSWER to the doubt just raised is that these two exclusions do yield an all-around sameness of the intellect with the object understood. But 'intentional form' must not be taken to mean the impressed species alone; it must be taken in its whole breadth to mean both impressed and expressed species.² For where intellect and species are not distinct in any sense of 'species', there the intellect and the object understood are utterly the same. This is undoubtedly true in St. Thomas' teaching, where the expressed species is the concept, and only in God's case is the expressed species the knower's own substance,³ with the result that, in no other case does one have a full realization of both exclusions. (Whether this would suffice in the doctrines of other philosophers is not germane to the present article; it will come up in the course of commenting on *De Anima III* or on *Metaphysics XII*.)

That 'intentional form' is in fact being taken across its whole range in this article is suggested by the wording of the text, where it says, "when the latter [our intellect] is doing the understanding." If he had meant to speak of the impressed species alone, he would not have needed to say, "when it is doing the understanding," because the impressed species is present in our intellect even when it is not doing the act of understanding, but resting. So by discussing the intentional form in terms of the intellect's status as actually operative,* he has dropped a broad hint that he is using 'intentional form' across the whole range in which a species contributes to the actual operation that is understanding. Well, both species [the impressed and expressed] contribute to that, as is well established. So, the use of 'intentional form' here should be taken as covering the whole range, so as to make the meaning more general.

* *in actu secundo*

² The talk of "the intentional form of *x*" was further broken down into (a) the homeomorphism of *x* which had to be in the knower's mind as a preparation for understanding *x*, and (b) the homeomorphism of *x* which the knower expressed to himself in his very act of understanding *x*. The former was called impressed species; the latter, expressed species.

³ This alludes to a point of Trinitarian doctrine: God the Son proceeds as the divine self-concept (the Word) but is consubstantial with the Father. See below, q.27, aa.1-2.

Does God fully comprehend Himself?

In I Sent. d.43, q.1, a.1 ad 4, *In III Sent.* d.14, a.2, q^a 1, 1 CG c.3;
3 CG c.55, *De Veritate* q.2, a.2 ad 5; *Compend theol.* c.106

It seems that God does not fully comprehend Himself.¹

q 15
PL 40, 15 (1) Augustine's *Book of 83 Questions* says, "what comprehends itself is bounded for itself." But God is unbounded in every way. So He does not comprehend Himself.

(2) If the suggestion is made that God is infinite to us but bounded to Himself, it won't work. Every state of affairs shows more of its truth to God than it does to us. So if God is bounded to Himself but infinite to us, His being bounded has more truth to it than His being infinite. But this is against a point already decided. Hence He does not fully comprehend Himself.

q 7, a.1
PL 40, 14 ON THE OTHER HAND, there is what Augustine says in the same place: "Whatever understands itself comprehends itself." But God understands Himself. Ergo, He comprehends Himself.

ANSWER: God comprehends Himself utterly. The truth of this emerges as follows. A thing is said to be "comprehended" when cognizance of it reaches its end, and this happens when the thing is known as fully as it is knowable. Thus a provable proposition is not "comprehended" so long as it is accepted on a ground that just supports it, but only when it is known scientifically by a conclusive proof. Well, God cognizes Himself to the full extent He is cognizable. For each thing's knowability is as great as its actualness

¹ For the medieval debates about *comprehensio*, see above, q.12, a.1 ad 1 and q.12, a.7.

(nothing is known to the extent it is potential, but rather to the extent it is actual, as it says in *Metaphysics IX*). At the same time, God's power to know is as great as His actualness in existing, because (as was shown above [in a. 1]) God is able-to-know* thanks precisely to the fact that He is actual apart from any matter or potentiality. Obviously, then, He knows Himself to the exact same extent that He is in fact knowable. Hence He comprehends Himself completely.

c.9,
1051a.31

* *cognoscitivus*

TO MEET THE OBJECTIONS — *ad* (1): if 'x comprehends y' is taken literally, it means that x holds and includes y. Thus it has to be the case that everything [literally] "comprehended" is bounded, like everything "included." But when God is said to be comprehended by Himself, we do not mean that His intellect is a distinct thing capturing and including Him. Rather, such statements need to be paraphrased as negations. For example, God is said to be "in" Himself because He is *not contained* by anything outside Himself. Just so, He is said to be "comprehended" by Himself because *none* of Himself is *hidden* from Him. For as Augustine says: "That is comprehended which is so wholly seen that nothing of it is hidden from the seer."

Epist. 147;
PL 33, 605

ad (2): when God is said to be "bounded or finite to Himself," the expression needs to be understood along the lines of a likeness of relations. As a finite object [stands to a finite mind when it] does not exceed the finite mind's understanding, so God [stands to His mind, *i.e.* He] does not exceed His own understanding. Calling Him "finite to Himself" does not mean to imply that He *thinks* He is finite.

Cajetan's Commentary

The title is made clear by the body of the text.

In the body, one conclusion is reached, answering the question with a yes: God fully comprehends Himself. The support goes thus. [*Antecedent:*] God takes cognizance of Himself as fully as He is cognizable; [*inference:*] therefore He comprehends Himself fully.

The antecedent is supported thus. [*Assumption 1:*] Each thing is cognizable to the extent it is actual; so God's cognizability is as extensive as His actualness. And [*assumption 2:*] God is able-to-know to the extent He is actual apart from all matter and potency; so His ability-to-know is as extensive as His actualness. Ergo, drawing the conclusion from (1) and (2) together: His cognizability is as extensive as His

ability-to-know, and *vice-versa*. Assumption (1) is made clear enough by *Metaphysics IX*, while assumption (2) is made clear by articles 1 and 2.

Next, the inference is supported from the definition of 'comprehend'. To comprehend something is to get to the end of knowing it; so it is knowing a thing as fully as it is knowable. Thus if God takes complete cognizance of Himself, He comprehends Himself.

All the points are clear. But even so, the text illustrates the definition of "comprehend" with an example from the cognition of a provable proposition. The end of knowing it is not reached until it is proved conclusively, since [until then] there would always be more *there* to be known than was actually known.

Is God's substance His sheer act of understanding?

1 CG c 45, *Compend. theol.* c.31; *In XII Metaphys.*, lectio 11

It seems that God's act of understanding is not His very substance.

(1) Understanding, after all, is some sort of activity.* 'Activity' indicates something going out from a doer. [The doer is the substance, and what goes out from the doer must be other than the substance.] So God's act of understanding is not His very substance.

(2) Besides, when a person understands *that he understands*, this is not an important or basic feat but a secondary affair, an accompaniment. So if God Himself is an act of understanding, understanding God will be like our understanding that we understand, and so understanding Him will not be an important affair.

(3) Moreover, every act of understanding is an act of understanding *something*. So, given that God understands Himself, if this very "self" is nothing but His understanding. [It follows that] He understands His understanding Himself, *i.e.* understands His understanding His understanding, *etc. ad infinitum*. Therefore, God's substance is not His sheer act of understanding.¹

ON THE OTHER HAND, there is what Augustine says in book VII of his *De Trinitate*: "For God, existing just *is* being wise." Well, being wise is understanding. So for God, existing just *is* understanding. But God's existing = His substance, as was shown above. Therefore, God's substance = His act of understanding.

ANSWER: one has to say that God's understanding = His substance. For if His act of understanding were an item other than His substance, the situation would have to be as Aristotle describes in *Metaphysics XII* [c. 8], namely: this other item would be the act and completion of the divine substance, such that (since the act of understanding is the completing and actualizing of the one who understands) God's substance would stand to

this other item as potency stands to act — which is absolutely impossible.

What needs pondering, though, is how this identity holds. As I said above, understanding is not an act that yields something outside the doer; it remains within the doer as his own act-state and completion, as *being-φ* is a "completion" of the one who is φ; for just as *being-φ* follows upon a φ-form, so [the act-state of] understanding follows upon an intensional form.* Well, in God, there is no form which is other than His very being (as was shown above). So, since His very essence is also His intensional form (as I said a little way back), it follows necessarily that His [act-state of] understanding is His essence and His being.

What emerges from all the above, then, is that, in God,

- the intellect and
- what is understood and
- the intensional form and
- the very act of understanding

are utterly one and the same. Clearly, then, saying that God is intelligent posits no multiplicity in His substance.

TO MEET THE OBJECTIONS — *ad* (1): understanding is not an activity proceeding out from the doer but one remaining in him.

ad (2): if the act of understanding that is being understood is not subsistent, nothing very important is being understood, and such is the case if we understand that we understand. But our case is quite different from the divine act of understanding, which is subsistent.

From there it is clear how to answer (3). The divine act of understanding, which is subsistent in itself, is [an understanding] *of itself*; not of something *else* so as to give rise to a process *ad infinitum*.²

¹ Let the proposition $Q = \exists x(x \text{ understands } x)$. Suppose Q is true when $V(x) = a$ a certain individual, but somehow this individual amounts to nothing more than its self-understanding. Then $V(x) = x$'s understanding x , so that we have $\exists x(x \text{ understands } x \text{'s understanding } x)$, where the last occurrence of 'x' would again be replaced by 'x's understanding x'; and that last 'x' would yet again be replaced, and so on *ad infinitum*, in a useless ballooning of proposition Q .

² This quite subtle reply *ad* (3) is best read as a critique of the formalization given in my footnote 1. Aquinas' point is that a subsistent act of understanding would be a value of 'x' in its own right (where 'x' is a bindable individual variable in a first-order theory). In such a case, $V(x) = \text{an understanding of } V(x)$. Then, if God is such a thing, we have ' $\exists x(x = \text{an understanding of } x)$ ' coming out true when $V(x) = \text{God}$. No ballooning *ad infinitum* appears.

Cajetan's Commentary

The title is clear. — In the body of the article, two jobs are done. They are: (1) a conclusion is reached answer-

ing the question in the affirmative; (2) an epilogue is added, tying together the points established thus far.

* *operatio*

q 14, a2

* *species intelligibilibs*
q 3, a 4
q 14, a2c.2.
PL 42, 936

q.3, a.4

1074b 18

Analysis of the article, I

ii. As to job (1), the conclusion is: God's act of understanding is His substance. It is supported two ways:

(a) The first is by showing, with Aristotle, that the alternative leads to an impossibility. [*Antecedent:*] If God's understanding were other than His substance, [*consequent:*] the divine substance would stand to another item as a potency stands to its act and completion. This latter is impossible. Ergo [His understanding is not other than His substance]. — The consequent rests on the ground that an act of understanding is the completing and actualizing of the one understanding.

(b) The second way is ostensive. [*Antecedent:*] God's substance [α] = His being and [β] = His intentional form. So [*inference:*] God's substance = His act of understanding. — The first part of the antecedent [α] was made clear by q.3; the second part [β], by a.2 in the present inquiry. — Drawing the inference is supported thus. [*Assumption:*] Understanding is an act-state abiding in the one who understands, as being [φ] is an act-state abiding in the one who is [φ]; so [*inference:*] if the substance of the one who understands = his being and = his intentional form, then his substance must = his act-state of understanding. The assumption is supported on the ground that the act-state of understanding [x] follows upon the intentional form [of x], as [the act-state of] being [φ] follows upon the [natural] form [φ-ness].

Understanding the ostensive way

iii. As this inference is a bit obscure because of its depth and formality, you need to pay attention to three points if you are to get it (and the support for it) clear.

• *First point.* In the text itself, four claims are made about the act of understanding:

- (1) it stays in the one who understands;
- (2) it stays there as an actualizing and completing of him;
- (3) it stays there in the same way as existence is the actualizing of the one who is;
- (4) it follows upon the intentional species in the same way as being [φ] follows upon the form [φ-ness].

The first two of these are not supported, since they are clear-cut. The third, however, is supported by way of the fourth, which is taken as well established.

• *Second point.* The above claim (4) comes out true in three respects relevant to present purposes:

(a) *with respect to causality*, because the form [φ-ness] is the reason why one is [φ], and the intentional form [of x] is the reason why one understands [x];

(b) *with respect to necessity*, because the [φ]-form *in act* necessarily goes with being [φ], and the intentional form [of x] *in act* (not in a mode between act and potency) necessarily goes with understanding [x];

(c) *with respect to how it causes*, because the [φ]-form, by completing what is [already there], makes it *be* [φ], and the intentional form [of x] *in act*, by completing the intellect in an intentional kind* (not in its

natural kind'), makes it *understand* [x], as seen from a. 1[†] above and my comments on q.12. a.2.¹

From these facts, especially the last, it becomes clear that claim (3) is a consequence of claim (4). For what follows from these facts is this: the act of understanding is a completing of the one who understands as the act of existing is a completing of the one who is, *i.e.*, how the act of understanding completes the understander is parallel to how the act of being completes the be-er. Indeed, the act of understanding *is* the understander's act of being in an intentional kind, just as the act of being is the be-er's act in his natural kind.

• *Third point.* The divine substance is "form" (indeed, pure act) both in natural kind and in intentional kind. As it is form/act in natural kind, the divine substance is what-it-takes to be and is called "a being." As it is form/act in intentional kind, the divine substance is what-it-takes to understand, and it is called "an intentional form or species." So God's existing corresponds to His substance *qua* pure-act-in-natural-kind, while God's understanding corresponds to the same substance *qua* pure-act-in-intentional-kind — and proportionately so, because to understand [God] is the to-be of the divine substance (as an intentional species) in its intentional kind, as to-exist is the to-be of the same substance in its natural kind.

Thus Aquinas' inference, with the support he gave for it, was optimal and formal, arguing from the coincidence of both forms [natural and intentional] in one [substance] and from each form's identity with the sort of being that goes with it. For from two points assumed in the antecedent, namely, that

- (1) God's substance = His intentional species and so is "form" in both kinds, and
- (2) God's substance = His being, so that His substance = the being He does in natural kind.

Aquinas draws the inference that His substance must also be His act of understanding, *i.e.* that His substance = the being He does in intentional kind. For the utterness/boundlessness/actualness of the divine substance is no less in intentional kind than in natural kind. To say otherwise would entail that God's substance was not pure act in the intentional kind. For the intellect-of-x-in-act-in-an-intentional-kind (which carries in itself the nature of x as knower and that of the known as known in x) stands to the *act* of understanding as potency does to act, as a being [ens] stands to its being [essence].

Analysis of the article, II

iv. As to job (2), the epilogue pulling together the three-fold identity is obvious, as is its corollary, that no diversity is introduced into God by His being intelligent. All points are clear.

¹ My intellect's natural kind is "human intellect." The intentional form of x leaves that unchanged but puts my intellect into the intentional kind, "knower of x," and gives it the act of being which is "understands x." The difference drawn in a. 1 between the cognizant and the non-cognizant can now be restated. The non-cognizant is in a natural kind alone; the cognizant is open to being in many intentional kinds as well.

* *in genere intelligibilis*

article 5

Does God take cognizance of things other than Himself?

In I.Sent d.35, a.2: 1 CG cc.48-49; De Veritate q.2, a.3; Compend. theol. c.30;
In XII Metaphys., lectio 11; In librum De Causis, lectio 13

It looks as though God takes no cognizance of things other than Himself.

q 46.
PL 40, 30 (1) After all, anything other than God is outside God. In the *Book of 83 Questions*, Augustine says, "Nor does God see anything outside Himself." Thus He takes no cognizance of things other than Himself.

(2) Besides, the object understood serves to complete the one who understands it. [What completes anything is more noble than it.] Therefore, if God understands things other than Himself, something other than God will serve to complete God and will be more noble than He. And that is impossible.¹

q 14, a.4 (3) Also, an act of understanding is specified by the object understood, just as any other act is specified by its object. So the nobler a thing-understood is, the nobler is the act of understanding it. Well, God = His act of understanding, as shown already. So if God understands something other than Himself, God Himself is being specified by something other than Himself — which is impossible. Therefore, He does not understand things other than Himself.

ON THE OTHER HAND, there is Hebrews 4:13, "all things are naked and open to His sight."

ANSWER: the bare claim that God knows things other than Himself has to be true. It is obvious, after all, that He understands Himself *completely* (otherwise, His being would not be complete, as His being is His act of understanding). But necessarily, if something is known *completely*, its power* is known completely;² and a thing's power cannot be known completely unless the effects to which its power extends are known. So, since God's power extends to things other than Himself, in that (as shown above) He is the effective first cause of all beings, it must be the case that God knows things other than Himself. This becomes even more obvious if one adds the fact that the very being which is being-the-first-agent-cause, i.e. God's being, is His act of understanding. For then any effects pre-existing in God as in their first cause must lie in his act of understanding, and all things must be in Him after the fashion of mental objects.[†] For whatever is in another is there in the fashion set by that other.

The problem is to see *how* God knows things other

than Himself. Here one needs to reckon with the fact that cognizance is taken of a thing *x* in two ways: (1) in itself, or (2) in another. One cognizes *x* "in itself" when one cognizes it through an intensional species distinctive to, and equivalent to, the knowable *x* itself,* as when the eye sees a man through the visual image of a man. One cognizes *x* "in another" when one sees it through the intensional species of a thing that includes *x*, as when a part is seen in a whole through the image of the whole, or when a man is seen in a mirror through the image of the mirror, or however else it may happen that one thing is seen in another.

The thing to say, then, is that God sees Himself "in Himself" (because He sees Himself through His own essence) but sees other things not "in themselves" but ["in another" from themselves, namely] "in Himself," inasmuch as His essence includes likeness to things other than Himself.

TO MEET THE OBJECTIONS — ad (1): Augustine's "God sees nothing outside Himself" should not be taken to mean that He sees nothing which-is-outside but that He sees what-is-outside "in Himself," as I said.

ad (2): it is not through its substance that the object understood serves to complete the one who understands it, but through its intensional species, because that is what is in the intellect as the latter's form and completion (as it says in *De Anima III*, "the stone is not in the soul but its species"). Well, the things that are other than God are understood by Him because His essence includes their intensional form, as I just said. So it does not follow that anything will serve to complete the divine intellect but God's own essence.

ad (3): when one is understanding the object *O* "in another," one's act of understanding is not being specified by *O*; rather, one's act is being specified by the overall object[†] *O*, within which *O* is being understood. For the extent to which an act of understanding is specified by its object is just the extent to which the intensional form in question is the source of the intellectual activity in question. After all, every case of "doing" is specified by the form which is the source of the doing, as heat [by being the source of a fire's doing] specifies [its doing to be] heating-things-up. Thus, the form by which an intellectual "doing" is specified = the form that renders the intellect active. But this is the intensional species of the overall object understood, and in God's case this form = His essence, in which all the intensional species of things are included. So it does not follow that the divine act of understanding — God Himself — will be specified by anything but the divine essence.

* per speciem propriam adde-
quatum ipsi cog-
noscibili

c.8,
431b 29

† principale
intellectum

† secundum modum
intelligibilem

¹ The claim that what completes *x* is higher or nobler than *x* is discussed in §§ ii-iv of Cajetan's comment on 2/1 57 q.3, a.6.

² There is no contradiction between this statement and the earlier claim that a thing is knowable only insofar as it is actual, not potential. For active power (*virtus*) was not the sort of potential that made a thing incomplete/underdetermined in itself, to some extent, and thus unknowable to that extent.

Cajetan's Commentary

The title is asking if God takes cognizance of other things broadly, not distinguishing "takes cognizance of *what they are*" from "takes cognizance *that they are*".

Analysis of the article, I

In the body of the text, two jobs are done: (1) he answers the question with a yes-conclusion; (2) he gives a solution as to how the conclusion can hold true. *ii.* As to job (1), the conclusion is that, necessarily, God knows things other than Himself. This is supported by two arguments.

• The first argument goes as follows. [*Antecedent:*] God understands Himself completely; [*1st inference:*] so He knows His own power completely; [*2nd inference:*] so He knows what effects His power extends to; [*3rd inference:*] so He knows things other than Himself. — The antecedent, though already nailed down above [in a.2], is supported here anew with an argument *ad impossibile*, namely:

[*antecedent:*] if God did not understand Himself completely, [*consequent:*] His being would not be complete. The latter is impossible [ergo the antecedent is impossible]. The consequent follows, because His being is His act of understanding. The first inference is left as self-evident, but the second is supported on the ground that, otherwise, a thing's power is not known completely (as is obvious). The third inference is supported on the ground that God's power extends to things other than God, which in turn is supported on the ground that He is the first cause of everything.

• The second argument supports or confirms the conclusion thus. [*Antecedent:*] The first cause's being is His act of understanding; [*1st inference:*] so all the effects pre-existing in the first cause are in His act of understanding; [*2nd inference:*] so they are in that cause as mental objects. — This last point inferred is supported on the ground that whatever is in another is there in the fashion set by the thing it is in.

Two uses of a key claim

iii. Concerning these two arguments, notice that the following proposition,

God's being is His act of understanding,

is used in the text twice: once to support the antecedent of the first argument, and once more to be the antecedent of the second argument. The first time it is used, talking of divine things in human fashion, it can be taken in either of two ways: as a formal predication,* or as an identity statement.¹ It will work as a formal predication because understanding is formally what God does in existing [*intelligere est formaliter esse Dei*],¹ as He is an intellect-entity (as became clear above);

* *formaliter*
† *identice*

q.14, a.4

¹ A thing's existing [*esse*] actualizes its specifying form. So what I do in existing is *be a man*. Since God is a pure intellect-in-act, what He does in existing is *understand*.

hence if the understanding were incomplete, God's being would be incomplete. It will also work as an identity statement, because the point Aquinas was after still follows, given general rules [about extensional identity]. For suppose God's understanding God (taken either on the subject side [as God's doing] or on the object side [as His grasp of God]) is open in itself to every level* of completeness; then given that

* *capax perfecti omnimodae*

God's understanding God = God's being, if the former is incomplete, 'God's being is incomplete' would necessarily follow *a posteriori*, inferring the incompleteness of the one from the incompleteness of the other identified therewith. For if the identifier were entirely complete, no incompleteness would be allowed in the thing identified with it.

Doubt about its use in the second argument

iv. But the second time this proposition is used [*i.e.* as antecedent of the second argument], there is doubt about how to take it. If it is taken as a formal predication, it is false. For this time the talk is not about God's overall being, so to speak, as it was before, but about God's being just as grounding His active power (for being-able is the being in which the effects of an active cause pre-exist). But His being-thus is form-wise other than His understanding, since it is a completeness naturally prior to His understanding, *etc.*² — On the other hand, if the proposition is taken as an identity statement, it is true enough but leaves the argument devoid of validity. For from a formal truth plus an identity statement there is no deriving another formal truth, and that would be the situation in this argument. Thus

all effects pre-exist in the first cause's being is a formal truth,³ but
the first cause's being = His understanding
is just an identity statement, and so one cannot derive
so all such effects are in God's understanding
as a formal truth.⁴ — The doubtfulness of this business is confirmed [by further examples]. The following, for in-

² In an act of understanding, the object understood, *O*, as impressed species, was said to "specify" the act. This was formal causality. "Natural priority" was the logical priority of cause over effect in any line of causality. So, as a specifier, *O* had natural priority over the act. In plainer words, there was no understanding *x* unless *x* was somehow "there" to be understood. So the objection is: if God understands His being-a-cause, that being is distinct from (because logically prior to) the being that is His act of understanding.

³ In other words, all effects pre-exist in the first cause's *being able to cause*. Differently said, all effects pre-exist in the first cause *qua* first cause.

⁴ One can derive the point as a factual truth but not as a formal one. As a formal truth, it would mean that the effects are in God's understanding *qua* understanding. The premisses given yield only that they are in God's understanding *qua* entity. But unless they are in God's understanding *qua* understanding, the real conclusion sought, namely, that the effects are in His understanding *as mental objects*, cannot be reached.

stance, is invalid:

all effects are in God's being;
 God's being [as Father to Son, or Son to Holy
 Spirit, etc.] is relation;
 ergo all the effects are in a relation and are there
 after the fashion of relation.

And this next is invalid, too:

God's being is His act of willing

ergo

all effects are in God's willing and are there after
 the fashion of wishes.

So the inference fails to work when 'act of understand-
 ing' is put in, too.

A possible solution

v. There are two ways to go in answering this. A first response is to say that, as used in the antecedent [to the second argument], the proposition that God's act of understanding is His being functions as an identity statement for *us* but in itself is a formal predication.⁵ If you say in general, "from a formal truth plus an identity statement [there is no deriving another formal truth]," I concede the point. But it can still be the case that from *such-and-such* an identity plus *such-and-such* a formal truth, a formal truth will result — granted, it will not follow by virtue of the form of the argument, but it may follow thanks to the material dealt with. Well, such is the case here. For in the talk of God's *natural completenesses*, it follows from their identity with each other that whatever is in any one of them in the fashion distinctive to it is in another of them in the fashion distinctive to that other. This is so because God's natural completenesses have every bit of completeness they can have by their formal definitions. And since they can each be infinite, they are equal. Thus each one, in the manner that goes with it, naturally extends to everything to which any one of them extends. So since God's act of understanding is a natural completeness of His, and His act of being is a natural completeness, too, and they are identical, it follows that whatever is in His act of being *qua* act of being, after the fashion of a being, is in his act of understanding *qua* act of understanding after the fashion of a mental object. — From there, it is easy to see how to break the counter-examples:

- the divine relations (and what goes with them) are not formally completenesses;
- His willing other things (and what goes with that) is a completeness, yes, but not a natural one; it is free.

⁵ In other words, let the state of affairs that God's act of understanding is tied into His act of being, and *vice-versa*, be the state of affairs *S*. *S* is poorly understood by us, so that our ability to describe *S* is poor, too. Perhaps the best description of *S* in our language is a material identity statement; it could still be the case (and we could have some reason to suspect) that the real structure of *S* is a tighter, more "formal" affair.

A better solution

The second response — at once better and capturing (beyond all doubt) the thinking of Aquinas in this text — is to say that the proposition in question is a formal predication. For whatever may be the case with God's overall being, His *being the first cause*, as such, is His act of understanding. He causes (and is naturally causative) not from the mere fact that He is, but from the fact that He understands; and *how* He causes (and is naturally causative) is not just as *He is*, but as *He understands*.⁶ It is not true, moreover, that the effects of an intellectual cause, *IC*, as such a cause, pre-exist in *IC*'s being, as that being is naturally prior to *IC*'s self-understanding.⁷ Rather, their pre-existing in *IC*'s being is incidental, arising from the fact that an act of understanding is an act of being. We experience this in our own lives, when we produce artificial things as our effects. The act of understanding serves as the very foundation for the active power of every intellectual cause *as such a cause*, and so it serves that way in the First Cause. Aquinas' wording was full of significance, then, when he wrote, "This becomes even more obvious if one adds the fact that the very being which is being-the-first-agent-cause is His act of understanding." And thus the objections cease. An act of willing, after all, is determining an intellectual cause to produce one or another of its alternatives but is not constituting it as such a cause; so, formally speaking, being-the-first-cause is not willing but understanding.

What does 'after the fashion of mental objects' mean?

vi. Turning now to the last inference in the second argument [the inference to "so effects are in the first cause as mental objects"], notice that the point inferred can be construed two ways, thanks to the two meanings of 'men-

⁶ Whatever else I may do in causing a tool to exist, the first and distinctive thing is: I *understand* what needs doing, what design a tool to meet that need should have, etc. I cause the tool because I understand (and as I understand). Now take the case where human beings come as close as we can to being a purely intellectual cause. Suppose what needs doing is just communication of a thought, and the tool I produce to do it is just a sentence-token in the language I speak. Here it is especially obvious that I cause the token not just because I am but precisely *because I understand* and as I *understand*. If Cajetan is right, this was Aquinas' clue for thinking about the causality of God. Against every form of naturalistic emanationism, Aquinas held that nothing other than God exists simply because God is. Every created effect, he said, occurs *because God understands* and occurs as *He understands*. The biblical image of a divine artificer who creates by speech-action has rarely had so deep an explicator

⁷ If God's power to create arises from understanding, it is not part of what-He-is prior (logically) to understanding Himself but part of what-He-is subsequent (logically) to understanding, i.e. part of what-He-is as "Object Understood" in the sense of expressed species.

tal object'.

- In one meaning, it is distinguished from 'sense object'. So taken, being in *x* "as a mental object" is just being in *x* in a matter-independent way.

With this sense in place, the point inferred is plainly right. For if a given case of being is an act of understanding, then, since an act of understanding is necessarily a matter-independent act, what is in this case of being will be there matter-independently, because whatever is in *x* is there in *x*'s manner.

- In the other meaning, 'a mental object' contrasts with 'a being', inasmuch as the class of intensions is distinguished from the class of beings [*prout genus intelligibile distinguitur a genere entis*]. So taken, being in *x* "as a mental object" is showing up in *x* as an object fit to be understood.

With this sense in place, the point inferred is plainly right again. For if a given case of being is an act of understanding, whatever items are in this case of being are in the act of understanding *qua* act of understanding, *i.e.*, they are understood; so they are objects understood or fit to be understood: mental objects. Anything in *x* is there in *x*'s fashion; so the items in an act of understanding [as such] are there as mental objects.

For our purposes, the difference between these two meanings comes down to the following:

- if the point inferred is taken the first way, it follows from the antecedent without intermediate inference;
- if taken the second way, it emerges *via* an intermediate inference, as it is made to do in the text.

The text's requirements do not exclude either construal, but since the second implies the first, is more subtle and more formal than the first, it should be adopted.

Analysis of the article, II

vii. As to job (2), in which Aquinas determines *how* God knows things other than Himself, a single conclusion is reached: things other than God are not known by Him "in themselves" but "in God Himself."

The support goes thus. [*Antecedent:*] God sees Himself and other things through His own essence; so [*inference:*] He sees Himself "in Himself" but sees things other than Himself not "in themselves" but in His own substance. — The antecedent is obvious. The inference is supported by dividing 'see *x*' into 'see *x* in itself' and 'see *x* in another' and by defining both. From the definitions given, the conclusion emerges. For if 'see *x* in itself' means seeing *x* through a distinctive species equivalent to *x*, while 'see *x* in another' means seeing it through the species of another thing, *y*, which includes *x* (as it says in the text), then, due to the fact that God sees Himself and other things through His own essence as through a species, it follows that He sees Himself "in Himself" but other things not "in themselves" but "in Himself;" after all, God's essence

is a species equivalent to God, not to anything else.

Further explication

viii. For better explication of the text, pay attention to two points here.

(1) The first concerns the force of the distinction in the text between taking cognizance of *x* "in itself" or "in another" — namely, that "in itself" differs from "in another" *object-wise*, so that "see *x* in itself" means seeing it *not in another mental object or sense object*, while "see *x* in another" means seeing it *in another mental object or sense object*.

(2) The second concerns the soundness of the two definitions. Since any intensional or sensible species has some object to which it is equivalent,⁸ and that object is no doubt both what the species first and firstly represents and what it first and firstly has as its object,⁹ it has to be the case that, if any object *O* is the equivalent object for a species *S*, then *O* is not represented by *S* "in another object" but "in itself;" and conversely, if object *O* is not represented by *S* "in another object," *O* must be the one equivalently represented through *S*. For if *O* is not equivalent to *S*, then *O* is represented in another object, *O**, the one that is equivalent to *S*. For to each species *S* there must correspond some object equivalent to *S*, an object in which everything represented by *S* is included (otherwise the object would not be equivalent to *S*). Likewise, if an object *O* is represented in another object *O** [by a species *S*], it obviously has to be the case that *O* is being represented by *S* as a non-equivalent object. Thus the reason for both definitions is clear. What is "seen in itself" is optimally defined as what is "seen through a species equivalent to it." And what is "seen in another" is equally well defined as what is "seen through the species of something including it" (within which it shows forth).

Doubts about this part of the article

ix. Concerning these definitions, a difficult doubt arises about both of them together, leading to a deep difference of opinion as to how God sees other things.

To lay this matter out, one must first discuss species that are such as to represent plural contents. Suppose *S* is such a species. Then *S* compares in just one way to its equivalent object but may compare in two ways to a non-equivalent object. For *S* can only represent its equivalent object *immediately* (the issue being object-wise immediacy),¹⁰ but *S* can represent a non-equivalent object both

⁸ The "equivalent object" *O* of an intensional species *S* seems to have been the one that satisfied the following bi-conditional: for any intellectual being *IB*, *IB* is informed with species *S* = *IB* is conscious just of the contents of *O*. Such an object of a sensory species seems to have met a similar test.

⁹ On the meaning of 'firstly', see § *vi* in Cajetan's commentary on q.3, a.2.

¹⁰ *S* represents *O* with object-wise immediacy just in case there is no object *O'* such that *S* represents *O* *via* representing *O'*.

mediately and immediately.

• *S* does so mediately by representing *O* as included in *S*'s equivalent object *O**; for then *S* is representing *O* via *S*'s equivalent object.

• But *S* does so immediately by representing *O* in itself, abstracting from how *O* is included in *S*'s equivalent object *O**; for then *S* represents *O* "immediately" with object-wise immediacy (the only kind of immediacy in question here) and, as so doing, does not represent *O* via *S*'s first object *O**.

As an example, take a visible thing, a log, placed so as to show in a mirror and in Socrates's line of vision [so that he can see both the log and the log-in-the-mirror]. Let us suppose (truly or falsely) that Socrates is not informed with distinct species, by one of which he sees the log and by the other the mirror (we have experience of seeing the same thing in both ways) [but is seeing both through the same species]; it now appears that the visual species *S* in the seer compares to the log in two ways — immediately insofar as *S* is the reason he sees the log in itself, and mediately insofar as *S* is the reason he sees the log-in-the-mirror.¹¹

From just this much, serious consequences follow.

(1) The first definition falls to the ground. For if an object is "seen in itself," it still might not be seen through a species equivalent to it, as one sees in the case of a non-equivalent represented object insofar as the species representing it does so immediately.

(2) Aquinas' whole reasoning about how God sees other things falls apart. For while the inference from *x* is seen through the species of something containing it

to ergo *x* is seen "in another,"

holds up, the inference to

ergo *x* is seen *only* "in another"

or (to what amounts to the same thing)

ergo *x* is *not* seen "in itself"

fails. For the species of the thing-containing-*x* can compare to *x* in two ways, immediately and mediately, etc. And yet the latter inferences were both drawn explicitly by Aquinas in the text.

(3) From here, diverse opinions arise about the mode of divine cognition. Those who think God's essence (the sole reason He understands, i.e. His sole intentional species) relates in two ways to things other than God (mediately and immediately), thereupon concede that God knows things other than Himself in two ways, i.e., "in Himself" and "in themselves," through just one reason-for-knowing, i.e., the divine essence alone. By contrast, those who think God's essence, as His reason for knowing, cannot represent immediately any

¹¹ The equivalent object of the *S* in this example (if I have got it right) is "that side of the room," within which both the log and the mirror are non-equivalent objects of *S*. Both are represented mediately compared to that equivalent object; but compared to each other, the log in itself is more immediately represented than the log-in-the-mirror, and that is the point.

object-known but its equivalent object thereupon say that God knows Himself only "in Himself," so that He sees other things "in Himself" as God, and not "in themselves."¹²

x Another doubt about the conclusion in this part of the article, and about the definition of 'seen in another', comes from Scotus' remarks on *I Sent.* d. 35. Scotus holds that God, through His essence as the reason-He-knows, knows things other than Himself "in themselves," as posited in being — in "objectival being" or "being a known" — through the divine intellect's act of understanding. From Scotus' position, the following argument can be fashioned against Aquinas. [*Antecedent:*] 'x is seen in another' is not equivalent to 'x is seen through the species of something including x'; [*inference:*] ergo the latter does not define the former. The inference is obvious, once the antecedent is supported by the following assumption. [*First part:*] A rock is seen by God through a species of something containing it, because it is seen through God's essence, which, in a higher manner, is the species of Himself and of other things; and yet [*2nd part:*] the rock is seen "in itself" object-wise.* Ergo 'x is seen in another' is false in a case where 'x is seen through the species of something including x' is true]. The second part of the assumption is supported as follows. God's intellect, as "actuated" in some sense by His essence-*qua*-intentional-species, is in a state of first act sufficient to produce any understandable object in intentional being.¹ Ergo, as God is understanding Himself, He, in understanding a rock, produces the rock in the being of a known [*in esse cognitio*] and thereby understands the rock "in itself." — The arguments that Scotus himself actually advanced on this question [in d. 35] pertain more to our next article, where the issue will be God's "discriminate cognizance" of other things.¹³

* *objectivè*

† *ad producendum in esse intelligibili quodcumque intelligibile*

General remarks against these doubts

xi. TO CLEAR THIS UP, two points require attention.

(1) The first is that, while all parties to this dispute agree that God's essence, either as the reason He knows or as the object of His knowledge (it is both, after all), contains in a higher fashion [*eminenter*] all understandable

¹² Let us call this difficulty for Aquinas' position the adverbial *dubium*. It admits with Aquinas that if 'I see x' is true, there is a visual or intentional species *S*, such that *S* represents *x* and I see *x* through *S* present in my eye or mind. But the adverbial *dubium* shifts the definition of 'in itself' in the phrase 'see x in itself through *S*'. For Aquinas, the defining issue was just what *S* represented. If *S* represented nothing but *x* (nothing but the contents of *x*), then one saw *x* "in itself" through *S*. The adverbial *dubium* changes the defining issue, so that it becomes how *S* represents whatever it represents. If *S* represents *x* directly (*immediatè*), then one sees *x* "in itself" through *S*, no matter what else *S* represents.

¹³ The *dubium* from Scotus resembles the adverbial one in that, for Scotus, too, 'see x in itself through *S*' is defined not by what *S* represents but by how. Scotus has, however, his own account of this 'how'. For him, if *S* represents *x* (alone or with no matter what else), then the mind's *S*-specified act of understanding "produces" *x* in being-an-object-known in its own right, so that *x* becomes-an-object-known "in itself" and thus is "seen in itself."

things, their disagreement arises from the fact that the cruder thinkers suppose God's essence to contain other things with a certain distinctness [from one another and from it], the way things reflect in a mirror, while the wiser thinkers teach that all things are contained in God's essence as non-distinct and as raised above [what would pluralize them], as effects are present in higher causes, and yet are contained there as completely as if they were distinct. And since this latter is quite certainly true, as the natures of causes show, one can come to see that the divine essence, as an intentional species, does not represent other things immediately, but mediately, through itself-as-object; for it stands to other objects as the *species* of a cause stands to the *effects* to which that cause can reach.

(2) The second point to note is that "the being of a known" or "objectual being" is not understood the same way by all experts. Scotus (in dd. 35 and 36) thinks that "being a known," "being represented" (or any equivalent) is a distinct sort of being from being-in-the-real.* Yet it is not things' being what-they-are [*esse essentiae*] in his scheme. Rather, it is *both* their being what-they-are *and* their existing, but the latter *in a qualified respect*.¹⁴ And he does not think that this kind of being is relational; he thinks it is absolute, though qualifiedly so, and that it grounds a relation, as you can see from the passages mentioned.¹⁵ In these aspects, he says, this kind of being is no different for one kind of intellect (say, man's) than it is for another (say, God's). This, he says, is the "being" in which all things other than God are "produced" by God's intellect acting; so those things are understood "in themselves" and not just in God's essence as in a cause.

xii. St. Thomas, however, maintains in *De Veritate* q. 21 [a. 1] that this "being" is fictitious.¹ He says that thought-produced being [*ens rationis*], as contrasted with real being [*ens reale*], breaks down exhaustively into the negative and the relational. Undisputedly, the "being" which Scotus posits is not real; so it is

¹⁴ *Esse reale* or *in rerum natura* was the existence we express by 'there is a . . .' in everyday contexts, such as 'There is a zebra in the Brooklyn zoo', while *esse essentiae* was the non-existential 'is' used in definitions, such as 'A dodo is a large, flightless bird', etc. In the metaphysics of an actual thing, *x*, *esse reale* was the ultimate actualness of *x*, while *esse essentiae* was the specifying act that *esse reale* included and actualized. Scotus was positing an existence-as-an-object-of-thought that also included *esse essentiae*.

¹⁵ Being "a known" or "an object of thought" seems to be a matter of being related to a knower or thinker — unlike being "a thing in the real," which seems to be a non-relational status (absolute). Aquinas' analysis followed this broad clue, as Cajetan will discuss momentarily. Scotus, however, pioneered the view that an object-of-thought could not stand related to a thinker unless it already amounted to something, prior (logically) to that relation. He posited a non-relational "objectual being," by enjoying which, an item amounted to

thought-produced; ergo, it is negative or relational.¹⁶

It is really amazing how these chaps stumble around in broad daylight. For the following points are well established.

— (1) By the very meaning of words, 'being known' is an extrinsic description;* things are called "seen" or "known" by extrinsic description, and hence they are not so called by some "being-a-known" which they have form-wise [*i.e.* as a factor within themselves].¹⁷

* *denominatio extrinseca*

— (2) "Being represented" is not something in the thing represented but just an extrinsic description; otherwise, a picture of some fictional monster would have the force of producing this monster in "being represented" — which is fatuous.¹⁸

— (3) Since more items should not be posited unless needed, and the requirements of this topic are quite well met by saying that the "being of a known" or "being represented," etc., is just relational being. Scotus' kind of being was thought up for no good reason. The second part of my 'since' clause becomes obvious as one proceeds

something (an object) and so was relatable to someone's understanding. Scotus was thus a precursor of the position made infamous in later days by Alexius Meinong. In formal terms, Scotus was so assimilating 'I think of a dodo' to 'I have a dodo', that, as the latter required

$\exists x(x \text{ is a dodo} \ \& \ I \text{ have } x)$,

so the former would require

$\exists x(x \text{ is a dodo} \ \& \ I \text{ think of } x)$,

the only difference being that the second case of ' $\exists x$ ' conveyed objectual being, while the first conveyed the real sort.

¹⁶ Knowing *x* did not alter *x*: so calling *x* known (unlike calling it red) did not posit any new or real factor in *x*. So "being-a-known" had to be thought-produced. But what sort of production was it? Well, it was accepted in the Schools (thanks to Aristotle's remarks in *Metaphysics I'*, c. 15) that knowing involved a relation (R) of the knower to the known and a converse (R) of the known back to the knower. If the knower had acquired within him an intentional likeness of the known, R was a real affair; but since the known was not internally altered in being known, the converse R was not a real relation. "Being-a-known" was a thought-produced relation.

¹⁷ Since calling *x* "known" was not describing *x* by a factor internal to its makeup, it was describing *x* by one external to its makeup. Such description was *denominatio extrinseca*. In this case, the external factor was the knower's relation to *x*. For full discussion, see q. 13, a. 7 with the commentary on it.

¹⁸ Here in a copy of *The Hobbit* is a picture of a dragon. 'Smaug' refers to that dragon and so bears a relation to it. The picture represents the dragon and so bears a relation to it. But there have never been any dragons. Conclusion? Relations of referring and representing can terminate at utter non-entity. Must they terminate at a relatum? Then a relatum can be an utter non-entity. The relation of God's essence (as intentional species) to anything other than God is one of representing. It too, then, can terminate at utter non-entity. A possible creature does not have to amount to anything beforehand; the divine understanding makes it a relatum, as Tolkien's made Smaug a relatum. A philosophy that turns the dragon into an independent 'objectual' being is comic: one that turns possible creatures into the same is bad theology (below, note 20).

case-by-case [*inductivē*]; so, I don't want to tarry over it here.¹⁹

This "being" can also be attacked from Scotus' own doctrines. For [if there is such a kind of being] it follows that the rock has this kind of being *before* it is understood by God. Why? Because the rock is put into being-represented by God's essence as an intensional species *before* it is put into being-known by His act of understanding. Why? Because [says Scotus] representation is *prior* to cognition as cause is prior to effect.

[Christian sensibility also militates against this alleged sort of being.] To an audience of believers, it does not sound good to say that God, not freely, but by natural necessity, produces-outside-Himself things other than Himself in an absolute being, even if that "being" is a qualified one.²⁰

The idea is also contrary to philosophy, which professes clearly and on optimal grounds that God understands nothing "outside Himself" object-wise, not just form-wise. For whatever He understands, He understands *through* His own essence as intensional form and *in* His own essence as object; nor can His gaze turn aside to anything else, as these chaps imagine.

Point-by-point replies

xiii. To answer the objections made by the other side, then, I say that the definitions presented above have no counter-examples when they are understood formally; they are sound quite generally, no matter what hypothetical cases are entertained.

* To those who admit [intentional and sensible] species at all — and this quarrel is among those who do — a thing *x* "seen in itself" (*i.e.* "viewed formally as such") *as so seen* is not seen through the species of something else, but seen through *x*'s own species or through one serving as *x*'s own species (which is the same as through *x*'s own); and conversely, what is seen "through its own species" or "through a shared one serving as its own" [*as so seen*] is seen "in itself."

* Similar remarks apply to the definition of "seen in another". A thing *x* seen in another, *as so seen*, is seen through the species of that which includes *x*; and conversely, what is seen through the species of something containing it is, *as so seen*, seen in another. Thus, it does not matter to the present purpose whether one and the same species can or cannot represent non-equiva-

¹⁹ Note the commitment to ontological parsimony and to case-by-case analysis. One is reminded of similar commitments by Russell, Ryle, and Quine.

²⁰ Cajetan says Scotus' theory makes God "produce outside Himself" because, if divine understanding produces a creature "in itself" as an object, it produces that creature outside God-as-an-object. To this rather technical criticism, one should perhaps add the following. The proponents of "objectual being" cannot face up to the radicality of creativity, human or divine. They cannot see creation as a making-up out of nothing. The best they can do is see creation as the transferal of a being from one *kind* of being to another.

lent objects "both mediately and immediately." For we are speaking formally here, while that distinction views the species of the containing or equivalent object materially, as is obvious from points already made.²¹

xiv. As for the objection drawn from Scotus, I say that its Scotistical foundation makes a false assumption, namely, that being-a-known is some absolute being, *etc.*, outside the intellect. For as is clear from my remarks above, "being-a-known" is nothing but "being-related" by extrinsic description.

So, to answer the argument in formal terms, let it be conceded that God, through His essence as species, is in a state of first act sufficient to posit anything you please in being-a-known. When the inference is drawn,

ergo a rock [is so posited],

let that be conceded, too. But when the further inference is drawn,

ergo things so posited have being-a-known in themselves,

I deny it. For nothing arises by such positing but an extrinsic description. For, from the fact that God, in seeing His own essence, sees a rock in it, what follows is just that the rock has this extrinsic description, that it is said to be known by God. It doesn't have to "acquire" anything else, because this suffices.²²

²¹ Cajetan's final response to the adverbial *dubium* is to distinguish "what *S* represents" into what it represents "formally" and what it represents "materially." Using still the example from § ix, he seems to be saying the following. If you look at *S* as representing both the log and the log-in-the-mirror, the former more directly than the latter, you are looking at what *S* represents "materially." To look at it "formally," you must look at *S* as a visual species, that is, as specifying a definite act of seeing. When Socrates looks at that side of the room, a great deal is "in his line of vision," but what he *sees* is another story. If he sees the log at all, he either (a) sees it and nothing more, or else (b) sees it and more (*e.g.* sees it in the mirror or sees it in the contents of the other side of the room). In case (a), he sees the log "in itself" through *S*; in case (b) he does not; he sees it "in another" through *S*. Either way, Aquinas' definitions hold up, and there is no other alternative. In my own analysis (footnote 12, above) I diagnosed the *dubium* as switching the definition of "in itself" in "seen in itself through *S*" (from what *S* represents to how). I read Cajetan as offering the same diagnosis implicitly but offering explicitly an argument in defense of sticking with what *S* represents, provided this is taken formally.

²² Cajetan's final reply to Scotus might be accused of overlooking the distinction between extra-mental things and objects (in expressed species or "concepts"). Let everything Cajetan says be conceded as true of an extra-mental thing, *x*: *x*'s "being known" is a thought-produced relation, yielding an extrinsic description of *x*, *etc.* But wasn't Scotus talking about objects, and doesn't the object *O* have a real being in the mind as the concept in and through which *x* is known? Cajetan's reply would be that the *esse conceptus* is irrelevant. Yes, its *esse* as real act is the same act as God's *intelligere* (1 *ST* q.27, a.1), but the only *O* so existing in God is the Eternal Word, in Whom God sees every creatable *x* that His essence represents; but each such *x* is still a non-entity (a mere relatum of a thought-produced relation), unless God creates it.

Does God know the other things with discriminate knowledge?

In 1 Sent. d.35, a.3, 1 CG e.50, De Potentia Dei q 6, a.1, De Veritate q 2, a.4, In librum de Causis, lectio 10

It seems as if God would not know with discriminate knowledge* things other than Himself.¹

* propria cognitione

(1) It was just said, after all, that God knows things other than Himself thanks to how those things are "in Him." Well, they are in Him as "in" a first cause common to them all and of universal scope. So those other things are known by God *as in* a first and universal cause. But this is knowing things on a basis they all share,[†] not with a knowledge that distinguishes them. Ergo, God knows things other than Himself in a general way,[†] not with discriminate knowing.

† in universali

q.12, a.2

(2) Besides, the distance from a creature's essence to God's is the same as from God's to a creature's. As said above, it is not possible to know God's essence through a creature's. Neither is it possible, then, to know a creature's essence through God's. So since God knows nothing except through His own essence, He does not know a creature's essence. He does not know the WHAT-IT-IS of each. But knowing *this* is what it means to know a thing "with discriminate knowledge." [So, God does not know other things that way.]

‡ ratio

(3) Moreover, a discriminate knowledge of a thing is only had through the thing's own scientific definition.[‡] Since God knows all things through His own essence, it does not seem that He knows each one through its own definition, because many things differing from one another cannot be such that each has the same *definiens* as its own unique definer. So God does not have discriminate knowledge of things.

ON THE OTHER HAND, having discriminate knowledge of things is knowing them not just by a trait they share but by how they differ. But God does know things in this latter way. Thus it says [in Hebrews 4:12-13] that [His Word] "pierces even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart. Neither is there any creature that is not manifest in His sight."

ANSWER: some writers have gone wrong here, maintaining that God knows things other than Himself on a general basis only, *i.e.*, in their status as beings. For example, if fire had conscious knowledge of itself as the source of heat, it would know the nature of heat and would know things other than itself just so far as they were hot. So, too, God [they say], in knowing Himself as the source of being, knows the nature of being and knows others just so far as they are beings.²

But this cannot be right. Understanding something in a general way but not what is specific to it* is taking incomplete cognizance. Thus our own intellect, in developing from potency to act, attains first to a general and vague knowledge of things before it gets to a discriminating knowledge of them, so as to go from unfinished understanding to finished, as seen in *Physics I*. So if God's knowledge of other things were entirely on an indiscriminate level, without their specifics, it would follow that His act of understanding was not complete in every way; and neither, then, would His act of being be complete in every way — contrary to points established above. One has to admit, then, that He knows things other than Himself with discriminating knowledge: not just as they agree in having what it takes to be beings, but down to how they differ.

To see how this is possible, one needs to take a hard look at the examples some writers use in making the case that God <through knowing one thing> knows many. A favorite of theirs is the center of a circle. If the center had conscious knowledge of itself [they say], it would know all the radii going from it. Another example is light. If light knew itself [they say], it would know all colors. Admittedly, these examples are serviceable up to a point: they illustrate being the explanatory origin for a whole set of effects.[‡] But they fall short because multitude and variety are not explained by the single common source appealed to: it does not originate distinction [in the effects] but only what they agree in. The variety of colors is not caused by light alone, but by varying dispositions of the diaphanous medium receiving the light.[‡] The many radii are not originated by the center alone but by variance of locus [*situ*]. So such cases of "many varied effects" could not be known "in their origin" with distinctive knowledge, but only with general. In God's case, however, matters stand differently. It was shown above that every completive trait[‡] in any creature pre-exists in its entirety in God, included in Him in a higher manner. But the traits that count as "completive" in creatures are not just the ones they agree in, like existing, but also the ones distinguishing some from others, like living, understanding, *etc.*, whereby living things differ from non-living, and those with intellect differ from those without. Indeed, every form by which a thing is put into its own species counts as a "completive" trait.[‡] Thus all things pre-exist in God not only as to what they have in common but also as to the traits in which they differ. Thus, since God includes in Him-

* in speciali

e.1,
184a.22

q.4, a.1
q.14, aa.2, 3

cf. Alexander of
Hales

‡ causalitas
universalis

q.4, a.2
‡ per se

¹ The issue is whether God takes cognizance of *what* other things are. "Discriminate knowledge" is of *natures* down to their specific differences. Individuals differing in matter alone are not the issue yet; they will come up in a.11.

² Averroes, *On Metaphysics XII*, comment 51.

³ Today we say: by varying dispositions of the surface reflecting the light.

⁴ Thus, please note, Aquinas denied that existence alone was completive, as if every essence-composing specification were a curtailment, not an enhancement, of a being.

self every *completive trait*, the way His essence compares to all the essences of things is not as the common to the distinctive (like the unit to the number thereof, or like the center to the radii), but as full act to less full act-states,* so to speak, as man compares to animal, or as a perfect number like six compares to the imperfect ones included in it.⁵ Well, less full act-states can be known through a fuller one not only in a general way, of course, but also with discriminating knowledge. One who knows [what it is to be] man knows with discriminate knowledge [what it is to be animal, and one who knows [a set of] six knows with discriminate knowledge [a set of] three.

So then: since God's essence has in it every completive trait that anything else's essence has, plus more, God can know everything "in Himself" discriminately. For the distinctive nature of each thing arises from the fact that it participates in some way in the divine completeness. Well, God would not know Himself fully, if He did not know every way in which His completeness could be participated in by other things; nor would He know the nature of being[†] exhaustively, if He did not know all the ways-to-be.[‡] Transparently, then, God knows all things with discriminating knowledge, as they are differentiated, one from another.

TO MEET THE OBJECTIONS — *ad* (1): [the objection assumed that *how* God knows other things to be is *only as they pre-exist in Him*; but] knowing something "as it exists in the knower" can be taken two ways.

(1) One way takes the 'as' clause to modify the ex-

⁵ Each essence specifies a way-to-be, but God's essence specifies the fullest way-to-be, the limitless way. How the fullest way-to-be "contains" every specific difference (1 ST q.4, a.2 *ad* 1) is unimaginable; but if one grants it, it carries the epistemological implication Aquinas wanted here.

* *sicut perfectus actus ad imperfectus*

† *naturam essendi*
‡ *modus essendi*

tent of what is known [so as to mean: God knows x to be ϕ only if x -as-it-is-in-Him is ϕ]. So taken, the assumption is false. For it is not always the case that a knower knows the known x according to the being x has in the knower. The eye, for example, does not know a stone according to the being it has in the eye; rather, through the image of the stone that it has in itself, the eye knows the stone according to the being which it has outside the eye. And if some knower does know the known x according to the being x has in the knower, he still knows it according to the being it has outside the knower. Take an intellect knowing stone: insofar as the intellect knows that it understands, it knows stone according to the intensional being which stone has in the intellect; but [insofar as it understands stone] the intellect still knows stone's being in stone's own nature.

(2) But if the 'as' clause is taken to modify the state of the knower, it is quite true that a knower knows a known only "as" it is in the knower, because the more completely the known is in the knower, the more completely is the manner of his knowing it.

Thus, the thing to say is that God does not just know things to be as they are in Himself but rather, through the fact that He contains things in Himself, knows them in their own nature; and the more completely each is in Him, the more fully He knows it.

ad (2): a creature's essence compares to God's as less-full-act compares to full. So a creature's essence is not a sufficient guide to knowing God's, but *vice-versa* [God's is a sufficient guide to the creature's].

ad (3): one and the same *explanans* cannot be taken to explain diverse things on a one-to-one basis.* But the divine essence is something surpassing all creatures. Thus it can be taken as distinctively explaining each insofar as it is diversely participatable or imitable by the various creatures.

* *per modum adaequationis*

Cajetan's Commentary

The title [talks of] discriminate knowledge. 'Discriminate knowledge of x ' can be taken two ways:

(1) to mean an act of knowing whose unique object is x , as opposed to an act which covers more than x (and so taken there is not a single thing of which God has "discriminate knowledge," because He performs just one cognition, and it reaches no x alone but reaches each thing along with everything else);

(2) to mean x known in its distinguishing traits, as opposed to x known on a common basis. This is how the phrase is being used here. We are asking whether God takes cognizance of things other than Himself in such a way as to see what is distinctive to each.

ii. In the body of the article, three jobs are done: (1) he answers the question in the affirmative; (2) he explains how this answer can be true; and (3) he sup-

ports his explanation with his answer by two arguments.

Analysis of job (1)

iii. To carry out job (1), three tasks are done. (a) The opinion of Averroes is rehearsed, from *Metaphysics XIII*, comment 51. It involves two parts: the opinion itself (that God knows all things insofar as they share in being), and how it could be true (*i.e.* [God could know them thus] by knowing Himself as the first causal Source of being). This is illustrated by fire. iv. Then (b) this opinion is rejected by showing that it leads to an impossibility. [*Antecedent:*] If God knew all things merely as beings, then [*1st inference:*] He would understand beings only on a common level, and so [*2nd inference:*] He would understand them vaguely and potentially, and so [*3rd inference:*] He would

know them incompletely, and so [4th inference:] His act of understanding would not be in all ways complete, and so [5th inference:] His being would not be in all ways complete either, which is impossible.

A vital distinction

v. Bear in mind that cognizance reaching a thing in its shared traits alone can be talked of as “incomplete, potential, vague, general, universal,” *etc.*, in two ways: (1) One way is talking about the thing known; in this way there is no doubt that such a cognizance fits these descriptions. (2) The other way is talking about the act of taking cognizance; so taken, it is not always true that a cognizance stopping at shared traits fits these descriptions; otherwise, metaphysics, which stops at traits common to all things, would be such that the very act [of thinking metaphysically] was “incomplete.”¹

Analysis resumed, with asides

The first three inferences [laid out in § iv], then, taken as talking about the thing known, are obvious and are supported by *Physics I*, as you see in the text.

Averroes’ answer does not escape them by saying: the object of God’s knowledge is not “a being” [*ens*] (which is indeed universal to all beings and includes them all on a common level, potentially, vaguely, and incompletely) but is “God’s essence,” which is neither universal nor particular, *etc.*; and so God’s knowledge is neither universal nor particular, neither general nor distinctive, but fits our term “higher knowledge” in an equivocal way. For while this may all be true, it does not break our objection. For the *known traits* of things known in God’s essence have to be traits common to them or else traits distinguishing them, either particular or universal, even if the first object [of God’s knowledge, His essence] is neither. So by talking about the known traits, the first three inferences proceed optimally: for if God’s knowledge stops at solely common traits of things, then His knowledge as so stopping must be called (as to the things known) vague, potential, *etc.*, because these descriptions fit the *known traits*.

As to the fourth inference, in which transition is made to the completeness of God’s cognizance in itself, notice that the point we are inferring is not

God’s cognizance is privatively incomplete (because Averroes could deny that: he could say God’s knowledge is complete despite only reaching things *qua* beings, since it is not fitted by its nature to reach anything else about them);² rather, we are inferring

His cognizance is not complete in every way,

which cannot be denied by those holding the antecedent. For they are admitting that at least one way of being complete — the way a cognizance reaches the distinguishing traits of things — is missing. This way of knowing counts as a completeness without taint of incompleteness; so it is naturally fitted to be present in an act of understanding that displays all the noble traits detachable from incompleteness and belonging to some intelligent act (and such is God’s act of understanding, just as His being has all the noble traits belonging to any being whatever, as the text says).

vi. From this critique, then, (c) a conclusion is drawn answering the question with yes: God knows things other than Himself with discriminate knowledge. For, from the lemma that His knowledge cannot stop at common traits, it follows that it must reach to distinguishing traits. The text of the article also clarifies what “know things with discriminate knowledge” means, *i.e.*, to know them not only under the descriptions they share but also under those that distinguish them; for these latter are the ones “discriminating” each from each.

Analysis of job (2)

vii. To accomplish job (2), three tasks are done.

(a) Examples on which other writers rely to show how God, by knowing Himself, knows other things are brought up. They are about [center-and-radii and] light-and-color, of course.

(b) That these examples do not show what they are meant to, is shown as follows. [*Major:*] Things pre-exist in God and come from God along two lines: that in which they agree, and the distinctives in which they differ; [*minor:*] these examples do not illustrate [the things in-and-from God] along the latter line, but only along the former; ergo [they fail to illustrate how God knows things]. — In the text of the article, the minor premise of this argument comes first and is shown to hold for both examples: radii *vis-à-vis* the center, and colors *vis-à-vis* light. Then the major premise is supported thus. [*Sub-major:*] Every completive trait found in things is present in God in a higher manner; [*sub-minor:*] not only a shared trait but also a distinguishing one counts as completive; [*conclusion:*] so the lot pre-exists in God and comes from Him. — The sub-minor is made clear by cases: living things, cognizant ones, the distinguishing forms of things.

(c) An example that works more suitably to illustrate the point intended is brought forward: it is that God stands to other things as full act stands to less full act-states, as man stands to animal. — This is supported metaphysically [*quoad esse*], on the ground that God’s essence contains all the completive traits of things in an exalted manner. Then it is supported epistemologically [*quoad cognoscj*], on the ground that when a full act has been known completely, all the less full act-states are known in it, both as to shared traits and as to distinguishing ones, as one sees clearly from the example appealed to.

¹ Distinguish “knowledge which is vague” because it is inchoate or shallow from “knowledge which is vague” because it is highly abstract. Both stop at common traits, but the latter does so in a focused, methodical way.

² In other words, Averroes could say that God’s knowledge is, by its very nature, nothing but an ideal knowledge of *metaphysics*.

God's essence and lesser act-states

viii. At this point, bear in mind that God's essence meets two conditions in containing other things. One of them is exaltedness,* in that His essence is infinitely more complete than the rest; and thus it contains things "in a higher manner." The other condition is all-inclusiveness,[†] in that the divine essence includes within itself every positive completive trait that can be found in anything whatsoever, with the result that no being, if compared to God's essence, adds anything positive that is not already contained in His essence; and this is the case because His essence is being itself, pre-possessing in itself every way-to-be.

It does not seem possible for both these conditions to be met in any created thing. Still, if we take the full act that comes last in a process of generation and compare it to the less full act-states that come earlier, as man to animal, intellectual soul to other kinds of soul, for if we take a finished construction and compare it to items achieved *en passant* in the construction, like quadrangle to triangle, set-of-six to set of three, we see something like the meeting of these conditions in some way. This is why the text brings these examples forward, *i.e.*, to show both exaltedness and inclusion of every positive trait; and these examples do show both. Hence they show the point intended, even though all examples are unequal to such an exalted inclusiveness, which is why at the examples' introduction, the text says, "so to speak, as man compares to animal," as if to say: "if license be allowed," *etc.*

Analysis of job (3)

ix. As to job (3), Aquinas' conclusion and his account of how it can hold are supported together, by two arguments.

(a). [The first goes like this.] [*Antecedent:*] God's essence has in itself every completive trait found in anything, plus more; [*inference:*] so God, by knowing Himself, knows all things with discriminate knowledge.

The antecedent is clear from points established earlier. Drawing the inference is supported by a *modus tollens* argument. [*Sub-antecedent:*] If God in knowing Himself does not know other things with discriminate knowledge, then [*1st sub-consequent:*] He does not know all the ways His completeness is participative; (this sub-consequent is seen to be correct from a point implicit in the original antecedent, namely,

each thing's own nature emerges in participating somehow in the divine completeness) and then [*2nd sub-consequent:*] He does not know Himself completely (which holds good from the same antecedent, which says that He includes in Himself every way-to-be-complete). — It follows in this *modus tollens* argument that either the sub-antecedent [He does not know all the ways, *etc.*]

is false, or else its conclusion, to the effect that

He does not know Himself completely, is true, which is impossible. And the impossibility of

this latter secures the falsity of the sub-antecedent, because, if it were true, the divine essence would not be of limitless completeness [because it would lack a form of cognition], and hence it would not contain in a higher way every possible way-of-being-complete.

x. (b) The second argument supports matters as follows. [*Antecedent:*] If God in knowing Himself did not know other things with discriminate knowledge, then [*1st consequent:*] He would not know fully all the ways-to-be, and so [*2nd consequent:*] He would not know the nature of being exhaustively. — All the consequences are evident, either on a purely formal basis or as taken from points already stated.

On being and the ways-to-be

Note that this second argument is directly against the opinion [of Averroes] set forth at the beginning of the article; indeed, it uses the foundation of the opinion to subvert it. For since God is Being Itself, by knowing Himself exhaustively He knows the nature of being (as in Platonism, the Form of Man would know human nature exhaustively by knowing itself); so He knows every way-of-being; so He knows every nature. For in every case, a nature is nothing but a way-to-be.

Do not discount the example I just gave on the ground that the Platonic Form of Man would not know human nature with its way-of-being in Socrates's matter, nor with its way-of-being in Plato's; for from this very fact, you will realize the point we are after. The reason the Form of Man would not, by knowing itself, know these particular ways-to-be-man is because these ways have their source elsewhere than from participation in that Form, *i.e.*, from matter. But now imagine that each particular man had nothing to him but traits that would be there by virtue of human nature; then it would have to follow that, if human nature was known, every way-it-could-be would be known. Well, this is how being [*esse*] stands to all things; for there is no item \emptyset present in any thing x that isn't some being [*aliquid esse*]. So the being [*esse*] that is in x comes from no other source but from being [*esse*]. And if you set aside the traits that are there in x by virtue of being itself, there is nothing left. For even matter and everything else are so many participations and ways-of-being. Thus, because of the all-inclusiveness* of being itself [*ipsium esse*], thanks to which the ways-of-being constitute all things through one or another positive makeup,[†] it follows that once being's nature is known, all things are known by their distinguishing traits.³ The first opinion [that of Averroes] missed this all-inclusiveness, and that is why it went

³ This paragraph is not metaphysical monism. Cajetan is not giving *esse* a common "nature," realized wholly in God and fragmentarily in creatures. For him, God's makeup as a being is only analogous to any creature's makeup as a being. A nature demands univocity; so what "unites" things only by analogy is no nature. To put the point a little differently, for Aquinas and Cajetan the so-called "nature of being" (a phrase fetched in from Averroes' argument) is nothing but the set of ways-to-be, and these are one set by analogy only. 430 years

* *excellencia*

† *comprehensio*

* *universalitas*

† *ratio*

wrong, reasoning about being as one would reason about other, special comparative traits, like living, understanding, *etc.*, apart from whose ways there are other things, while apart from being itself and the ways-to-be, there is clearly nothing.⁴

xi. At this point, dear reader, you should recall that the whole debate in this area has turned on how everything can be known in just *one* known object; clearly, then, it has been the consensus of opinion among the wise that the only way God understood things other than Himself was by understanding them "in Himself." So have your defenses up, when you read recently hatched theories.⁵

had to pass before Thomism was turned into a form of monism, on the pattern of German idealism, with *esse* serving as "the" inner "nature" of all reality. The author of this feat was K. Rahner, who subtly unvocalized *esse* by positing a "primordial unity of knowing and being-known" and making it "*das Wesen des Seins*" (*Hearers of the Word*, pp. 55-56). The one case, of course, in which this "primordial unity" really does constitute the natural *esse* of something is the divine case. So the result of Rahner's move was to give every being, *qua* a being, the *ratio Dei*. To be is to be God, and to be a creature is to be a deficient God.

⁴ This summary of the difference between Averroes and St. Thomas can be paraphrased as follows. They both espoused the doctrine (stateable in first-order logic with an existence predicate) that "everything exists." This is the extensional all-inclusiveness of *esse*. In other words, both men believed that every unqualifiedly real thing was within being, and neither accepted "possibles" or other demi-entities as straightforwardly real. But Aquinas also espoused an intensional all-inclusiveness of *esse*, while Averroes did not. Intensional all-inclusiveness is the higher-order claim that every mind-independent property (essential or accidental) of anything (in any category) is a case or manner of being. Where this doctrine is rejected, a thing is "a being" just in its ultimate actualness, nowhere in its specifics, and an exhaustive knowledge of being will be a pure metaphysics. By contrast, where intensional all-inclusiveness is accepted, a thing is "a being" through-and-through, and an exhaustive knowledge of being cannot be a mere metaphysics but must reach down to include all the specific properties discovered in physics, chemistry, biology, history, *etc.*

⁵ This may have been an allusion to Scotus, whose novel univocity of being and of every other distinct "formality" was attacked in Cajetan's commentary on *De Ente et es-*

Understanding the answer *ad* (1)

xii. Re the answer to the first objection, bear in mind that, when you say,

stone is seen [by God] in God,

the 'in' can indicate either

- the how of the object, *i.e.* how stone is an object,* or
- the how of the thing known as a known, *i.e.* the how [it is] known,[†]

because it is not just the case that stone is an object in God Himself but also the case that how it is in God is known. But there is a difference between these. When the 'in' indicates the how of the object, you can insert the exclusionary word 'only', so that

stone is seen by God *only* in God

is true; for stone is only an object to God as contained in God Himself, as is clear from earlier remarks [in a.5]. But when the 'in' indicates the how-known,

stone is seen by God *only* in God

does not come out true. Stone is seen by God according to the being it has in God Himself. *but not only so*, because it is also seen by God according to the being it has in this stone or that stone, and according to the being it has in its causes, material causes as well as efficient, and (in short) according to all its ways-to-be (not only those suitable to it but every one possible). God, after all, in seeing in Himself "just" stone, sees stone according to all the ways-of-being it has or can have. This is what the text is saying, clearly enough, in different words.

Understanding the answer *ad* (3)

xiii. In the answer to the third objection, realize that what emerges here in all clarity is that, in the thinking of St. Thomas, *what suffices* for God to understand all things down to their distinct defining makeups is just the higher-order completeness of the divine essence, by which God has-as-object[‡] each and every complete trait of everything imitating it, plus more. Aquinas does not say that certain relations are needed, as Scotus claims he does (in the second opinion discussed at *I Sent.* d.35). So the arguments that Scotus fashions against those relations do not go against St. Thomas on this topic. (How well they go against him on the topic of God's "ideas" will be seen in the next inquiry.)

sentia, and whose novel theory of *esse objectivum* was attacked in the commentary on a.5 above.

* *modum quo lapsus obicitur*

† *modum cognitum*

‡ *obicitur*

Is God's optimal knowing discursive?

1.57 q.85, a.5, 1 CG cc 55, 57; *De Veritate* q.2, a.1 ad 4-5; a.3 ad 3; a.13; *Compend. theol.* c.29; *In Iob* c.12, lectio 2

* *scientia* It seems that God's optimal knowing* is discursive.

(1) For it is not habitual expertise, after all, but an act of understanding actually occurring. As Aristotle c.10 says in *Topics II*, habitual expertise extends to many 114b 34 things at once, but an occurrent act of understanding reaches just one. So since God knows many things aa.2, 5 (both Himself and other things, as just shown), it seems that He would not understand them all at once but would run through them one after another.

(2) Besides, grasping an effect through its cause is the optimal knowing of a discursive thinker. God grasps other things through Himself, as effects through their Cause. Thus His cognition is discursive.

(3) Also, God knows each and every creature more completely than we do. Well, what we do is secure in created causes a cognizance of their effects, and thus we move mentally from causes to things-caused. The process would seem to work similarly, then, in God.¹

ON THE OTHER HAND, there is what Augustine says in *De Trinitate XI* [c. 14], to the effect that God does not "see all things a slice at a time, or one at a time, as if His awareness were shifting from here to there and back again; rather, He sees all things at once." PL.42, 1077

ANSWER: in the divine knowing, there is no movement of thought.¹ One sees this as follows. In our own scientific knowing, there are two movements. One is thanks to sheer succession, as when after understanding something in act, we turn to understand something else. The other is thanks to causal connection,² as when we reach cognition of conclusions because of starting points of proof. † *discursus* ‡ *causalitas*

¹ It is not clear whether the causes and effects meant are those in nature or those in our learning, where causes-of-knowing (initial data) have as their effects points-learned.

The first has no application to God's case. Take a set of things which we understand successively, if each one of them gets consideration in its own right. We understand them all at once, if we understand them in some one thing, e.g. if we grasp them as parts in a whole, or if we see various things in a mirror. Well, God sees all things in one Thing (which is Himself) as said above. As a consequence, He sees them all at once, not successively. q.14, a.5

Likewise, the second movement of thought can have no application to God's case. To begin with, it presupposes the first: those who move from starting points to conclusions are not thinking both at once. Then, too, such movement pertains to one who is proceeding from the known to the unknown. In that case, when an item is known, another is obviously still unknown. So the other is not being known "in" the first but "from" it. The movement terminates when the other is seen "in" the first, when the effects are resolved into their causes, and at that point the movement of thought is over. So, since God sees His effects "in Himself" as in their Cause, His cognition is not discursive.

TO MEET THE OBJECTIONS — *ad* (1): even if there is just one act of understanding occurring in oneself, one can still be understanding many things in some one thing, as I just said.

ad (2): when God grasps effects through their Cause, it is not of *unknown* effects as through an *already known* cause; He grasps them "in" the Cause. So His cognition has no movement of thought, as I said.

ad (3): God is seeing the effects of created causes in the causes themselves much better than we do; but it is not happening in Him in such a way that cognition of the effects is caused in Him (as it is in us) by cognition of the created causes. Hence His optimal knowing is not discursive.

Cajetan's Commentary

The title is clear at the beginning of the article. — In the body of it, there is one conclusion, answering the question with no: God's ideal knowing is not discursive in any way. The support goes as follows. [*Antecedent:*] In God's knowing there is no movement of thought because of succession, nor any because of causal connection; [*inference:*] so there is no discursus in any way.

Drawing the inference is supported by adequate break down of the movements of thought, which are

clear in our experience. The first part of the antecedent is supported as follows. Movement of thought thanks to succession lies in understanding one thing after another; God sees all things in One, i.e. Himself; so He does not move in thought by understanding one after another. The second part of the antecedent is supported on two grounds. (1) The second movement of thought includes the first. (2) The second is from known to unknown; hence it is knowledge of a second item "from" a first, not "in" that first. God, however, knows all things "in"

14, a.7

a first item. Therefore, His thought does not move; His knowledge is like [our] ideal knowing at the *terminus* of [our] thought's movement. For with effects already resolved into their causes, ideal knowing sees the effects "in" their causes. So, too, analogously* (but without the previous resolution

* *proportionaliter*

process), God sees all things in Himself, the Cause of all.

Remember to correct your copy at this point if it reads 'The third movement arrives . . . ' [*Tertius vero discursus*]. It should read, 'The terminus of the movement arrives . . . ' [*Terminus vero discursus*].

Is God's optimal knowing a cause of things?

In I Sent. d 38, a.1; de Veritate q 2, a.14

It seems that God's optimal knowing [*scientia*] is not a cause of things.

PG 14. 1126 (1) In his commentary on Romans [8:30], Origen says, "The reason something will occur is not *because* God knows it will happen; rather, the reason it is known by God beforehand is *because* it will happen."

(2) Besides, when a cause is in place, so are its effects. But God's optimal knowing is eternal. So, it seems that if this knowing is a cause of created things, creatures have been around from all eternity.

(3) Furthermore, an object of scientific knowledge* is prior to the science of it and is the standard against which the science is measured, as it says in *Metaphysics X*. But what is this posterior and submitted to a standard cannot be a cause [of its standard, etc]. So [since things are objects of God's scientific knowledge,] God's knowing is not a cause of things.

c. 13
PL 42, 1076 ON THE OTHER HAND, there is what Augustine says in *De Trinitate XV*: "the reason God knows all creatures, spiritual and corporeal, is not because they are; rather, they are because He knows them."

ANSWER: God's optimal knowing is a cause of things. It stands to all created things as an artist's knowledge stands to his art works. But the artist's knowing is a *cause* of his works. Given that the artist works through his intellect, his intellect's form has to be a source of his doing, as [the form which is] heat is a source of heating-things-up. On this point, however, one needs to pay attention to a further nuance. A natural form [ϕ -ness] does not become the source of a like-named doing [making things ϕ] merely by abiding in the subject to which it gives a being[- ϕ], but by having a tendency to an effect [of that doing]. Similarly, an intentional form [by which ϕ -things are understood] does not become the source of a like-named doing [making ϕ -things] merely by being in the artist who understands, but only when an inclination to the effect is attached to it, and this comes about through the will. After all, an intentional form equips one to understand both contradictories (since understanding *p* is understanding *not-p*), and so the

artist would not yield a determinate effect if he were not narrowed down to one or the other through desiring* it, as it says in *Metaphysics IX*. Well, it is obvious that God causes things through His intellect, since His existing is His act of understanding. It has to be the case, then, that His optimal knowing is a cause of things insofar as it has His will joined to it. This is why it is customary to call His knowledge, in its role as a cause of things, His "approving knowledge" [*scientia approbationis*].

TO MEET THE OBJECTIONS — *ad* (1): [when Origen says the reason something will occur is not because God knows it,] he is speaking in terms of the defining make-up of knowledge, which, as I said, does not have what it takes to cause effects unless the will is attached to it. — But when he says that the reason God foresees things is "because" they will happen, his statement has to be taken to mean the 'because' of a valid conditional [*secundum causam consequentiae*], not the 'because' of a cause of being [*non secundum causam essendi*]. For the conditional,

if any events will happen, God will have foreseen them,

is valid; but it is not the case that future things cause God to be aware of them.

ad (2): God's knowing causes things to be in the fashion in which they are in His knowledge. Well, that things exist from eternity was not in God's knowledge. So although God's knowing is eternal, it does not follow that creatures exist from eternity.

ad (3): natural things hold a middle place between God's knowing and our science. Acquisition of our science is caused in us from natural things, whereas God causes those very things through His knowing. So, just as natural objects-of-knowledge are prior to our science-of-them and set the standard for it, so God's knowing is prior to natural things and sets the standard for them. In much the same way, a house *H* holds the middle place between its architect's knowing and the knowledge acquired by someone whose acquaintance with *H* comes from *H* already standing.

* *appetitum*
c. 5;
1048a 11

* *scibile*

c. 1,
1053a 33

Cajetan's Commentary

Title. This article has great importance, because here begins the inquiry into how God produces things outside Himself. Asking whether God's knowing is a cause of things is nothing other, really, than asking whether God causes through His intellect. But causing things can be investigated two ways:

- (1) in its own right (and that is how a special treatise will cover it below, where all the details will be examined fully), or
- (2) as a feature of divine knowing, which is how it comes up here, so that Aquinas can tell the full story of God's knowing, including whether it fits this particular description ('is a cause of things').

Analysis of the article, I

ii. In the body of the article, there is one conclusion, answering the question with a yes: God's ideal knowing is a cause of things. To get this conclusion, three jobs are done in the text: (1) it is given a preliminary support; (2) a general case is made for how God's knowing gets to be a cause in actual operation [*in actu secundo*]; (3) the conclusion is given effective support along with this case for the way how.

iii. As to job (1): [*major*:] God's knowing stands to things in general as an artist's stands to his artworks; [*minor*:] but the artist's knowing is a cause of his works; [*conclusion*:] ergo God's knowing is a cause of things in general. — The major is not supported until job (3) is undertaken [see below, § v]. But the minor is supported [thus]. An artist works through his intellect: so his intellect's form is a source of his doing, as heat is a source of heating-things-up. One takes as implicitly added: but his knowing is his intellect's form. Ergo [his knowing is a source of his doing]. All points are clear.

iv. As to job (2), a general determination is made: knowing is not a cause except when volition is attached. This is supported as follows. [*Antecedent*:] Knowing does not display what it takes to be a cause just by being in the knower but by inclining to an effect; [*inference*:] ergo, by having the will joining in. — The antecedent is supported by likening it to a natural form, say, heat. Drawing the inference rests on the ground that [*assumption*:] the agent's knowing itself covers both contradictories; [*sub-inference*:] ergo narrowing the agent down to one of them comes from his desire joining in. — The assumption and sub-inference are found in *Metaphysics IX*.

A note on form and inclination

Notice here that the text speaks quite cautiously about natural form. It does not say that a naturally active form like heat needs to have an inclination added to it, in order to be the source of a doing: for that is not so. It says rather that the form itself (say, heat) as having just *this* (its being or abiding in the subject) does not have *from this* (or *as such*) what it

takes to be or be called the source of a doing. And this is true. Otherwise it would follow that every form in anything was a source of a doing (which is false). But while the form does not have *from this* what it takes to be active, it is still needed for what it takes to be active, while inclination to the work is what gives the form what it takes to be active.¹ It does not matter for present purposes whether such a determining inclination comes from intrinsic factors, from the form's very nature, or comes from outside factors, as is the case with knowing, which, as shown, does not have the makings of a cause in actual operation without the attachment of volition. For if knowing is taken in isolation, it will never cause anything (unless it caused both contradictions, which is impossible).

Analysis of the article, II

v. As to job (3): the conclusion is repeated but now with an added account of how: God's knowing is a cause of things insofar as it has His will attached. — This is supported by an argument which also supports the major premise assumed at the outset [see § iii]. [*Antecedent*:] God's existing is His act of understanding: so [*1st inference*:] God is a cause of things by His intellect: so [*2nd inference*:] God's ideal knowing is a cause of things insofar as it has His will joined to it.

The antecedent is clear [from article 4 above], and drawing the first inference is obvious* by now. The second inference is clear from the assigned account of how understanding is a cause of things. Even so, the second inference is confirmed in the text by the special name used: as a cause of things, God's knowing is customarily called "approving knowledge."

* *multa*

Doubts about the first inference

vi. Concerning the first inference in this argument, the one from

God's existing is His act of understanding
to
hence He is an agent-cause through His intellect,
doubt arises as to what foundation it has. After all, two objections arise.

(1) One is an objection to the very truth of it. After all, the following inference

God's existing is His act of understanding.
hence He produces the Son or the Holy Spirit
through His intellect

fails, since both are produced by God through His nature, as will come out below [1.57 q.41, a.2].

(2) The other comes from the opinion of those who hold that God causes everything by necessity of His nature. These philosophers concede that God's ex-

¹ The point seems to be that being-in-the-subject-*x* is a necessary but not sufficient condition for a form *f* to be "active." But given that *f* is in *x*, *f*'s having propensity to a definite effect *e* suffices to make *x*'s being-*f* a source of *x*'s producing-*e* and so suffices to make *f* (so situated) "active."

isting is His act of understanding, but they deny the alleged consequence by saying that, while God produces things "through" His intellect *as a side-light** (He does understand, after all, that He is causing things), He produces them only "through" His nature *as the cause*.†

* *concomitantes*

† *causality*

vii. The SHORT ANSWER to this is that the foundation for this inference is the following proposition: agent-causing through one's intellect is more complete, loftier, and more far-reaching than agent-causing through one's nature.

This proposition is supported in 2 *CG* c.23. With it in place, the following inference is perfectly in order. We start with

if God's existing is His act of understanding, then all God's effects are in God as mental objects,

which was shown to hold earlier [in a.5], because effects have to pre-exist in the essence of their cause in the manner set by that cause's essence. But if all [effects] are *both* in God's existing *and* in His act of understanding *as such*, and it is more complete, loftier, and farther-reaching to be their cause through one's act of understanding than through one's existing alone, then since one should attribute to God what is most complete, loftiest, and most far-reaching in causing and manner of causing, no blame whatever can attach to the inference

hence God is the cause of things through His intellect.

viii. * As for objection [2], drawn from the opinion of certain philosophers, I have already made it clear that they go wrong in denying the consequence.

* As for the one touching on Trinitarian matters [objection (1)], I say that the objection is not germane. For what we are talking about in this article is [God's status as] a genuinely *efficient cause*, which is unintelligible without an essential otherness between cause and effect. Productions remaining purely within the agent* are not, genuinely and properly speaking, cases of "causing," and the Father is not, genuinely and properly speaking, the "cause" of the Son, because the substance of each is numerically the same substance. And so it is no wonder if the inference drawn in the text does not hold in Their case. — However, one could also answer this objection along another line. One could say that the inference presented in the text holds wherever the thing-producible does not conflict with being produced-through-intellect. For if the producible-thing-x conflicted with this, then even though *x* pre-existed as a mental object in the cause, *etc.*, it would still never follow, obviously, that *x* could be produced "through the intellect." Well, such is the story in the case at hand. For a divine Person conflicts with being produced after the fashion of an artifact, while other things do not. And so the inference to

* *ad intra*

hence God is agent-cause through His intellect goes through for other things, but not for divine Persons. God [the Father] is Their Author through His nature, as will emerge below [1 *ST* q.41, a.2].

On the answer *ad* (2)

ix. In the answer *ad* (2), look forward to a further discussion of it, which will be forthcoming when God's causality of things is treated in its own right [in 1 *ST* q.46, a.1].

Does God's optimal knowing extend to non-entities?

In I Sent. d.38, a.4, In III Sent. d.14, a.2, q^a.2, I CG c.66, de Veritate. q.2, a.8

It seems that God would not have scientific knowledge of non-entities.

* vera (1) God knows scientifically only what is true.* 'True thing' and 'being' are equivalent terms [*convertuntur*].¹ So His science does not extend to non-beings.

(2) Genuine knowing requires a likeness between the knower and the known. Things that do not exist can have no likeness to God, who is Existing Itself. So things that don't exist cannot be known by God.

(3) Also, God's optimal knowing is a cause of the things known. Well, there is no cause of non-entities, because what does not exist has no cause. Therefore, God does not have such knowledge of non-entities.

ON THE OTHER HAND, there is what the Apostle says in Romans 4:17, "who calleth those things which be not, as though they were."

ANSWER: God knows scientifically all items whatever that "are" in any way or sense. There is no problem with saying that items "are" in a qualified sense, when they "are not" if one is speaking without that qualification.[†] The things that unqualifiedly "are" are just those in actuality.[‡] Items not in actuality are potential — in the power of God or of a creature, be it active power or passive potency, be it power to suppose or imagine or signify in any way. So all that can be brought about, thought up, or spoken of by a creature, plus all that God Himself can bring about — all these God knows, even if they are not actual.² And by this measure He can be said to have "optimal knowledge" even of non-beings.

¹ The Latin adjective '*verus*' was used not only where we use 'true' but also where we use 'real'. For us, 'real thing' and 'being' are the equivalent terms.

² Think of all there is as the actual world in a Kripke model for quantified modal logic; then God cognizes the "domain" of the model plus the states of affairs in all its worlds.

Next one needs to notice a variety among the non-actuals.

* Some are not now actual but have been or will be: all of these God is said to know with sight-knowledge.* For since God's act of understanding (which is His existing) is measured by eternity, which is without succession and covers all of time. God's "present regard" bears upon all of time and everything obtaining at any time as being presently[†] subject to His gaze.

* Other items are in God's power or that of a creature but are not actual, never will be actual, and never have been actual. Of these items God is not said to have sight-knowledge but knowledge of "simple understanding."[‡] We talk this way because, in our use of 'see', the things we "see" have a being outside the seer distinct from their being-seen.

TO MEET THE OBJECTIONS — *ad* (1): in whatever way non-actuals are in potentiality, in that way they have a truth to them; for it is true that those items "are in potency."³ And that is how God knows them to be.

ad (2): since God is Existing Itself, each thing participates in His likeness in whatever fashion it "is," just as each thing participates in heat in whatever fashion it is hot. Thus, the items that "are" in potency [share a likeness to God in that fashion and hence] are known by God, even though they are not actual.

ad (3): God's knowing is a cause when conjoined to His will. So,

'Everything God knows exists or did or will exist' does not have to be true — only the ones He selects to exist or permits to exist. And again, what is in God's knowledge is not that those items do exist but that they can.

³ Alternatively: in whatever way non-actuals are in potentiality, in that way they have a realness to them; for it is really the case that (in the power of God) "it is potentially true that they are." In a Kripke model, what is potentially true in the actual world is true in a possible world accessible from here.

Cajetan's Commentary

The title is clear. — In the body of the article, two jobs are done: (1) he answers the question in the affirmative; (2) he differentiates God's knowledge of items that are, in different ways, non-beings.

Analysis of the article

ii. As to job (1), the conclusion is: One can say that God has "science" of non-beings. — The support goes thus. [*Antecedent:*] God knows all the items that "are" in any sense; [*1st inference:*] so He knows all that can be brought about, thought up, or spoken

of by His own power or that of a creature; [*2nd inference:*] so He knows items that are not actual; [*3rd inference:*] so one can say He has optimal knowledge of non-beings.

The first inference is supported by distinguishing the senses of 'being', i.e. (1) without qualification vs. (2) with-a-qualifier,¹ and then by dividing 'with-a-qua-

¹ Quine's dictum, 'to be is to be a value of a bound variable', was meant to eliminate sense (2) of 'being'. In a Kripke model for quantified modal logic, the dictum captures sense (1) without eliminating sense (2).

lifier* according to the several kinds of potentiality, viz. those of being in
 – the Creator's power vs. a creature's power
 – something's active power vs. its passive potency
 – a power to affect the real vs. a power to think-up, etc. — The second inference is self-evident, because all these [ways to be potential] are [ways to be] non-actual. — The third is obvious, too, because, given that certain items are not "beings" without a qualifier, but "potential beings," and "potential" is a diminishing qualifier, a negation of being is perfectly true of them in unqualified usage,* and so [in such usage] they are "non" beings, as a potential man is truly "not-a-man," and potential profit is "not wealth."
 Job (2) is a sorting out of names: God is said to know one class of non-beings with "sight knowledge"; another class, with "simple understanding." The reason for the names is that, in our usage, things meet two conditions for us to say we "see" them:
 (a) they are present† objects to us as seers;
 (b) they have a distinct being outside the seer.²
 So God knows with sight-knowledge, we say, the items that are [or obtain] at some time, while we say He does not see but simply understands the ones that are [or obtain] at no time. For thanks to the eternal character of God's knowing, items that are at-some-time meet the two conditions, while those that are at-no-time meet neither.³

² Condition (b) is eminently defensible as a semantic rule for 'see', but it is routinely flouted by skeptics and Husserlians. The skeptics say that we see hallucinations (so maybe everything we see is illusory). Husserlians reply that "objectivity" can be salvaged from the skeptic by halves: we can certify the "objects of consciousness" while bracketing the question of extra-mental existence. For Aquinas, neither move is acceptable. To a skeptic, he would say that a hallucinator has an odd experience but does not "see" at all. To Husserl he would say that 'object of consciousness' does not define a uniform class. For 'O is an object of sight' carries a real existential implication, $\exists x(x \text{ is seen as } O)$, while 'O is an object of thought' carries no such implication.

³ This sentence clarifies how conditions (a) and (b) apply in the odd case of God. If x exists at a time t , x clearly meets

A minor doubt

iv. There is a small doubt concerning this part. [Assumption:] The [nominal] differentiation [of God's knowledge] does not apply to non-beings as non-beings but as beings; [inference:] so its relevance to an article dealing with knowledge of non-beings is coincidental. — The assumption is obviously right, because the items that "are" at some time pertain to sight-knowledge precisely by virtue of "being at-some-time actual," and not insofar as they are non-beings. So [the differentiation applies to them as beings].

The SHORT ANSWER is that the differentiation touches non-beings in both ways, i.e., insofar as they are and insofar as they are not. What is known with simple understanding about items never actual but always potential is not just [positive descriptions like] "entities in potency" but also negations of actuality [like "not actual at any time"]. Similarly, what is known from eternity with sight knowledge about items at some time actual is not just [positive descriptions like] "entities actual at a time" but also negations of actuality at another time. The reason for these facts is that a negation is known through an affirmation and follows the affirmation's classification in being and being-known.⁴ Thus the differentiation in the text fully covers non-beings, relevantly to the purpose at hand.

condition (b) at t ; but how does x meet condition (a) to God? The answer has to be that, for the eternal God, His "presently" seeing x just means: for some value of t , God knows x to be at t . Thus, while *human* "present seeing" is an affair of McTaggart's A-series, God's present is not. The A-series present = the now-state of affairs in time, where our seeing is one of the affairs in time, and 'now' is indexical rather than unique. But God's present is unique, His seeing is not one of the affairs in time, only its objects are things-in-time. See below, a. 13.

⁴ The point seems to be that 'φ-things are always potential' (a time-universal affirmative) implies the negative 'φ-things are never actual', which remains time-universal; the particular affirmative 'φ-things are actual at t_1 ' is known to be consistent with a negation that is also particular, and 'φ-things are actual just at t_1 ' implies such negations.

Does God take cognizance of evils?

In I Sent. d.36, q.1, a.2, l CG c.71, de Veritate q.2, a.15, Quidl. XI, q.2

It looks as though God takes no cognizance of evils.

(1) Aristotle says in *De Anima III* that an intellect not in potency does not experience privation, and evil is "privation of good," as Augustine says. So since God's intellect is never in potency but always in act, as came out above [in a.2], it looks as though God takes no cognizance of evils.

(2) In every case, moreover, scientific knowledge either causes the known or is caused by it. In God's case, such knowledge neither causes evil nor is caused by it. Therefore His knowledge does not cover evils.

(3) Besides, every object known is taken into cognizance through its likeness or through its opposite. What God knows He takes into cognizance through His own essence, as emerged above. That essence is not a likeness of evil; but neither is it an "opposite" to evil, since nothing is "contrary" to the divine essence, as Augustine observes in *The City of God XII*. Therefore God does not take evils into cognizance.

(4) Also, what is not taken into cognizance through itself, but through another, is taken incompletely. Evil is not taken into cognizance through itself by God, because then there would have to be evil in God (since the known has to be in the knower). If it is therefore taken into cognizance through another, *i.e.* through good, it will be known by God incompletely (which is impossible because no cognizance of God's is incomplete). Ergo, God's knowing does not cover evils.

ON THE OTHER HAND, there is Proverbs 15:11, "Hell and destruction are before God."

ANSWER: in order to take cognizance of something "completely," one has to take note of everything that can affect it.* Well, there are good things that can be affected by becoming corrupted through evils. So God would not be taking cognizance of the good things

completely, if He did not also take cognizance of evils. Now, how it is possible to cognize an item — any item — is set by how the item "is." So since the "is" of an evil [*esse mali*] is privation of a good, God knows the evils through the very fact that He knows the goods — as shadows are known through light. This is why Denis says in c. 7 of *De divinis nominibus* that God "obtains vision of darkness through Himself, seeing the shadows no other way than by the Light."

TO MEET THE OBJECTIONS — *ad* (1): Aristotle's remark should be taken to mean that an intellect not in potency does not experience privation through a lack or absence within itself. This interpretation fits the context, for he had just said that a point (or any indivisible item) is known through absence of division. The reason for this is the fact that simple forms and indivisibles are not in act in our intellect, only in potency; if they were *in act* in our intellect, they would not be known through the absence [of another, but directly]. This is also why simple forms *are* known directly by separated substances. God, therefore, does not know an evil through any lack or absence in Him, but through [knowing] a good opposed to that evil.

ad (2): God's knowing does not cause an evil; but it does cause a good through which the evil is known.

ad (3): although an evil is not "opposite" to God's essence (which is not corruptible by evil), it is opposed to His effects. These latter He knows through His essence, and by knowing them He knows the evils opposed to them.

ad (4): knowing an item only through another is incomplete cognition *if the item is knowable through itself*. Evil is not knowable through itself, because its makeup is being a privation of good. So the only way it can be defined or known is "through good."

PG 3, 869

c. 6,
430b 24
Confusiones III,
c.7, PL.32, 688

q.14, aa. 2, 5

c.2,
PL.41, 350

* *omnia quae pos-
sunt illi accidere*

Cajetan's Commentary

The title is clear. — In the body of the article he (1) answers the question with yes and (2) explains how.
ii. As to job (1), the conclusion directly answering the question is yes: God knows evils. — This is supported. [*Antecedent:*] God knows all good things completely; [*1st inference:*] so He knows all that can happen to affect any of them; [*2nd inference:*] so He knows evils.

The antecedent and first inference are left as obvious. The second rests on the ground that there are goods to which being corrupted through evils can happen, as one sees with natural as well as moral goods.

iii. As to job (2), how God knows them is "through another," so that the supported, illustrated, and confirmed conclusion is: God knows evils "through goods." — First it is supported. [*Antecedent:*] The to-be of an evil lies in privation of a good; [*inference:*] so the knowability of an evil lies in negating a good; so the reason God knows evils is because He knows goods. The antecedent is clear. The inference is supported: how each thing is set how it is known. — Then the conclusion is illustrated: as shadows are known "through light." — Then it is confirmed by Denis's authority, as you see.

Does God take cognizance of particulars?

*In I Sent d36, q. 1, a. 1, In II Sent. d.3, a.2, a.3, I CG cc. 50, 63, 65,
Q. Disp. de Anima a.20, de Veritate q. 2, a.5, CT cc. 132-133, In I Perihern., lectio 14*

* *singularis* It seems that God would not know particulars.*

(1) After all, God's intellect is far more independent of matter than ours. But even the human intellect, thanks to its immateriality, does not know particulars; rather, "reason deals with universals; the senses, with particulars," as it says in *De Anima II*. Therefore, God does not know particulars.

c.5.
417b 22

(2) Besides, the only proficiencies in us that have to do with knowing particulars are those that take in images [*species*] not abstracted from material conditions. But things in God are supremely abstract from all materiality. Hence God does not know particulars.

(3) Furthermore, every cognition occurs *via* some likeness. Well, a likeness of particulars, as particulars, does not seem to be in God, because the source of particularity is matter; and since matter is only a being in potency, it is utterly dissimilar to God, who is pure act. Therefore God cannot know particulars.

ON THE OTHER HAND, there is Proverbs 16:2 (Vulgate), "all the ways of a man are open to His eyes."

ANSWER: God takes cognizance of particulars. All the complete traits in creatures pre-exist in God in a higher way, as I made clear already. Well, knowing particulars is a complete trait in people. So it must be the case that God [has it, too, in a higher way and so] knows them. Even Aristotle thought it awkward to say that we know something God doesn't. Against Empedocles, he argued in *De Anima I* and *Metaphysics III* that God would be feeble minded if He didn't grasp "strife." But complete traits found separately in lower things exist as one, simple trait in God. So while we use two faculties, one to grasp universal and immaterial things, another to grasp particular and material ones, God knows both through His simple intellect.

Now, as to how this can be the case, some have tried to show it by saying that God knows particulars through general causes; nothing turns up in any particular [they say] that does not come from some general cause. They give this example: if an astronomer knew all the general motions of heaven, he could predict all future eclipses. — But this is not enough. Particulars get from general causes certain forms and powers; but however many of these are added together, they are only individuated by individual matter. A person who knew Socrates by forms like being-white, being-a-son-of-Sophoniscus, and any other such forms you please, would not know him as *this man*. So by this theory, God would not know particulars in their particularity.¹

¹ Properties such as being-snub-nosed, *etc.*, occur "with particularity" in Socrates. For some metaphysicians, this particularity needs no explanation. Properties occur automatically in the real as "thin particulars," they say, and an individual

Others have maintained that God knows particulars by applying general causes to particular effects. — This is no solution at all. No one can "apply" the one to the other unless he already knows it. An alleged application cannot be the whole explanation of knowing particulars; it presupposes a knowledge of them.

Let us turn elsewhere, then. The right thing to say is that, since God is a cause of things through His knowing (as stated above), His knowing reaches as far as His causality reaches. God's active power extends not only to forms (where things get a general makeup) but also down to their matter, as will be shown below: so God's knowing must reach all the way down to the particulars that are individuated by matter. For since the reason He knows things other than Himself through His own essence is *because* this essence bears to things such likeness as comes of being their active source, it must be the case that His essence is a sufficient source of His knowing all the things that come-to-be through Him — knowing them not only in general, but also in particular. The same would be true of any artist's knowledge, if he produced the art work's total self and not just its form.

q 14, a 8

q 44, a 2

TO MEET THE OBJECTIONS — *ad* (1): our intellect abstracts an intelligible form from its individuating factors; so our mind's intentional form can't be a likeness of the individuating factors, and this is why our intellect does not know particulars. But the divine intellect's intensional form, God's essence, is not matter-independent by abstraction, but in and of itself, standing as the source of *all* the factors in a thing's composition, both those that determine its classification and those that individuate it.² Thus, through His essence God knows not only universals but also particulars.

ad (2): although the divine intellect's form does not meet material conditions by its own being (as images received in imagination or the senses do), its power still reaches to material and immaterial things alike, as I just said.

ad (3): while matter lies far from God's likeness thanks to its potentiality, still, by having even potential being it retains some likeness to the divine being.

like Socrates (a "thick particular") could be known by God simply as a stack of thin particulars. But for Aquinas, a property's particularity needed to be explained. The snubness in Socrates was "this case," he said, because it belonged to *this nose*, and the particularity of "this nose" had to be explained in turn by matter. Thus Aquinas held that God would not know this man, if He did not know matter.

² Aquinas has sometimes been accused of confusing matter-independence with abstractness. This passage is good evidence that he did not.

 Cajetan's Commentary

The title means particular *material things*. They are the topic of doubt, not immaterial ones. It was already settled that God knows Himself, a particular obviously [and immaterial]. — In the body of the article, he (1) answers yes to the question and (2) deals with how.

Analysis of the article, I

ii. To accomplish job (1), he does three tasks. (a) He answers the question with yes: God takes cognizance of particulars. — The support goes thus. [*Major:*] All complete traits in creatures pre-exist in God in a higher manner; [*minor:*] cognition of particulars is a complete trait of man; [*conclusion:*] ergo such cognition pre-exists in God in a higher manner.

(b) He shows the strength of this support from Aristotle's authority. The key idea is that whatever we know, God must know — which is just what Aristotle assumed against Empedocles.

(c) He clarifies a phrase that comes into the conclusion from the middle term, namely, "in a higher manner". He says it amounts in this case to the fact that we get to know particulars and universals through different faculties, while God comprehends all things, material and immaterial, through His simple intellect. This is supported on the ground that traits found divided off from one another in lower things are present in God as one trait and without composition.

Clarifying the major

iii At this point, notice that the major, "All complete traits found in creatures pre-exist in God in a higher manner," does not hold for form-wise pre-existence, unless you are talking about traits that are unqualifiedly complete; so although in us an act of knowing a particular = an act of sensing, the text does not say "sensation" but "knowing particulars" is a trait pertaining to our completeness. For sensation is not unqualifiedly complete; it does not pre-exist in God form-wise, only virtually. But knowing the particular is unqualifiedly complete, and the conclusion had to be that this pre-existed in God form-wise.¹

Analysis of the article, II

iv. To perform job (2), he does three things: he handles two opinions and reaches a determination.

The first opinion as to how God understands particulars consists in saying that He takes cognizance of particulars by knowing all their general causes. Support for the view that this suffices goes thus. Nothing arises in any particular that did not come to be there from a general cause; ergo, if all general causes are

known, the whole particular is known. The idea is also illustrated with the eclipse example.

This opinion is then refuted. [*Antecedent:*] If God knew particulars by just knowing general causes. [*consequent:*] He would not know particulars in their particularity (contrary to what Aquinas had shown). Attaching this consequent is supported as follows. [*Point assumed:*] The aggregate [of effects] present in a particular from general causes does not suffice, as such, to constitute a particular; [*inference:*] so [knowing that aggregate would not amount to knowing the particular in its particularity]. — The point assumed is supported and illustrated. The support is: take away designated matter (or the source of individuation, whatever it is, since it is certainly not universal), and a particular will never arise. This is illustrated with the case of man.

v. The second opinion consists in saying: God knows particulars by applying universals to particulars. — The counter is that "applying" can only be done to the already known; so applying the universal to the particular presupposes (and does not bring about) knowledge of the particular.

vi. The determination reached is: [*1st part:*] God knows particulars [*2nd part:*] through His own essence. The support for the first part goes thus. [*Antecedent:*] God's optimal knowing is a cause of things; [*1st inference:*] so it extends to everything to which His causality extends; [*2nd inference:*] so [it extends] to particulars. The antecedent along with the first inference is well known. The second inference is supported on the ground that God is not just the cause of forms but also of individuating matter. — Support for the second part is as follows. [*Antecedent:*] God knows things other than Himself through His own essence as the likeness or active source of those things; [*1st inference:*] so His essence is a sufficient source for knowing all the things that come to be through Him, even in the particular; [*conclusion:*] so He knows particulars through His own essence. The antecedent is clearly right from points already stated. The inference is obvious from its terms and from the support given for the first part.

Lastly, the whole argument is illustrated by the example of an artist's knowledge, if we imagine it to be the cause of the artwork's form and matter.

Notes on the whole

vi. The entire solution reached in this text assumes God to be the proximate cause of prime matter; this is allowably assumed here, because it is going to get a special examination below. If it is conceded, the remaining points are clear and undoubted.

In the answers to the objections, many points arise that will need discussion, but not here; they will become clear at the proper places below.

¹ On form-wise vs. virtual pre-existence, see the commentary on q.6, a.2.

Can God know infinitely much?

In *I Sent.* d.39, q.1, a.4; 1 *CG* c.69; *de Veritate*, q.2, a.9; q.20, a.4 ad 1;
Quodl. III, q.2, a.1; *Comp. Theol.* c.133

It seems that God cannot take infinitely many items into His cognizance.

(1) An infinite set as such is an unknown, because it is "that whose quantity is such that, whatever part one takes, there is more to take outside that part," as it says in *Physics III*. And Augustine says (in *City of God XII*) "the knower's comprehension reaches the end of what his knowledge comprehends." But there is no "reaching the end" of infinitely many. That many cannot be comprehended, then, by God's knowledge.

(2) If the suggestion is made that things boundlessly many in themselves are yet bounded for God's optimal knowing, it runs into the following counter. By definition, the "infinite" is what cannot be gone through; the "finite" is what can (as it says in *Physics III*). Well, an infinite [amount] is impossible for either a finite thing or an infinite thing to traverse, as Aristotle proved in *Physics VI*. So the infinite cannot be "bounded" for a finite thing, nor even for an infinite one. Ergo infinitely many items are not "bounded" for God's knowing, which is infinite.

(3) Besides, God's optimal knowing is the "measure" of what it knows. But it goes against the definition of an infinite [set] for it to be measured. Ergo infinitely many items cannot be known by God.

ON THE OTHER HAND, Augustine says in *City of God XII*: "Infinitely many is incalculable but not incomprehensible to the One whose knowing is incalculable."

ANSWER: since God knows optimally not only things that are actual but also items that "are" potentially, either by His own power or by that of a creature (as shown above), and since these are admittedly limitless in number, one is compelled to say that God knows infinitely many items. And even if His sight-knowledge (which is only of things that are, will be, or have been) does not cover infinitely many things, as some writers maintain (because we do not posit the world to have existed from eternity, nor that generation and motion will go on forever, so as to multiply individuals to infinity), still, if one thinks the matter through more carefully, one is compelled to say that God knows infinitely many items even with sight-knowledge. For God knows the thoughts and affections of our hearts, which will rise to be infinitely many as rational creatures go on living everlasting life, "world without end."

The reason God's knowledge extends infinitely is because the extent of any knower's knowing is set by the form which is the source of the knowing. [Such a form is a sense image or else an intentional form.]

* Thus an image belonging to one of the senses,* informing one of our sense-powers, is a likeness of just one individual; through such an image, only one individual can be known.

* An intensional form,* belonging to our intellect, is the likeness of a thing in a specific nature, and numberless individuals can share in that nature; thus our intellect, through its intensional form of man, knows in a way numberless human beings. I say "in a way," because how our intellect knows these people is not as they are distinguished from one another, but as (and to the extent that) they share in the nature of the species, because our intellect's intensional form is not a likeness of people in their individual factors but only in those that determine our species.

* species intellectualibus

* But the divine essence, through which the divine intellect understands, is a sufficient likeness of all the things that are or can be, not only in their shared factors but also in the factors unique to each, as was shown above.

q.14, aa.6, 11

Hence it follows that God's optimal knowing extends to infinitely many things, even insofar as they are distinct from one another.

TO MEET THE OBJECTIONS — *ad* (1): "the definition of 'infinite' puts it under how-many," as Aristotle said in *Physics I*. But a correct tally of how-many¹ mentions parts in order.¹ So to know an infinite [set] after the fashion of an infinite [quantity] is to know part-after-part. By that approach there is no way an infinite [set] can be known, because no matter how many parts have been taken into cognizance, there always remain more, not yet taken in by the knower. But God does not know an infinite thing or set of things that way, as if counting part-after-part, because He knows all things at once, as I said above, not successively. So nothing prevents Him from knowing infinitely many items.²

c.2, 185a.33
 † quantitas

ad (2): traversal implies succession of parts, and that is why an infinite extent cannot be traversed either by a finite thing or by an infinite one. But the definition of comprehension requires only *correspondence*,³ because we call a thing "comprehended" when nothing of it is outside the comprehensor. So it does not go against the definition of an infinite for it to be comprehended by an infinite. And thus what is infinite in itself can be called "bounded" for God's knowledge — provided that 'bounded' means 'comprehended', not 'traversable'.³

q.14, a.7

‡ adaequatio

¹ To determine "how much," one counts through a set (n at a time), or one lays off an expanse by applying a unit measure (again and again). Thus one gets parts-in-order.

² Aquinas does admit an actual infinity — not of created things in *esse naturae*, of course, but of creatable items in *esse intentionali* in God. Those who deny that 'actual infinity' is even conceptually sound can get no support from him.

³ This is a crucial text, especially if 'adaequatio' means *one-to-one* correspondence; that was Cantor's most important tool in pioneering the theory of transfinities.

c.6, 207a.7
 c.18, PL.41, 368

c.4;
 204a.3

c.7;
 238b.17

c.18;
 PL.41, 368

q.14, a.9

* species sensibilis

ad (3): God's optimal knowledge is not a quantitative "measure" of things (in that sense an infinite set has no measure) but is the standard for a thing's genuineness.* Each thing has the genuineness of its nature to the extent it measures up to God's knowledge, as an artwork has to the extent it measures up to art.

So even if an infinite set (say, infinitely many people) or an endless expanse of something (infinite air, some of the ancients said) were actual, they would still have a determinate and finite being, because their being would be limited to certain definite natures. So, they would still be "measurable" by God's optimal knowing.

Cajetan's Commentary

The title is clear. — Three jobs are done in the article: (1) he answers the question overall; (2) he answers it for sight-knowledge in particular; (3) he gives a reason for both conclusions.

ii. As to job (1), the answer for God's overall knowledge is: He knows infinitely many items. — The support goes thus. God knows all things in actuality plus all those in His power or a creature's power to make; so He knows infinitely many. The inference is obvious, because the items involved are admittedly infinite in multitude.

iii. As to job (2), whether His sight-knowledge covers infinitely much, Aquinas says two things. (a) He rehearses a negative opinion along with what makes it plausible. Generation is not going on forever, either in the past or in the future; so only finitely many things are, will be, or have been; hence God's sight-knowledge does not cover infinitely much. — (b) He refutes this opinion and supports an affirmative conclusion. The count of rational creatures' thoughts and affections will go on rising forever; so God's sight-knowledge covers infinitely many items. Thus the first opinion did not take into account every kind of coming-to-be, but only the kind dependent on the motion of the heavens; that is why it went wrong.¹

¹ Physical comings-to-be depend on astrophysical conditions, but not all psychological ones do. Angels and human souls will generate thoughts, etc., independently of the heavenly bodies. More fundamental than Cajetan's point is a

iv. As to job (3), a causal factor is assigned to explain how God knows infinitely many items with His overall knowing and with His sight-knowledge, as follows.

[*Antecedent:*] The extent of someone's knowing is set by how much the form at the source of the knowing represents; [*1st inference:*] so the extent of God's knowing is set by how much His essence represents; [*2nd inference:*] so God's knowing extends to infinitely many items, even as they are distinct from one another. Thus the supporting argument both *establishes that* God knows so much and *explains why*.

The antecedent is supported case-by-case, beginning with sense-knowing and sense-images, then going to intellectual knowing and intensional forms, as found in us. In a sense-power, the image represents numerically one thing, no more; and so the sense-knowing extends likewise. In our intellect, an intensional form manages to represent a form-wise one [*i.e.* one nature], in which infinitely many cases potentially share; and so our intellectual knowing extends likewise. — The first inference is supported on the ground that God's essence is the "form" through which the divine intellect understands. — The second inference rests on the ground that God's essence succeeds in representing all the things that are or can be, not only in shared factors but also in those unique to each, as already said.

logical one, however. The first theory limited the count of what God sees to first-order individuals. Aquinas included second and higher-order items.

Does God's optimal knowledge cover future contingencies?

1 *ST* q.19, a.8, q.86, a.4; q.115, a.6; *In I Sent.* d.38, a.5; 1 *CG* c.67; *de Veritate* q.2, a.12; *de Malo* q.16, a.7; *Quodl. XI*, q.3, *Opus. De rationibus fidei contra Graecos, Saracenos et Armenos* 10; *Comp. Theol.* cc.132-133; *In Periherm.* I, lectio 14

It seems that God's optimal knowing does not cover future events that are contingent.¹

(1) What comes of a necessary cause, after all, is a necessary effect.² God's optimal knowing is a cause of objects known by it (as said above). So since God's optimal knowing is necessary, it follows that the objects known by it are necessary objects. Hence His optimal knowing does not cover contingent objects.

(2) Besides, in every conditional whose antecedent is independently* necessary, the consequent is necessary, too. For the antecedent stands to the consequent as premises do to a [validly drawn] conclusion; and what follows from necessary premises is none other than a necessary conclusion, as is proved in *Posterior Analytics I*.³ Well, here is a conditional:

(C) if God knew this will happen, it will happen; and (C) is true, because God's optimal knowing does not cover any points but true ones.⁴ But the antecedent of (C) is necessary in its own right, both because it is eternal and because it is stated in the past tense.⁵ So the consequent of (C) is also necessary in its own right. [But the word 'this' can be pointing to any state of affairs you please.] So *anything* known by God [as going to occur] is a necessary occurrence. [So none is a contingent occurrence.] And so God's optimal knowing does not cover contingent affairs.

(3) Also, everything "known" by God has to be the case, because everything "scientifically known" by us has to be the case, and God's knowing is more certain

than our science. But no future contingency has to be the case. So no future contingency is known by God.

ON THE OTHER HAND, Psalm 33:15 says, "He fasteneth their hearts alike; He considereth all their works" (human works). But people's deeds are contingent occurrences insofar as they are subject to free choice. Ergo, God knows future contingent occurrences.

ANSWER: it was shown above that God knows both everything in [current] actuality and what is possible by His own power or that of a creature; so since some of the latter are contingent occurrences future to us, it follows that He knows future contingencies.

To get this point clear, one needs to bear in mind that a contingent event can be looked at in two ways:

(1) One can look at the occurrence *in itself* as already actual; so viewed,

- it is not being looked at as future (but present),
- nor as unsettled either way (but as one definite outcome).⁶

Hence, as so looked at, the occurrence can be unmistakably subject to sure cognition, such as eyesight, as when I see that Socrates is sitting.

(2) The other way to look at a contingent event is *in its cause*; so considered,

- it is looked at as future and
- as "up in the air," not settled to one outcome,

because a "contingent cause" bears the causal relation to opposed outcomes.⁷ So looked at, a contingent oc-

good measure, the objector threw the antecedent of (C) into the past tense. His license for doing so was this. Let t_1 be an arbitrarily chosen time, and let t_0 be any time earlier than t_1 . If 'God knows that p ' is true in eternity, it is true throughout time. In that case, it is true at t_0 . But anything true at t_0 is correctly expressed at t_1 in the past tense. Thus the objector could use the fact that a truth in the past tense has the (weak) necessariness of being fixed forever after, etc.

⁶ Since a contingent event e is one such that $0e$ & $0-e$, but what is actual at each moment of time verifies the laws of excluded middle ($e \vee \neg e$) and non-contradiction ($\neg(e \& \neg e)$), the actual outcome of a contingency must be either e & $0-e$ or else $\neg e$ & $0e$. In other words, the event turns up (without being necessary) or else fails to turn up (without being impossible). This is its occurrence "in itself as already actual."

⁷ A "contingent cause," c , was one whose effect was irreducibly disjunctive: because c obtains (at or earlier than t), either e_1 or e_2 or ... e_n obtains (at or later than t), where the e_1 , e_2 ... e_n are mutually exclusive. Thus even if c 's working is actual or predictable, it leaves $0e$, & $0-e$, for each e_i in the disjunction. This is what Aquinas called looking at e_i "in its cause," as "unsettled either way" [*ut ad utrumlibet contingens*], etc. This topic will recur at q.19, a.8 and at 2/1 *ST* q.10, a.4. To interpret the modalities here, use a modal system called D. It

¹ A "contingent" future event could "go either way." If e was such an event, e was neither necessary nor impossible, but $0e$ & $0-e$. Well, e was such in some sense of these modalities, and more than one sense will be seen.

² This is a claim about the "because" relation between states of affairs. Suppose that because S_1 obtains, S_2 obtains; the claim adds: if S_1 obtains necessarily, so does S_2 .

³ A "conditional" was what we call a strict implication: $\Box(p \supset q)$. Aristotle proved that if $\Box(p \supset q)$, then $(\Box p \supset \Box q)$.

⁴ Underlying (C) is ' $\Box(\text{God knows this will happen} \supset \text{this will happen})$ '. The objector hopes to get ' $\Box(\text{God knows this will happen})$ ', so as to get ' $\Box(\text{this will happen})$ '.

⁵ The objector does not try to make 'God knows this will happen' necessary in the strong, modern sense (as if the content of His knowledge were invariant across all possible worlds), but only in a weaker sense: invariant across times. God's knowing is eternal. So, for any proposition p , if 'God knows that p ' is true, it is true in eternity. But what is true in eternity seems to be true throughout time (i.e. always true), and 'always true' was one of the weak interpretations of 'necessary'. Another weak interpretation was 'unalterable now or in future', which attached to anything in the past. So for

currence is not subject with surety to any cognition. So anyone who knows a contingent effect just "in its cause" has only conjectural cognizance of it. But God knows all contingent occurrences not just as contained in causes but as they are each actual in themselves.

Now, even though contingencies emerge into actuality successively, God does not know them successively (as we do, as each emerges in its own being) but all-at-once. For His cognition is measured by eternity, just as His being is: but eternity, standing all at once, embraces the whole of time, as I said above. Hence all the things that turn up in time are present to God from His eternalness* — not just because He has before Him the accounts explaining things[†] (as some maintain), but because His purview, by being eternal, takes them all in, as they are in His present [*praesentialitas*].

q 10 a.2 ad 4

* *ab aeterno*
† *rationes rerum*

Thus it is evident that contingent occurrences are known by God unmistakably, as they are subject to divine sight thanks to their presentness to Him, but are nevertheless future contingencies when compared to their causes.

TO MEET THE OBJECTIONS — *ad* (1): even when the highest cause is a necessary one, its effects can still be contingent, thanks to a contingent proximate cause of those effects. Thus the germination of a plant is contingent thanks to a contingent proximate cause, even though the sun's motion (which is a first cause of the process) is necessary motion. Similarly, objects known optimally by God are contingent objects thanks to their proximate causes, even though God's optimal knowing (as their first cause) is necessary knowing.⁸

ad (2): some writers take the line that the antecessor

has the axioms of the standard propositional calculus plus two modal axioms, one known as K , $\Box(p \supset q) \supset (\Box p \supset \Box q)$, and one known as D , $\Box p \supset \Box \Box p$, plus the rule of Necessitation. Details are found in G.E. Hughes and M.J. Cresswell, *Introduction to Modal Logic* (London, 1968). Think of a D -model in which the "actual world," w_a , represents the state of things at a time t , and each world accessible from w_a represents a way things can turn out as of a t' later than t . Thus each such world represents a possible future from t . In such a model, any proposition true in at least one world w_i accessible from w_a but not in another such world w_j , picks out a contingent event. When t' arrives, the event will be actual (one way or the other) and "looked at as present." Until then, it is "future" and "looked at in its cause."

⁸ The gist of this reply is to say that the because-relation (because SA_1 obtains, SA_2 obtains) is too heterogeneous to support the sweeping claim that (where the relation holds) if SA_1 obtains necessarily, so does SA_2 . For a *causa* of SA_2 could be any factor that would need mention somewhere in a total explanation of SA_2 ; hence a *causa* could be just a remote, necessary condition. It is easy to think of examples where such a condition (say, the sun rises and sets) obtains invariantly across all versions of how things can go from the present (or from t), and yet SA_2 itself (say, this seed germinates) obtains only in some such versions, not others. The example of solar motion also shows that Aquinas had a pre-modern idea of what features of the universe were "necessary." How to approximate his idea will be explained below, p. 331, note 2.

dent in question,

God knew this (contingent event) will happen is not itself necessary but remains contingent because, even though stated in the past tense, it involves a relation to the future.⁹ — But this involvement does not remove necessariness from it altogether: for even though "the future" sometimes does not come, what *did have* a relation to the future must *have had* it.¹⁰

Other writers hold that this antecedent is contingent [overall] because it is composed of a necessary [part] and a contingent [part], much as the statement, Socrates is a pale man, is contingent [overall].¹¹ — But this, too, comes to nothing. For when one says,

God knew this (contingent event) will happen, the word 'contingent' is only put in as the content of the thing-said* [*i.e.* as content of the indirect discourse], not as a principal part of the proposition; hence the contingency or necessity of that content has nothing to do with whether the proposition itself is necessary or contingent, true or false. Thus

I said a man is [literally] an ass
I said Socrates is running
I said God exists
can all be true, and the same goes for their being ne-

* *ut materia verbi*

⁹ Those who took this line (Bonaventure and Albert the Great on *I Sent.* d.38) sought to avoid conceding

\Box (God knew that this would happen) even in the weak sense of " \Box " that normally goes with past-tense statements. They seized upon the fact that the object of God's knowing is expressed here in the future tense. Thus the antecedent as a whole, they said, posited a cognitive relation between God and the future. But the future as such is unsettled. *Qua* future, this event may or may not turn up. If it does, the relation holds, and 'God knew this would happen' is true. If it does not turn up, the relation fails for want of a terminus, and 'God knew this would happen' is false. So a past-tense statement involving a relation to the future, they held, fails to have an unalterable truth-value until the future comes. Thus such a statement is an exception to the usual rule that past-tense statements have, *qua* past, this weak sort of necessariness.

¹⁰ Aquinas' rejection of this line of reply is too terse to reveal much of his thinking about it. But it did reveal that he declined to tinker with normal tense logic. He declined the proffered exception to the rule about past-tense statements. He can be read as holding that, if 'God knows that p ' is true as of a time t , it must remain true-as-of-at every time t' later than t , regardless of the tense of p . In different words, once God knew that p , it was unalterably the case that God once knew that p ; and 'unalterably the case' is a sense of 'necessarily'.

¹¹ It is true that the modality of a proposition can be no stronger than that of its weakest part — if by 'parts' you mean conjuncts or disjuncts into which the proposition can be analyzed. 'Socrates is a pale man' can be analyzed as a conjunction of 'Socrates is a man' (which cannot be otherwise) and 'Socrates is pale' (which can be otherwise). Hence the whole conjunction can be otherwise. Thus some writers (such as Robert Grosseteste, *De libero arbitrio*) tried to break 'God knew this would happen' into two parts, one necessary ('God knew') and one contingent ('this will happen').

necessary or contingent.¹²

The thing to say, then, is that the antecedent in question is independently necessary.

Granting that much, some authors maintain that the consequent still need not be necessary in *its* own right, because the antecedent is a remote cause of the consequent, the latter remaining contingent thanks to a proximate cause.¹³ — But this is going nowhere. A conditional whose consequent was a contingent effect and whose antecedent was a remote, necessary cause would be a *false conditional*, like

if the sun rises and sets, the crop will sprout.¹⁴

So one must turn elsewhere. The correct thing to say is that, in conditionals where the antecedent posits some [propositional] object pertaining to a mental act, the consequent [matching that object] should be taken according to how it is in the mind, not according to how it is in itself. For example, suppose I say,

If the mind understands something,
it is matter-independent.

The consequent should be taken to say that the “something” as it exists in the mind is matter-independent, not that it is so as it exists in itself. Likewise, if I say,

If God knew something, it will happen,

the consequent should be taken to mean that the “it” as *subject to the divine knowing* will happen, i.e., as *lying in His present*. Well, as lying in God’s present, the “it” is just as necessary as the antecedent, because “whatever is the case has to be the case while it is the case,” as *On Interpretation I* tells us.¹⁵

c 9;
19a 23

¹² Aquinas rejected this strategy because he recognized that verbs of knowing, saying, etc., introduce an intensional object whose content is nothing like a conjunct or disjunct of the overall proposition. Notice that his examples of ‘I said that *p*’ cover a case where *p* is impossible (a man is literally an ass), a case where *p* is contingent (Socrates is running), and a case where *p* is necessary (God exists), to show that these differences in the content of *p* have no bearing on the truth or modality of ‘I said that *p*’. In every case, that proposition, if true-as-of-*t*, is unalterably true-as-of-*t* at each *t*’ later than *t*. So the same sort of unalterability would attach to ‘God knew that *p*’ regardless of the modality of *p*.

¹³ Cf. Alexander of Hales *Summa Theol. I*, 171, 184.

¹⁴ An alleged conditional is falsified by a case where its antecedent is true, but its consequent false. Aquinas picked a conditional famously falsified in this way (the sun rises and sets in years when the crop fails, too), to illustrate the broad point that a successful conditional is far more demanding than a because-relation. Daily sunlight is a factor “because” of which a crop sprouts, but the corresponding conditional fails. Alexander of Hales’ strategy would cause ‘if God knew this will happen, it will happen’ to fail similarly. But it does not fail. Therefore Alexander’s strategy is mistaken.

¹⁵ This is a point of bivalent modeling, guaranteeing the theorem $\Box(\neg p \vee p)$ and thus strict impotence, $\Box(p \supset p)$. Each proposition given the value ‘true’ at present is immune from being given the value ‘false’ at present; and, if the present is the time *t*, each proposition true-as-of-*t* is unalterably true-as-of-*t* at every *t*’ later than *t*. In other words, present-

ad (3): the things which are reduced to actuality temporarily come into *our* cognizance successively in time, but they come into God’s cognizance in eternity, which is above time. To us, therefore, future contingencies cannot be known-for-sure,* because we take cognizance of them as future and contingent. They can be known-for-sure only to God, whose act of understanding is in eternity, above time. Take this comparison. A man going along a road does not see those who are coming along behind him; but a man who sees the whole road from a high place of some sort, sees *all* those who are passing along the road.

* *cetera*

As a result, what is known by us scientifically has to be “settled” [*necessarium*] even as it is in itself, because the things that are in themselves future contingencies cannot be known by us scientifically.¹⁶ But the things that are known by God have to be settled only in the being they have as subject to the divine knowing, as I said; they do not have to be settled in their own being, which is how they are considered [when looked at as] in their particular causes. Now,

truth, as soon as it is present truth, has an unalterability similar to that of past truth. So if this unalterability is all you mean by ‘necessary’ (and it was all Aquinas conceded for the antecedent of (C)), there is no reason to deny ‘necessarily *e* happens’ for any present event *e* whatsoever.

But now: how can an event future to us count as a present event? Aquinas’ solution (incredible to Peter Geach and many others) is to say that an event *e* has two sorts of being: one at eternity, and one *vis-à-vis* its causes in time, so that the same *e* may be future-to-us in the latter being, while present in the former. Each future *e* still lacks being-outside-its-secondary-causes, but it has this other being in which it counts as “present” because eternity is a standing “present” co-actual with every time.

Lastly, Aquinas had to show that *e*’s being present-for-God was the relevant being for purposes of analyzing the conditional (C). He argued that if ‘will happen’ is given its normal, temporal meaning, the clauses of (C) are mismatched. To be right, ‘will happen’ must mean ‘present in eternity as to-happen-at-a-time-future-to-us’. Thus (C) becomes

God knew *e* to happen-at-a-time-future-to-us \supset *e* is present in eternity as to-happen-at-a-time-future-to-us,

and the ‘ \supset ’ applied to the whole and its parts is just tense-logical unalterability of truth-value.

¹⁶ Among the various senses of ‘*necessarium*’, the one wanted here was “necessary in status,” which in turn meant settled in truth-value. A point was an “object of science” when it was scientifically explainable; and in order to be explainable, a point did not have to be an inherently necessary affair (such as one finds in mathematics); it could be any state of affairs whose causes were such that, when they were sufficiently in place, they made it predictable. A future contingency lacked precisely such causes; hence the future contingency remained beyond our science. (For example, the causal factors at work in economics may make an increase in consumer spending predictable, but they will not make the spending of a particular family predictable.) For this account of the “necessariness” of the objects of science, see § *xii* in Cajetan’s commentary on q.1, a. 2.

given these preliminaries, the proposition, everything known by God has to be the case, is customarily disambiguated. The 'has to be' can be *de re* or *de dicto*. If it is taken *de re*, the proposition has divided sense and is false, the meaning being, everything that God knows is a necessary thing.¹⁷ Alternatively, it can be taken *de dicto*; then the proposition has the composed sense and is true, meaning that

'What God knows is true' is a necessary point.¹⁸

Some writers object to this solution, however. They say the *de re/de dicto* distinction makes a difference when the talk is of forms separable from their subject [like whiteness from a tunic]. In such cases, a white thing can be black all over is false *de dicto* but true *de re*. The thing which is white can be black, but the whole proposition, 'a white thing is black all over', can never be true.¹⁹ However, [these writers claim,] when the talk is of forms inseparable from their subject [as blackness is inseparable from being a crow], the distinction between *de re* and

and *de dicto* makes no difference. Thus a black thing (crow) can be white all over is false on both construals.²⁰ Well, being-known-by-God [they say] is inseparable from a thing, because what is known by God cannot be not-known. [So a solution that disambiguates

whatever God knows has to be the case by using the *de re/de dicto* distinction will not work.]

This objection would have merit if the predicate 'known' meant some trait inhering in a subject. But since its meaning boils down to the knower's own act, it is irrelevant whether the known is always [*i.e.* inseparably] a known.²¹ Traits that are not attributed to the known as it stands under the act of knowing can still be attributed to it as it is in itself. Thus 'is a material thing' is attributed to a stone as it is in itself but is not attributed to it as it is an object-of-intellect. [*Pari ratione*, 'is contingent' can be attributed to an event as it is in itself but not as it is subject-to-divine-knowledge.]

¹⁷ Medieval analysis found that modal words were often used ambiguously in ordinary-language sentences. A modality could be used to modify a term within a proposition (and so was called a *de re* modality) or could be used to modify the whole proposition (and so was called *de dicto*). Contemporary analysis retains these terms and confirms the ambiguity of 'whatever God knows has to be the case'. Taken *de re*, it says:

God knows that $p \supset op$.

This goes into disjunctive normal form as

$\sim(\text{God knows that } p) \vee op$,

with the \square governing only the second disjunct. Hence the modal sense is "divided."

¹⁸ The *de dicto* sense is $\square(\text{God knows that } p \supset p)$; the normal form is $\square(\sim \text{God knows that } p \vee p)$; the \square governs the whole disjunction; the modal sense is "composed."

The objection fails because, deceived by the ambiguity, it overlooked the *de dicto* construal, which says nothing against the contingency (in itself) of what God knows.

¹⁹ Again, contemporary analysis agrees. 'A white thing can be black all over' is ambiguous as between the *de re* conjunction,

$(\text{white } x) \ \& \ (\text{black } x)$,

which is consistent and comes out true when $V(x) = \text{a tunic}$, for example, and the *de dicto* claim that

$\square(\text{white } x \ \& \ \text{black } x)$,

which is false for any value of x , because $(\text{white } x \ \& \ \text{black } x)$ is inconsistent in the sense intended (white all over and yet not-white but black all over).

²⁰ A trait essential to a species was one that any possible member would have. Applied to blackness and crows, this doctrine yielded a *de dicto* necessity:

$\square \forall x(\text{crow } x \supset \text{black } x)$,

which excluded as false

$\diamond \exists x(\text{crow } x \ \& \ \text{white } x)$,

which was the *de dicto* sense of 'a crow can be white'. At the same time, a species was such that no actual member of it could cease to be a member of it and still be traced as an individual. Applied to crows, this doctrine yielded:

$\forall x(\text{crow } x \supset \square \text{crow } x)$.

Combining the doctrines of species and essence yielded the joint doctrine that a trait essential to a species was one which no actual member of it could lose and still exist. Applied to crows, this is the *de re* claim,

$\forall x(\text{crow } x \supset \square (\text{exists } x \supset \text{black } x))$,

which excludes as false the conjunction,

$\exists x(\text{crow } x \ \& \ \diamond (\text{exists } x \ \& \ \text{white } x))$,

which was the *de re* construal of 'a crow can be white'. So the *de re/de dicto* distinction made no difference to the truth value (the falsity) of a case like this.

²¹ In other words, the objection would have merit if 'is known by God' worked like an essential trait of events. But it does not. Essential traits are ways-to-be really inherent in the things that are that way, while 'is known' (even 'is known by God') is an extrinsic description of anything in its own being outside a knower's mind (*e.g.* of an event *qua* occurring in time). This extrinsicality was defended in q.13, a.7 (see fn. 5) and its commentary, and it was defended again in the commentary on q.14, a.5.

Cajetan's Commentary

The title is clear as far as the word 'future' is concerned and also as far as 'contingency' is concerned.

Analysis of the article, I

In the body of the article, four jobs are done: (1) he answers the question with a yes; (2) he explains how [his answer can be true] on the object's side, in the paragraph beginning, "To get this point clear ..."; (3) he explains how [it can be true] on the knower's side, in the paragraph beginning, "Now, even though ..."; (4) he puts forth a sort of corollary, in the paragraph beginning, "Thus it is evident ..."

ii. As to job (1): the conclusion given in answer to the question is affirmative: God takes future contingencies into His cognizance. — The support goes as follows. [*Antecedent:*] God knows optimally not only everything in actuality but also everything potential in His power or that of a creature; [*inference:*] so He knows future contingencies optimally. — The antecedent is clearly right from points established earlier. Drawing the inference is supported on the ground that some of these things [that are potential] are contingent occurrences future to us.

On 'future to us'

Note that this addition, 'to us', is not put in as a limitation or diminishment of the definition of 'future' but as a clarification. The occurrences under discussion here are unqualifiedly "future," because they are future in themselves;* they are not just future [*quoad nos, i.e.*] in the sense that we have not yet perceived them. But unqualified [talk of] future occurrences is clarified by the expression 'future to us', because they are future by the very standard of duration that applies to us, *i.e.* by the standard called time, and not by the one called eternity, as we shall see below.¹

* secundum
scilicet

¹ All material things were subject to physical change and hence subject to the "measure" of such change, time. What was future by the standard of time had to be future to a given time *t*. Well, what was future to *t* was the set of events (*e*: *e* is a change in one or more material things, and *e* occurs later than any event finished occurring as of *t*). Aquinas took his account of time from Aristotle (see above, q. 10), and since then McTaggart has distinguished an A-series account of time (essentially involving past, present, and future tenses) and a B-series account (essentially involving only timeless relations of earlier-than and later-than). Which sort of account Aristotle had cannot be said (I think) without drawing a further distinction between the measure itself (time itself) and our application of it; the former seems to have been a B-series affair for Aristotle; the application brought in the A-series.

Cajetan's further distinction between the unqualified future and the future merely *quoad nos* had little importance in his day but became important with the discovery of astronomical distances. Some have said that in Einstein's work, all future events are definite in themselves, so as to be unsettled only *quoad nos*. But this is false; see H. Stein, "On Einstein-Minkowski Space-Time," *Journal of Philosophy* 65 (1968): 5-23.

Analysis of the article, II

iii. As to job (2), he sets forth two ways in which future contingencies are subject to divine cognition, but differently so. Then he puts down this conclusion: future contingencies are known by God

(a) as they are actual in themselves, and

(b) as they are [potential] in their causes;

in way (a) they are known for sure, while in (b) they are just known to whatever extent they are knowable.

This is supported and clarified by distinguishing two statuses of future contingencies — in act vs. in the power of their causes — and by noting three differences between these two statuses.

• The first is a difference as to temporal description: as being actual, a contingency fits the definition of "present"; as being in potency, "future."

• The second is a difference as to contingency itself: as actual, it fits the definition of "settled to one outcome"; as being in potency, "unsettled either way."

• The third is a difference as to cognition: as actual, it is open to sure cognition (as in the case of observation); as in potency, it is open only to conjectural cognition.

Nature vs. status

iv. At this point, bear in mind that it is one thing to talk about the *nature* of a contingent occurrence, and quite another to talk about its *status*. On the one hand, "contingent" marks a difference between beings, not an accidental difference but a substantial one, because each thing is a "contingent being" or else a "necessary being" in itself, thanks to its own nature, and its nature does not vary but stays constant across act and potency; so it has to be the case that a "contingent item," be it actual and present, or be it potential and future, is always an item of a *contingent nature*. So the difference set forth in the text between contingent-occurrence-in-act and contingent-occurrence-in-potency, present and future, is not a difference of nature (as if the occurrence had one nature taken this way, another nature taken that way), but is a *difference of status* for the same nature. One and the same nature, keeping its constant definition, can have different statuses (actual and potential, present and future, etc.). Being "actual" is the status of an item settled* to one contradictory or the other, while being "in its cause" is the status of an item unsettled either way.[†] Now, it is well established that contingency is a matter of unsettledness;[‡] but necessity, a matter of settledness [*ex parte determinationis*]. A contingent item, *qua* future and potential, is said to fit the definition of "contingent" in its status; but *qua* present and actual, it is said to fit the definition of "necessary" in its status. Again, let an item be as contingent as you please: it takes on from its status of presentness a certain mode of necessariness, pertaining to it under that status, given that status, as one learns from *On Interpretation* I [c. 9], because "what-

* *determinatus*

† *indeterminatio*

‡ *se tenet ex parte indeterminationis*

ever is the case has to be the case while it is the case.” But the same item as future or in potency, since it is not [actual], does not take on such a mode of necessariness but remains a contingent item in the *contingent state*. This is why the body of the article says a contingent occurrence as *present* is open to unmistakable and sure knowing, and the end of the reply *ad* (2) says the occurrence as *present* is necessary.²

² Today, the difference between contingency in nature and contingency in status comes out in remarks on the “worlds” in a model for a modal logic. In a model, propositions are assigned truth or falsity in a world. Those that are actually true are assigned truth in a special world, w_0 , identified as the actual world, propositions that are possibly true are assigned truth in some world w_i accessible from w_0 .

Contingency of nature is seen in the modal logic T (characterized by the axiom, $\Box \supset p$) by taking the “worlds” as alternative world-histories. Call this type of model \mathcal{M}_1 . In this type, w_0 is the actual history of the universe, and each w_i accessible from w_0 is how else universe-history could have gone.

Suppose this last means how else it could have gone *conceivably*. Then, since there might conceivably have been nothing at all, every existent or event e becomes “contingent in nature” (every e satisfies $\Box e \& \Diamond \neg e$). This is the perspective of late Medieval skepticism and modern empiricism.

Suppose instead that ‘how else universe-history could have gone’ means how else under the *actual laws of physics but from the beginning*: then ‘ \Box ’ means consistent with the laws of physics, ‘ \Diamond ’ means inevitable under those laws, and a universe empty of *material* creatures remains a possibility; now every material existent or event e is “contingent in nature,” leaving only pure spirits, perhaps, to be otherwise.

Suppose thirdly that ‘how else it could have gone’ means how else under the *laws of physics and consistent with the actual past until 5,000 years ago*. Now w_0 is the universe’s actual recent history, and the w_i accessible from w_0 are alternative versions of this history. Things and events appearing in only some versions are contingent in nature; but the celestial, geological, and biological affairs appearing in every version become (along with the pure spirits) “necessary in nature.” So interpreted, the \mathcal{M}_1 -type of model captures the Aristotelian and medieval perspective, in which the constants of recent cosmic history were taken as “necessary” features of it.

Necessity and contingency of *status* are more difficult. They are not captured by ‘ \Box ’ or ‘ \Diamond ’ in any standard modal logic, but their meaning does come out in comments on a model for the logic D (p. 326, note 7), when each “world” is taken as a time-slice. Let the slice w_0 be the actual state of things at a time t , and let each w_i accessible from w_0 be a “possible future” from t , i.e. as how things can turn out as of a t' later than t . Call this type of model \mathcal{M}_2 . Think of each proposition true in w_0 as picking out an event-at- t , and count every event-at- t as “necessary in status.” But think of each proposition true in a w_i accessible from w_0 as picking out an event-at- t' . Then suppose an event e appears in one such world, w_m , while $\neg e$ appears in another, w_n . Then we have e at t' in one possible future and $\neg e$ at t' in another such future. Both are possible; so we have $\Box e$ at t' & $\Diamond \neg e$ at t' . Thus, as of the time t , e at t' is unsettled and thus “contingent in status.”

Analysis of the article, III

v. As to job (3), Aquinas first sets down *how* God knows these occurrences, i.e.: all-at-once. And since *why* God knows them turns on the same point, the text gives the conclusion answering the question an explanation from the all-at-once manner. In a conclusion linking why and how, he posits that God knows all future contingencies thanks to the state whereby they are all actual from the perspective of eternity.*

* *ub aeterno*

The support goes as follows. [*Antecedent, 1st part:*] Eternity, existing as a whole all at once, encircles¹ the whole of time, and [*2nd part:*] God’s knowing meets the standard of being eternal. [*1st inference:*] so He knows all-at-once the things that emerge successively, and all the things that emerge in time are “present” to God by His eternalness, not just because He has before Him the accounts of them, but because His purview, thanks to its eternity, bears upon them all as they are in His present. [*Second inference:*] So contingent items, too, as subject to divine purview thanks to their being present, are known by God unmistakably. — The second part of the antecedent is supported: [His knowing is eternal] because His being meets the standard of eternity.

¹ *umbit*

vi. As to job (4); the corollary that emerges from the above is that the following two points,

- it is a future contingency whether e
- it is known for sure that e ,

are consistent, because they hold thanks to diverse statuses. Being subject to sure cognition belongs to e thanks to e ’s being actual, which is how e is a terminus of the divine purview; it’s being a future contingency whether e will happen belongs to e thanks to e ’s being in its causes, as emerged in previous remarks.

Two areas of doubt

vii. On the points made in this article, one needs to realize that two of them are under dispute. The first and more important is the explanation drawn from eternalness; the second is the explanation included in passing, drawn from the accounts-of-things which God possesses. For the text says all these occurrences “are present to God by His eternalness — not just because He has before Him the accounts explaining things ... but because His purview, by being eternal, takes them all in,” etc. What is plain in this passage is that two reasons are being assigned why items are present to God from eternity: (a) accounts-of-things, and (b) eternalness. Thanks to their accounts, all things are present to Him in the makeup of “knowns,” i.e. as knowns to a knower, thanks to His eternalness, all are present to Him as co-existents to One co-existing with them. My procedure, then, will be to go first into the main argument about eternalness, where, with God’s light and the intercessions of St. Thomas, I will defend his explanation; thereafter, secondly, I

will go into the argument over the accounts of things, included as an explanation in passing.

Doubts about the explanation from eternalness

viii. In the explanation from eternalness, two things are vulnerable to doubt. The first is the proposition

(A) All the items that emerge in time are present to eternity.

The second is the use of this proposition to get the conclusion wanted, namely, that

(B) Hence God knows future contingencies with surety.

Against proposition (A) itself Scotus launches four arguments in his comments on *1 Sentences* d.39.

(1) [*Major:*] What does not exist cannot co-exist with anything; [*minor:*] future things do not exist; ergo [they do not co-exist with eternity]. The major rests on the ground that 'co-exists' means a real relation.³

(2) If all things co-exist with eternity, then [*1st consequent:*] all things are unqualifiedly actual, and then [*2nd consequent:*] they cannot be put into actuality subsequently. The first consequent is supported by the fact that what has actual existing in itself *vis-à-vis* the First Cause is unqualifiedly actual; after all, whatever is *φ vis-à-vis* the First Cause is flatly and unqualifiedly *φ*.

(3) If this [claim that events in time co-exist with eternity] were true, then [*consequent:*] my sitting-down tomorrow would be produced by God twice. The consequent is supported: it is already present in itself to eternity, hence produced; and yet it does not exist yet; so it is still to be produced, etc.

(The fourth argument is a confirmation of the first but is also an attack on an example St. Thomas used in *1 CG* c. 66 together with the foundation for it.)

(4) [*Major:*] Co-existence of passing things with a permanent thing requires the existence of both relata for a certain measure of duration. [*Minor:*] But two instants of time cannot exist together in the same measure of duration. Ergo it is impossible for them both at once to co-exist with eternity, the other relatum. The major is clear from the example of the center of a circle and the points on the circumference, if we think of those points not as standing but as passing [*i.e.* as erased as soon as another is plotted]; for then each individual point, when drawn, co-exists with the center; but no two such points ever do so together, the problem being not with the center but with themselves, because no two such points are drawn simultaneously. The same goes for eternity and [the points of] time.

ix. Against the use of proposition (A) to get the conclusion (B), Scotus launches three arguments.

(1') My future sitting-down, as future, is either known by God with certainty, or else it isn't.

— If it is, there is no need to put it into actual existence for it to be known with certainty.

— If it is not, then God knows things already done differently [with better certainty] than He knows things yet to be done, contrary to what Augustine says in book V of *Super Genesim ad litteram* [c. 18]. — The support for the consequent [on the second alternative] is that, when the said case of sitting has been done, God will know it with certainty.

(2') [*Antecedent:*] God's knowing does not acquire its certitude from any object other than His own essence; [*inference:*] ergo His knowing is sure knowing not because my sitting is actual but from another source. The antecedent is supported on the ground that, otherwise, the divine intellect would be put in an inferior position.

(3') An angel's age [*aevum*], according to the Thomists, co-exists with all of time; so if Aquinas' explanation is right, an angel will be able to know all future contingencies on a natural basis [without revelation].

Answering these doubts

x. In moving to answer these objections, let me first say that Aquinas' texts on this topic are judged by his adversaries to be full of contradictions and mistakes, and that among his followers, his doctrine is thought to be so obscure that up until now none of them (to my knowledge) has defended his position assertively, either in writing or orally. And it eluded me, too, I must confess, for a good 15 years. But quite recently, when I was thinking about commenting on this article, the light began to dawn on me (by St. Thomas' intercession, I think). The truth of the matter became plain and clear, so as to be expounded in short order.

The first thing to know, then, as we get the terms straight, is that the talk of being 'present to' or 'co-existing with' eternity abstracts (formally speaking) from the presence of a known to a knower.⁴ If being eternal were not a cognoscitive affair, and a stone existed at some time, it would still be "there" with a genuine presence to or co-existence with the eternal, without any cognition taking place. — From this point as well as from what the text of the article says, it is clear that the talk here is about the being [*esse*] of the things that emerge in time — not their being objects of cognition, nor their potential being, but their actual being in the real by themselves,* outside their causes. So the talk at present is about a co-existence which, *vis-à-vis* eternity, is a real co-existence belonging to contingent items in their actualness. So when it is said that they are all "present to eternity," the sense is that all of them, thanks to actual being in the real, are present to, *i.e.* co-existent with, eternity.

xi. With that said, turn your attention to the fact that

³ The relation, 'x co-exists with y', requires by its very meaning that the two relata, x and y, be in existence, even when the relation is thought-produced in some respect. So Cajetan will not bother to dispute the realness of it here.

⁴ It is not first off an epistemological issue, in other words, but a metaphysical or ontological one.

* *in rerum natura secundum seipsas*

our proposition,

(A) Items in time are present to eternity,
can be understood two ways. On one construal, it says

(A₁) they are present to eternity at a "now" of time,
so that any item's co-existence with eternity is measured by an instant* of time. This, it seems to me, is the sense in which Aquinas' adversaries have construed his text. But mistakenly so. He never dreamed of such a thing; indeed, it involves a blatant contradiction. For since an item only coexists by virtue of its actual existing, the co-existence of the item with eternity has the same duration-measure as the item's existing; now take the existence of an instant of time — say, the instant at which the sun rises tomorrow. It is not measured by any preceding or following instant; ergo it is not measured by any [other] instant.⁵ Besides, if an instant *t* always (*i.e.* at each instant of time) co-existed with eternity, *t* would thereby co-exist with other instants of time, past as well as future [to it]; and thus *t* would not be passing away; all instants of time would really be the one instant *t*, plural instants of the same time would be simultaneous; past and future would be the present, *etc.* All of which are blatantly impossible.⁶

xii. The other way to construe it is to say that

(A₂) they are present to eternity at a "now" of eternity,

so that the co-existence of each item with eternity is salvaged in each "now" of eternity. This sense is true and is the one meant by St. Thomas.

Here is why sense (A₂) is true. Since eternity has only one "now," equaling eternity itself and exceeding every time, it has to be true that every instant of our time (together with everything that exists or happens in it) is salvaged in the "now" of eternity and is measured

⁵ An instant of time was a limit of a duration, and the distinct such limits were linearly ordered. So the claim that a given instant *t* is not "measured" by any earlier or later instant meant either that *t* is not covered by the duration of any other instant or that *t* is not the same limit as any other.

⁶ What is being rejected in this paragraph as absurd is the construal of the verb 'are' in

(A) Temporal items are present to eternity as a present-tense verb. A present-tense verb co-indicates the moment of time that we call "now" as we speak and use that verb. Hence, it indicates, in Cajetan's phrase, a "now of time." Thus when (A) is construed as (A₁), it is a present-tense statement and entails that there is [tenselessly] a moment of time *t'* such that events from all parts of time co-occur with eternity at *t'*. More formally: $\exists t' \forall t (e \text{ occurs at } t \supset e \text{ co-occurs with eternity at } t')$. Cajetan highlights the absurdity of (A₁) by the curious move of taking the arrivals of times as values of *e* (that is, as events). For all equal time-intervals or instants, *t* and *t'*, the arrival of *t* occurs at *t*, and there is no *t' ≠ t* such that the arrival of *t* occurs at *t'*. (Today we have to add: provided that *t* and *t'* are measured within the same inertial frame). On more solid ground, Cajetan observes that the present-tense (A₁) posits a time as of which all events are simultaneous. It is sometimes said that relativity permits such a time, but it doesn't.

by it (not as by an equivalent measure but as by an excessive one). — To preserve you from snares and traps in going from things to propositions, and from propositions to things, [recall that] the following propositions

all the items that emerge in time are present to eternity, or

... are present to God from eternity, or

... are always present to God,

and the like, need to be disambiguated. Either the verb 'are' indicates the now of time, or else it indicates the now of eternity. Similarly with the adverb 'from eternity' or 'always': either it is taken syncategorematically, *i.e.* as quantifying over all the different parts of time, or else it is taken categorically, *i.e.* as indicating the complete everlastingness* involved in eternity and its "now." Taken the first way, these propositions are false; the second way, they are true.⁷ [Let an hour start with the present instant.] It is perfectly true and beyond doubt that at the now of eternity this hour starts at this instant; and just as truly at the same now of eternity (not at this now of time, which is the start of this hour) this hour ends at this instant (but at another instant of time, of course).⁸ Hence there is no problem about the fact that propositions which would be contradictories as of the same now of time are both true at the same now of eternity.

That (A₂) was what St. Thomas meant to convey in his text emerges from two pieces of evidence.

* First, all his remarks come out true and consistent on this construal. For, since a "now" (be it one of time or one of eternity) cannot be broken down into past, present, and future, a "now" is all just present — which proves that 'all things are present to eternity' is a true thing to say as of a now of eternity in signified act — which obviously amounts to saying

all things are present to eternity at a now of eternity,

which carries the co-conveyed meaning that 'all things are present to eternity' is a perfectly true thing to say as of eternity's "now" in exercised act. But our imagination misleads us into looking at the 'are' and thinking it must co-convey (as usual) a temporal now.

* Secondly, this construal yields optimal explanation of the point investigated and intended in the text. From the fact that all temporal existences, taken as of

⁷ The construal Cajetan is accepting takes the 'are' in

(A) Temporal items are present to eternity as a tenseless verb. He identifies eternity with the perspective from which one can speak of temporal things in such a way as to say that they tenselessly are-at-*t* (or are-not-at-*t*).

⁸ In other words, "It is-at-*t* the first instant of hour H' and 'It is-at-*t'* the last instant of hour H' ARE [tenselessly] both true in the same "now" of eternity (*i.e.* in its one tenseless "present")." Some late Medieval debaters must have thought that Aquinas' position on eternity-and-time yielded contradictory answers as to what time it was, in eternity; Cajetan is showing (correctly, as the reader can see) that there is no contradiction.

* sempiternitas

eternity's now, are present to eternity, it follows quite well and quite directly that they are all present together in their existences to the Act-of-Seeing that is measured by eternity (all present together with eternity's instant-like togetherness*) Thus, because the Act-of-Seeing is terminated at present events, it is sure and unmistakable, like ours.

* simulate
instantaneam
determinata

Also, this interpretation is confirmed as follows. For something to count as present to our bodily eye-sight, nothing more is required than that the thing *be visible and be present* for purposes of the same measure of duration as the seeing itself [is present seeing]; JUST SO, for something to be present in itself to the divine purview, nothing more is required than that it *be and be present* for purposes of the same measure of duration as the divine seeing itself [is present seeing]. But this last is eternity. Ergo it is enough that the things be present (not past or future) *according to eternity*, even if they are future according to time.

xiii. From the above remarks, it becomes clear how to answer all the objections to the proposition,

(A) all items [in time] are present to God by His eternalness.

For all the objections labor under an equivocation, taking the items as they are in time or at instants, while in fact the talk is of temporal items (and even time itself and its instants) as they are [in] or enjoy eternity.⁹

xiv. I turn now to the objections brought against

(B) Hence God knows future contingencies with surety,

that is, against using the above explanation [of eternalness] to get the conclusion wanted.

Against argument (1'), where Scotus says, "My sitting down tomorrow, as future, either is known with certainty, or else it isn't," one needs to draw a distinction. The future sitting down, *as future*, does not have

⁹ The reader may be interested to see how Cajetan's solution meets the arguments in Scotus' first set, one by one. His argument (1) said that future things do not exist and so do not "co-exist" with eternity. The argument works, says Cajetan, if 'exist' and 'co-exist' are taken as present-tense verbs. For, indeed, future things do not presently exist. But it fails if the verbs are taken tenselessly. Let the argument be stated at *t*, and let *t'* be a time later than *t*. Things tenselessly existing at *t'* tenselessly co-exist at *t'* with eternity. Scotus' argument (2) said that if all things co-exist with eternity, they are unqualifiedly actual, and so even future things cannot be made actual hereafter. The argument works, says Cajetan, if 'co-exist' and 'are' are taken as present-tense, and if 'actual' is taken as a tensed notion, but fails if the verbs and actualness are taken tenselessly. All temporal things are such that they tenselessly co-exist at one or another *t* with eternity, but being actual at some *t* is not being unqualifiedly actual. E.g. being actual at *t'* is consistent with being purely potential at *t*, for *t* earlier than *t'*, and so being (tenselessly) actual at *t'* does not preclude becoming actual later than *t*. Argument (3) is answered the same as (2), and argument (4) is answered the same as (1).

being at all except in its causes. But it can be related to those "causes" either

- (a) as *underdetermined* as between producing my sitting-down tomorrow or not producing it, or
- (b) as *determined* to produce it rather than its opposite (or as excluding the opposite).

Looked at the first way, future things are not taken as just future but as quite contingent future. Looked at the second way, future things are still taken as future but as less than fully contingent, in proportion as determination by the causes more or less fully requires the outcome. Future contingencies, then, as future from underdetermined causes, are not knowable — as the text says — not by God, not by anybody. For neither in act nor in potency are they any more "beings" than their opposites are. But future things from determining causes are knowable in proportion to the determination by the causes. Furthermore, when Scotus infers,

then God knows things already done differently than He knows things yet to be done,

the drawing of the inference is to be rejected flatly. For in Augustine's text, the word 'differently' speaks to the "how" of the knowing on the knower's side (which in God's case does not vary). The support Scotus offers, namely, because "when the said case of sitting has been done, God will know it with certainty," seems too childish to deserve a response. For who is unaware of the fact that nothing gets added to God's knowledge? Scotus should say, "And yet He knows it with certainty according to its actual existence." But this does not support the inference he wanted to draw. After all, it is one thing to say

things-done are differently related to God's cognition than things-yet-to-be-done,

and quite another to say

God knows things-done in a different manner than He knows things-yet-to-be-done.

The former claim is true in a discussion of contingencies, while the latter is false. The former only means that things have one status* as already-done and another as yet-to-be-done. Indeed, they do. For as already-done they assume a certain necessariness; and as yet-to-be-done, they don't. So as already-done they are optimally knowable with certainty; as yet-to-be-done, they aren't. As done, they can terminate divine vision; as yet-to-be-done, they can't.

Against Scotus' (2'): it is one thing to say God's optimal knowing *derives* its sureness from Socrates' sitting, and quite another to say

Socrates' sitting is not in shape to be[†] a terminus of God's knowing-for-sure except insofar as it is certain [*i.e.* settled] in itself.

The former is unacceptable [puts God's knowing in an inferior position]; the latter is true and necessarily so. The former is not in the text. The latter is. As a

* dispositio

† non esse capax
ut sit

result, Scotus' whole argument can be granted, because it says nothing against us but just makes a false assumption, *i.e.*, that Aquinas' position *implies* that God's knowing derives its certitude from an object other than His substance. What Scotus should have assumed is just that God's knowing-for-sure *requires* there to be a certaintiness [settledness] in that other object or terminus of His knowing, and not just in His own substance; for this is what follows from Aquinas' remarks, not that God's knowing acquires its sureness from that other.¹⁰

As to Scotus' argument (3'): it is wrong on two counts. First, the cognitive action by which an angel knows temporal things is not measured by its "age" [*avum*]. So the argument proves nothing. Secondly, the representation of temporal particulars through the angel's source of cognition (*i.e.* its intensional species) is also not measured by the age [*avum*] but begins to be during it.* So it is impossible for angels to know future contingencies on a natural basis. This topic will come up for further clarification below [at q.57, a.3].

* *advent de novo*

Doubts about the explanation from the accounts of things

xv. In the same passages as I cited above, Scotus also argues against the second reason for this article's conclusion, *i.e.*, that [God knows future contingencies]

because He has before Him [*apud se*] the accounts explaining things [*rationes rerum*].

† See the prolog to q. 15

Scotus takes 'accounts of things' to mean God's *ideai*† of them, and he makes four arguments. [God cannot know future contingencies by knowing these *ideai* :]

(1) because accounts of the things related in a state of affairs [the *extrema*], no matter how complete those accounts may be, do not yield knowledge of any *contingent* state of affairs [*complexio*] involving them;

(2) because these accounts represent things purely nature-wise, prior in logical order to any determination of the divine will, [and so they represent things] when [in logical order] the contingencies are not settled yet;

(3) because, by their same nature-wise status and logical priority, appeal to these accounts puts the contingencies that will in fact turn up on the same footing as those that will not turn up but are just possible;

(4) because, again by their nature-wise status and logical priority, these accounts do not represent an event *e* as about-to-be at one time any more than at another.

¹⁰ God's cognizance of things other than Himself acquires its certainty from *how* He takes cognizance of those things, *i.e.* (as a.5 said) "in Himself." But what He knows-for-sure in Himself includes all possible entities, events, *etc.*, as a. 9 said. So it includes, for each contingent-in-nature event *e*, and for each possible time *t*, both $\partial e, at-t$ and $\partial -e, at-t$. Apart from determination by God's will, acting with His intellect to cause things (as a. 8 said), there is just nothing more to know about any such *e*. But given such a determination, there are outcomes like *Quine-sits-at-t* & ∂ -*Quine-sits-at-t*; these are "required," not in order for God to glean information from them, but in order for there to be *anything further to know*.

Answering these doubts

xvi. To clear this difficulty up, I need to make three preliminary remarks.

First, 'a *ratio*' is a broader term than 'an *idea*', in that an *idea* is only a terminus understood, but 'a *ratio*' applies to both the terminus and the source of an act of understanding. But in the coming q. 15, we are told that what is numerically plural in God is not sources of His understanding but the termini of it. Since this article says the "accounts (plural) explaining things" are before God, it is correct to take '*rationes*' here to mean God's *ideai* of things, which stand to His intellect as items *which* He understands, not as factors *whereby* He understands, as Aquinas will tell us in the next inquiry. q 15, a.2

My second preliminary remark is that the question now before us is not the same as the one about whether God knows a subject and its accidents in the same *idea*. What our current adversaries intend to show by the above arguments is that *neither* in the same *idea*, *nor* in different ones, does God know contingent states of affairs. (I mention this lest anyone think I am getting ahead of myself, bringing up here a topic that should be handled further along.) Rather, what I am going to dispute here is the claim that God's *ideai* do not go far enough to represent a contingent state of affairs. To be sure, it would have been just as well to debate this, too, in the next inquiry. But since Aquinas included this explanation here in the context of how God knows future contingencies, while Scotus, Aureol,¹¹ and Gregory¹² disputed it in this context, it seemed best to handle it here.

My third preliminary is that this issue is difficult or insoluble for those who hold that the divine *ideai* are not the same thing as the divine substance; but for those of us who hold that the *ideai* are the divine substance itself, it is quite easy to see that the *ideai* reach far enough to represent contingent facts.* For since

* *veritates*

the divine essence both serves as the source by reason of which He understands all things and serves as the object by reason of which He understands all things (as came out in the preceding articles),

and since

His essence *qua* source or intensional form suffices to represent all things (as Scotus, too, admits), even contingent realities,

it has to be the case that

the same essence *qua* object is a sufficient account of all things, too, including contingent facts.

Otherwise the same thing as object would not be equivalent to itself as intensional form, which is impossible. And so, since God's *ideai* are identically His essence *qua* object-like account of things, it follows that they extend even to contingent facts.

¹¹ The reference is to Peter Aureol. *In I Sent.* d.38, q. 1, a.1, *proposito* 5.

¹² This is Gregory of Rimini. *In I Sent.* q.2, a.8.

xvii. With these preliminaries in place, I say that since God's *ideai* are, for St. Thomas, identically His essence *qua* object-like account of things, it was perfectly in order for him to claim that, because God has present to Him these accounts or *ideai* of things, He therefore knows for sure all future contingencies.

ad (1). Against Scotus' argument (1), I deny an assumption it makes [about complete explanations]. For clarity's sake, a distinction is in order. The "*idea*" of some quiddity can be called "complete" in two senses. The first is the sense in which 'complete' covers what is intrinsic to the quiddity represented.¹³ So taken, Scotus' assumption is true: no matter how "completely" a man is represented in all the ways of being intrinsic to being a man,* his involvement in sitting down or fortuitously finding a treasure is never going to be represented. But in the other sense, 'complete' covers the totality of the thing in every fashion. So taken, Scotus' assumption is false. If a man is represented in every way he is [*secundum omne esse suum*] — and this, after all, is being represented *totally*, because it covers all his beings-thus-and-such — it has to be the case that he is represented in the being-thus which he has in such-and-such a contingent connection. But this is the sense of 'completely' in which the divine *ideai* represent things completely. So the assumption in Scotus' first argument is false.¹⁴

ad (2)-(4). Against his second argument and the rest of them, I deny the premise that serves as the root of them all, namely, that God's *ideai* represent whatever they do represent nature-wise [*naturaliter*] only. Our view is that His *ideai*

- * represent some *items* nature-wise, e.g. the quiddities of things, but
- * represent others not just nature-wise but naturally given a free supposition, e.g. the existences of things and their contingent connections.

God's *ideai* represent the former in logical priority to any act of His will, while they represent the latter [contingent connections] given a free determination of His will one way or the other — which Scotus himself admits is how God's essence represents things (taking His essence as the reason He understands). And thus all the rest of Scotus' arguments fall to the ground: God's *ideai* do not represent future possibilities in a way that makes them indistinguishable from possibilities that are never-to-be, and His *ideai* do not represent future things in a way that makes them indistinguishable as to *when* they are to occur; rather, God's *ideai* represent things as nailed down in these respects as a consequence of the

¹³ What is "intrinsic" to a thing *x* of any kind *K* is just the traits that need to be mentioned in defining it as a *K*-thing. '*Entitatis modus*' is obviously equivalent here to '*modus essendi*'.

¹⁴ If Cajetan is right, then, for each temporal substance *x*, God's *idea* of *x* is a many-dimensional plan for how *x* is to be extended/qualified/situated/related/occupied at each time *t* during which *x* exists.

divine volition.¹⁵

These points also show how to answer Gregory's arguments (at *In I Sent.* d.38) against the same doctrine.

Doubts about Aquinas' answer *ad* (1)

xviii. In the answer to the first objection, pay attention to the fact that two points in it are subject to doubt. The first such point is

- [C] God's knowing, which is a first cause, is necessary.

The second dubious point is

- [D] [Some] things known by God (a) are contingent because of their proximate causes but (b) are necessary *vis-à-vis* His knowing.

The (b) part of [D] is not in the answer *ad* (1) but comes out explicitly in the answers *ad* (2) and *ad* (3).

Standing in the way of claim [C], obviously, is the fact that God's knowing creatures as makeable is free knowing; and His causing them, free causality. By virtue of the fact that God has willed freely to make a creature, He has *freely* made its making a knowable point [*scibilem*]. If He had not willed its making, the latter would not be [a knowable point — it would not be] knowable by God or anyone else. On the same basis, it is obvious that God's causation is free. So God's knowing things that get made, *qua* getting-made, is not necessary — not insofar as it is knowing, and not insofar as it is causing. So it is quite false that God's knowing, which is a first cause, is necessary.

xix. Meanwhile, objection is raised to claim [D].

— Either it means that one and the same thing is, in itself, contingent as well as necessary, *i.e.* that it has contingentness from its distinctive causes while having necessariness from its first cause. And this is impossible. [*Antecedent:*] 'Contingent' and 'necessary' differentiate beings substantially and oppositely, as is well known. So [*consequence:*] it is impossible for the same thing to be contingent and necessary in the same regard [here: in itself], regardless of how it is compared to different causes. This consequence

¹⁵ Scotus had a way of distinguishing nature from will, so as always to separate how things are on a basis of nature (*naturaliter*) from how they are on a basis of volition. Cajetan will criticize this at 2/1 *ST* q 10. Scotus also had his own peculiar way of using the adverb '*naturaliter*', which Cajetan criticized above in § ix of his commentary on q.12, a.5. Suffice it to say that Scotus' moves made the *ideai* in God *all* prior to His will and *wholly* independent of it, because his moves made those *ideai* *all natural* to the cognition that was *naturally there* in God. Without entering into the deeper issues here, and without denying that there are in God some such *ideai* as Scotus maintained, Cajetan denies that *all* the divine *ideai* have this will-independent status. He is saying that there are logically distinct levels of cognition in God, and that, on at least one such level, God's *ideai* represent (by their nature on *that level*) things as He has willed them to be (directively or permissively).

holds because diversity of relations to diverse causes does not make the nature of a thing change in itself.

— Or else it means that a thing contingent in itself has a necessary relation to its first cause but a contingent relation to its proximate causes (or conversely, that the first cause has a necessary relation to an effect *e* that is contingent in itself, while the proximate causes of *e* have a contingent relation to *e*). Well, *against this second reading of [D]*, Scotus fashions four arguments at *In I Sent.* d.2, q.1, and at d.8, q.5, and at d.39 on the relevant issue.* Here they are.

* *contra 3^m positionem*

(1) [*Major:*] A cause [*y*] that induces a change [*c* in *z*] insofar as it [*y*] undergoes a change [*c'* from *x*] necessarily induces [*c* in *z*] if it necessarily undergoes [*c'* from *x*]. But [*minor:*] every secondary cause acts or induces a change [*c*] insofar as it undergoes a change [*c'*] at the hands of the first cause. So [*1st conclusion:*] every secondary cause necessarily induces if it necessarily undergoes at the hands of the first cause. And so [*2nd conclusion:*] there will be no such thing as a contingent cause at all [on this reading of [D]].¹⁶

(2) [The first cause of an effect *e* is prior to any more proximate cause of *e*]. [*Antecedent:*] A prior cause of *e* has a naturally and unqualifiedly earlier bearing upon *e* than a posterior cause of *e* has; so [*1st inference:*] in that prior instant[†] the first cause of *e* will give necessariness to *e* [if the second reading of [D] is correct]; and so [*2nd inference:*] a proximate cause bearing on *e* at a subsequent instant[‡] cannot give contingentness to *e* [as this reading of [D] requires].¹⁷

† *in illo priori*

‡ *in secundo instanti*

(3) [*Antecedent:*] Any contingent effect, *e*, [normally there because] of a secondary cause, can be produced directly by God, with the nature of *e* staying constant; [*1st inference:*] so *e* would then be a contingent effect dependent on the first cause alone, with no secondary causes in play; [*2nd inference:*] ergo [such an effect *e* does not get its contingentness from its secondary causes, as the second reading of [D] requires].

(4) [*Antecedent:*] God has in fact produced many contingent effects directly [*i.e.* without the mediation of any other cause]; [*inference:*] so things are not contingent from their proximate causes, but mainly from their first cause.

Resolving these doubts: introduction

xx. To clear up this difficulty, please be aware that disputing over the source of contingentness is not directly relevant to this text [q.14, a.13 ad 1], where

¹⁶ This argument turns on Scotus' assumption that whenever *y* is a secondary cause, a strict implication holds: $\square (y \text{ undergoes change } c' \text{ from } x \supset y \text{ induces change } c \text{ in } z)$.

¹⁷ This second argument is based on the doctrine of essentially ordered causes. For an effect *e*, these causes were a set $\{c_1, c_2, \dots, c_n\}$ simultaneously operative to produce *e* and so ordered among themselves that c_1 is not operative unless c_{n-1} is operative. In this order, the relation of c_{n-1} to c_n was called "natural priority." Thus c_1 enjoyed natural priority over c_n , and Scotus thought of this as putting c_1 at a "prior instant of nature," c_n at a subsequent "instant of nature."

the topic is contingent matters *as they are known*, not as they are caused; rather, that dispute is relevant

- partly to q.19 [a.8], where God's will is examined as a cause of things (since knowing does not cause except as determined by the will),
- and partly to q.115 [aa.4, 6], where it is disputed whether [the motions of] higher bodies necessitate [the motions/changes of] lower ones.

But since the first objection in this article deals with contingencies as caused by divine knowing (because His knowing is not just knowing but a cause of the items-known), and since the answer to it doesn't just say that a proximate cause is contingent and a remote cause necessary, but also says that the unqualifiedly first cause is necessary (which these arguments maintain is impossible), I do need to tackle two tasks here.

(1) I need to discuss in general whether these claims are in conflict [*i.e.* whether, for any contingent event *e*, *e*'s proximate cause's being contingent conflicts with *e*'s first cause's being necessary].

(2) Then I need to show what is in fact the case, *i.e.* in what way God is in fact a necessary cause, and what is in fact the sense of Aquinas' text.

Resolving these doubts: task (1)

xxi. To start on task (1), we need to avoid equivocating on "necessary". The word is used in two senses relevant to present purposes.

- In one sense, a cause is "necessary" *unqualifiedly [simpliciter]*, meaning that it is entirely impossible for the cause to act otherwise.
- In the other sense, a cause is "necessary" *immutablely*, meaning that it cannot be changed from this [way of acting] to an opposite way, although, absolutely speaking, it *could have been* the opposite.

Both senses come up in this answer ad (1). Aquinas is discussing unqualified necessariness when he makes the general remark that a remote cause can be "necessary" while the effect is contingent; and his example is the motions of the sun, which philosophers routinely number among the causes that are "necessary" unqualifiedly.¹⁸ Meanwhile, he is discussing the necessariness that is being-immutable when he speaks specifically of God's knowing and calls it a "necessary" cause. For God's knowing is not a necessary cause unqualifiedly, since it *could have* not been a cause; its necessariness is that of being-immutable, because, once it is determined to be a cause and determined to produce just such-and-such effects, it cannot be changed.¹⁹

¹⁸ This is not logical necessity, of course, but unqualified physical necessity — the idea being that the sun, by its very nature, cannot possibly do anything but pour out light and heat (as we still say of a middle-aged star) and move in its heavenly sphere (as we no longer say). In modern idiom: the causality of such a star is deterministic, given its nature and position.

¹⁹ This is still a physical, not logical, necessity, attaching

xxii. In the dispute at hand, then, I say that an effect's being contingent does not conflict with a remote cause thereof being unqualifiedly necessary, whether or not that remote cause is the absolutely first cause. One sees compelling evidence of this in syllogisms where a contingent conclusion follows from a necessary major and a contingent minor.²⁰ Indeed, all propositions depend on necessary first principles. — The following argument is also compelling. Plurality has to emerge out of oneness, change out of the changeless, the pluriform out of the uniform. Now the contingent meets the test of being plural, changing, and pluriform, because it can be otherwise, while the necessary meets the test of being one, changeless, and uniform, because it cannot be otherwise. So the contingent naturally emerges from the necessary, and not *vice-versa*. Therefore it does not conflict with, but harmonizes with, the contingent, that it should take its origin from the unqualifiedly necessary. — Compelling evidence is also at hand in the coinci-

to God's knowing as a cause; but one cannot say that God's knowing, by its very nature, is such that it cannot possibly cause any universe but this one. God could have determined Himself to know a different set of things (even an empty set) as to-be-realized-in-time. Thus divine causality is not deterministic, given His nature, but just immutable, given His self-determination. This last entails that all conditionals of the form

if *e* happens in time, God's knowledge will become different from what it is

are false; but certain counterfactual conditions, such as

if God had decided to make no creatures, His knowledge would have been different from what it is

are true.

In human experience, the active power (*virtus, facultas*) of self-determination requires an area of indeterminacy within ourselves — an area of further determinability (*potentia passiva*). Cajetan is pointing out that the active power is to be affirmed in God, even though (like any other Thomist) he forbids passive potency to be affirmed in God. The result is a deep mystery. How God really and tensellessly "can" determine Himself to know/will/cause different things, without there being a trace of potency in Him to be determined, is unimaginable. But it is arguably consistent and therefore thinkable. The divine substance, *qua* active source of knowing/willing, does not alter itself *qua* active source, after all, nor *qua* God's natural being, but only *qua* the intensional object principally terminating the divine willing/knowing.

In any case, and whatever its difficulties, this genuine Thomist position is not to be confused with the one recently attacked as the Thomist position by William Lane Craig. Craig interprets the immutability of God in Thomism to be an unqualified necessariness, so that God's knowledge is "the same across all possible worlds." See Craig, "The Tensed vs. the Tenseless Theory of Time: A Watershed for the Conception of Divine Eternity," *apud* Robin LePoidevan, ed., *Questions of Time and Tense* (Oxford, 1998), pp. 221-250.

²⁰ For instance, suppose all crows are necessarily black, and it just so happens that all the birds in that tree are crows; then it just so happens that all the birds in that tree are black. Or suppose the earth with everything on it necessarily orbits the sun, and it just so happens that a visiting scientist from Alpha Centauri is on the earth; then it just so happens that the said scientist orbits the sun.

dences that occur among us, as the text says (unless someone wants to deny that real contingency is found in the events here below).²¹ — One may also be persuaded by Aristotle's authority, that of Averroes, and that of many more philosophers.

xxiii One should also dissent from Scotus' remarks on *II Sentences* d.1, q.3, where he claims that the philosophers unwittingly admitted both sides of a contradiction by saying that an event is brought about contingently and that its first cause acts as a cause necessarily. Scotus' arguments prove no such thing.

ad (1). I turn now to Scotus' first argument [starting with the following proposition: a cause *y* that induces a change *c* in *z* insofar as *y* undergoes a change *c'* from *x* necessarily induces *c* in *z* if it necessarily undergoes *c'* from *x*], which is his Achilles [*i.e.*, his strongest], and which he has used again and again. I answer it on two heads.

• First I distinguish the phrase, 'insofar as *y* undergoes a change *c'* from *x*'. Either it picks out the sole reason* [why change *c* is induced in *z*], or else it picks out a contributing reason.[†] If the phrase picks out the sole reason, Scotus' proposition commits [the fallacy of] implication *in adjecto*: for if the [alleged] secondary cause *y* really is a cause, it does not induce *c* solely by undergoing *c'* but also contributes something from itself; and if *y* does induce *c* solely by undergoing *c'*, it contributes nothing from itself and so is not a cause. But if the phrase picks out a contributing (yet principal) cause, I deny Scotus' proposition: for '*y* necessarily undergoes *c'*' is consistent with '*y* does not necessarily induce *c* in *z*'. After all, the input[‡] of the prior cause is modified in the secondary cause in the manner [set by the nature] of that secondary cause; so even if *y* necessarily undergoes *c'* from the first cause *x*, still, if *y* itself is posited to be a contingent cause, the input received in *y* is modified by the contingency of the receiver. Since causal order is such that this input is first modified [by being received in *y*] before it impels *y* to induce a change [in *z*], the input from *x*, already adapted to a contingent cause, will not induce *y* to induce *c* in *z* necessarily, but contingently. And if *y* is posited to be a natural cause [of changes like *c* in things like *z*], it can still fail; the input from the first cause, once adapted to the nature of the secondary cause *y*, will not induce *y* to induce [changes like *c* in things like *z*] necessarily, but for the most part, in the way proper to a secondary cause, not a first cause. And thus one sees the whole Scotist edifice come

* *causa praecusa*
† *concausa*

‡ *moto*

²¹ In the medieval picture, all the heavenly outer spheres precluded contingency from their workings; the innermost (sublunar) sphere received causal inputs from the heavenly workings, and the question was whether any events down here could really be contingent. Today's universe is a macroscopic superstructure on a field of quantum events; crucial indeterminacies are admitted to lie *between* the two, and the question is whether determinism holds throughout the superstructure.

tumbling to the ground, from one charge.²²

• Next, I distinguish in a different way the phrase 'y undergoes change c' from x' '. Either this means that y undergoes c' as a change previous to its performing its own action (as water, *after* having been heated up by a fire, does its own act of heating [something else]), or else it means that y undergoes c' as x' 's intrinsic co-operation* with y's own action.²³ If Scotus' proposition were taken the first way, it would be true, I grant, or at least defensible; but if it is taken the second way, it cannot be defended. For a cause x cooperating intrinsically with any other cause y cooperates with y according to y 's own manner. But such is the cooperation of the First Cause [with secondary causes], about which Scripture says, "it reacheth from end to end mightily, and disposeth all things gently," *i.e.* cooperating with each after the manner of each.

* *motio co-operans intrinsicè*

Wisdom 8: 1

²² Suppose z became ψ , and the question is why. Suppose the Thomists and the Scotists agreed that the explanation must appeal to two other things, y and x , and to a property that y acquires, say ϕ -ness, under the influence of x . Then their agreed explanation said that

- (1) y induced change c in z to ψ -ness
- (2) *because* y underwent change c' to ϕ -ness,
- (3) *because* x induced c' in y .

Beyond that, the Thomists and Scotists disagreed. For Scotus, the because-relation was uniform in a crucial respect, while for the Thomists it was not. The central disagreement will come out more clearly if we switch to the modern idiom, replacing lines (1)-(3) above with the following formulation:

- (4) y 's becoming ϕ thanks to x *caused* z to become ψ .

See how easy it is to change (4) into a conditional,

if y becomes ϕ thanks to x , then z becomes ψ ,

and how easy it is to think that this should be a necessary conditional, because (4) stated a causal connection. This is how Scotus did think, and so he altered lines (1)-(3) into

- (5) \square (if y becomes ϕ thanks to x , then z becomes ψ).

From there, if x is such as to act necessarily, so that \square (y becomes ϕ thanks to x), then \square (z becomes ψ) by standard modal logic. Thus Scotus thought that Aquinas' language, describing God (here: x) as a necessary cause, would destroy contingency throughout the created order. Scotus saw no escape but to say that God's knowing is not a necessary cause at all, but a contingent one. Cajetan's attack on Scotus is attacking precisely the transition from (1)-(3) to (5). The distinctions which Cajetan advances are meant to show how lines (1)-(3) can be describing heterogeneous situations, at most one of which would support (5). In this light, it is interesting that Richard Sorabji is also protested against the wide importation of necessariness into Aristotle's philosophy of causation: *Necessity, Cause, and Blame* (Cornell, 1980) c.2.

²³ A "secondary cause" was a created thing y in an active/operative state. It was general scholastic doctrine that no created y could be in such a state without an activational input coming from the First Cause. This input was called the First Cause's "cooperation" with the secondary cause, and the co-operation was called "intrinsic" because it was not a separate preliminary but a defining component of secondary causation. It made some creatures necessitating secondary causes; others, contingent ones.

ad (2). My response to Scotus' second argument is to say that, across the board, the priority [of the first cause over secondary causes] is not "coming earlier" in some quasi-duration of "nature," as if the effect were reached by the first cause in one "instant of nature" and were reached by a secondary cause in a second "instant of nature," as Scotus imagines. It is rather a priority as to independence and immediacy of power: the prior cause attains the effect more independently and more immediately (talking of immediacy of power) than the secondary cause does.²⁴ But the effect is reached by both in the *same* "instant of nature." The conclusion to draw from this, however, is *not*

ergo the effect receives both necessariness and contingency at once;

for the effect is not attained by the first cause in itself and in isolation, but by the first cause as modified in the secondary cause. So the conclusion to draw is

ergo the effect receives contingency from two causes at once, a necessary cause and a contingent one.

ad (3) and (4). My reply to Scotus' third and fourth arguments is that they do not go against the general point I am now making. Rather, they get down to the *de facto* causality of the First Cause. What to say to them will become clear, then, in just a moment.

Resolving these doubts: task (2)

xxiv. Turning to my second task, which is to show how the First Cause does in fact cause things, the concise thing to say is this: properly speaking, the First Cause is neither an unqualifiedly necessary cause nor a contingent one, *but transcends both*. We have no better term for this than to say that He is a "free cause." For unqualified necessariness conflicts with freedom, but contingency, as it involves mutability, puts imperfection into freedom. This is why St. Thomas, in remarks on *I Sentences* d.38, written before the inept vocabulary of modern authors came into style, denied that God causes [things] "contingently." After all, the regular situation is that a higher thing pre-possesses in itself *as one trait* properties that are distinct and scattered in lower things; so the First Cause, being higher than necessary and contingent causes, should pre-possess in Himself (not formally but in a higher manner) the nature-and-mode of necessary causes *and* that of contingent ones, and that He should be a Cause of both, and that He should cooperate with each towards the distinctive effects of each after the mode of each. We humans, to whom every cause seems necessary or else contingent, are amazed; we find ourselves unable to see how One

²⁴ On immediacy of power (*immediatio virtutis*), as opposed to immediacy of referent (*immediatio suppositi*), see section *iv* of Cajetan's commentary on q.8, a.1.

Cause can be the common and immediate activator of necessary *and* contingent causes. But if we lift up our mind's eyes to a higher kind of Cause, and to its higher way of causing things, the stupor goes away, and everything fits, even though we remain in darkness, unable to see the "how" which is how God intrinsically "falls in" with all creatures and cooperates with each according to each one's own way-of-causing. This point absolutely *must* be borne in mind in such discussions.²⁵ And even so, when God or His knowing is called a "necessary cause," it is not so called because of unqualified necessity but because of being immutable — which property is verified form-wise in God and even in God *qua* Cause.²⁶

xxv. So, when the question is raised:

does the contingency of an event *e* have its first source in God's will or in a proximate cause of *e*? one needs to answer it with two distinctions as to the sense of the question.

(a) The first bears on 'God's will'. This can be taken to ask [if contingency has its first source in] *the contingency in God's will*, as the modern writers [e.g. Scotus] understand. So taken, the answer should be no. For one thing, the question so taken makes the false assumption that the divine act of willing is contingent. It is not contingent, *nor necessary*, but free and "necessary" only in the sense of being immutable.²⁷ For another thing, even if the divine will did cause things necessarily, in the unqualified sense of "necessarily", contingency could still arise in an effect, as I tried to make clear above, because, as reaching the effect, the divine volition is modified by the effect's closest causes, which are defectible [*i.e.* can fail to yield an effect] or may work both ways [*i.e.* may yield either *e* or an effect amounting to $\sim e$]. — The other way to take 'God's will' is [to ask if contingency in creatures has its first source in] *God's will* without further qualification, that is [if it comes from] *the efficacy of God's will*. So taken, the question is rightly answered, with St. Thomas, in the affirmative: the divine will is so efficacious a cause that, by its com-

q. 19, a.8

²⁵ The point so crucial to bear in mind can be put thus: the general Thomist doctrine that no term of human language applies univocally (*i.e.* under the same scientific definition) to God and to creatures *applies with full rigor* to modal terms and verbs of causing. God's necessariness, too, is at best analogous to any necessariness we can define in created things.

²⁶ On "virtual" vs. "form-wise" possession of a property by God, see § iii of Cajetan's commentary on q.6, a.2; see also q.13, a.2, with its commentary. Immutability or changelessness was the topic of inquiry in q.9, where Aquinas excluded from God any passage from potency to act but did not exclude free and timeless self-determination.

²⁷ Please review the 5th paragraph in footnote 2 above (p. 331), where the modal system is T, and the paragraph is sketching a T-model \mathcal{M}_1 ; then make the following meta-logical remarks. God's knowledge and will are "fixed" in any one version of recent universe-history. So over the course of its actual history, w_0 , His knowledge and will are immutable. He has timelessly determined His will and knowledge to attain just the one object, w_0 , to which time is internal; and given that self-

mand, it produces both necessary items and contingent ones.

(2) My second distinction has to do with 'first source'. The question can mean [to ask if contingency has its] *unique source* [in God's will], and then the right answer to the question is no, as is clear from points already made. — The other way to take it is [to ask if contingency has its] *first and initial source* [in God's will]; and then the right answer is obviously yes.

xxvi. The preceding remarks make it plain what to say to Scotus's third and fourth objections. Let the assumption [that whatever God does usually through a secondary cause He can do Himself, directly], be granted [for the sake of argument].²⁸ My response to the third objection is that the effect *e* would be contingent because of the efficacy of the First Cause and because of whatever extra God was doing to make up for the missing contingent cause of *e*. In the fourth objection, where God Himself is the proximate cause of *e*, I answer that [*e* is contingent because] God is a contingent cause — not formally, but virtually — as came out in earlier remarks.

xxvii. Let us now face St. Thomas' words in his answers *ad* (2) and *ad* (3), saying that things known, as related to God's knowing, *are necessary*. Do these words pose a problem in the present discussion? No, they do not. His talk there is not about things-known relative to God's knowing *qua* cause, but only about such things relative to God's knowing *qua* knowing. If all known items are compared to God's knowing as effects to their cause, then some of them are necessary and some contingent; none is both at once; none has a necessary relation to such a cause *qua* cause (or, better said: such a cause does not have a necessary

determination, His causation of w_0 is infallibly efficacious. But when we look at another way this history might have gone, say w_k , we can say that, if w_k were actual, His knowledge and will would be different in all the ways it would take to make w_k the actual history instead of w_0 . Thus God, by knowing and willing, could have caused w_k ; and since $w_k \neq w_0$, He, by knowing and willing, could have caused not- w_0 . So, again meta-logically speaking, w_0 and not- w_0 both appear in \mathcal{M}_1 to be "possible effects" of God (abstracting from His self-determination either way). Who therefore appears to be (again abstracting from His self-determination either way) a contingent cause. Thus the T-model \mathcal{M}_1 sketched in that footnote supports meta-logical remarks in which God is characterized as both an immutable cause (taking His self-determination into account) and a contingent one (abstracting from it). I stress, however, that these are meta-logical remarks. The divine causality itself is not formalized in T, and the modalities of necessity, possibility, and contingency which \mathcal{M}_1 interprets are modalities attaching to created things or states of affairs. Thus the meta-logical extension of the modal term 'contingent' to God's causing is an *analogous* extension.

²⁸ The translator has added the words 'for the sake of argument' because Cajetan did not in fact grant this famous Scotist assumption. He attacked it in section ix of the commentary on q.12, a.5.

relation to any of them, but a free relation towards all of them, and an immutable relation, as emerged in previous remarks. But if things are compared to the divine knowing *qua* knowing, then since every item known, *qua* a known, cannot be otherwise (as is clear from *Posterior Analytics I*), every item known is “necessary” — not in itself, unqualifiedly, but on a supposition, thanks to the disposition whereby it has what it takes to be a known, *i.e.* to be a terminus of the divine purview. In other words, Socrates’ running is in itself contingent (unqualifiedly); nevertheless, that same running, on the supposition that it is happening, *must be happening while it is*, as one sees from *Perihermeneias I*. And if you add the further point that Socrates’ running is not in shape to serve as the terminus of a sure understanding *except as a present event*, “while it is happening,” the consequence will be that Socrates’ running as related to the divine knowing *qua* knowing is necessary — necessary in status — even though it is contingent in itself and as related to its proximate causes.²⁹

And thus the argument [advanced by Aquinas in his

²⁹ Let *Sr* stand for the proposition, ‘Socrates runs at *t*’’. The fact that *Sr* picks out an event contingent “in itself” or “in its nature” means that we have $\circ Sr \& \circ \sim Sr$ under a particular interpretation of \circ , presented above under the name \mathcal{M}_1 in footnotes 2 (p. 331) and 27 (p. 340). As Cajetan said before and now repeats, contingency of nature is quite different from contingency of status. If *Sr* picks out an event contingent in status, it is unsettled at the time counted as actual, as came out in remarks made on the model \mathcal{M}_2 (given in the last paragraph of footnote 2 on p. 331); thus, since *Sr* = ‘Socrates runs at *t*’’, the event it picks out can remain contingent in status only until the actual state of things = their state as of *t*’; at that point, the event becomes non-contingent (“necessary”) in status. In the passage now before us, Cajetan relates these kinds of contingency to the epistemic modalities involved in opining and knowing. One may approach the new topic as follows. If I merely opine that *Sr*, I think that *Sr*, but I also think that I could be wrong; in other words, $\sim Sr$ is consistent with everything I know, even though I assent to *Sr* rather than to $\sim Sr$. Take ‘consistent with everything known’ to define an epistemic modality, \diamond , and define its companion, \blacksquare , to mean $\sim \diamond \sim$. One now sees that opining involves $\diamond \sim$. I think $Sr \& \diamond \sim Sr$. But when I know, or think I know that *Sr*, I think that *Sr* and also think that I could not be wrong. I think that $\sim Sr$ is not consistent with everything I know. Thus knowing involves $\diamond \sim$, which is \blacksquare . I think $Sr \& \blacksquare Sr$. Cajetan is not confusing this epistemic modality with any alethic modality. He is simply positing the following, plausible relation. In order for the knowledge claim, ‘I know that *Sr*’ (or God knows it, or anybody knows it) to be true, it is not required that the event picked out by *Sr* be necessary in itself (the \mathcal{M}_1 interpretation of \square), nor that it be inevitable (the \mathcal{M}_2 interpretation of \square); it is only required that *Sr* be true. But this is just the same as saying that, for the knower in question, *Sr* must be non-contingent in status. If I am the knower, my immersion in time forbids ‘I know that Socrates runs at *t*’’ to be true until the time of my knowing is *t*’ or later. If God is the knower, His independence of time lets ‘God knows that Socrates runs at *t*’’ be true just in case ‘Socrates runs at *t*’’ has (tenselessly) a definite truth-value in eternity. Either way, the object known *qua* known is non-contingent (“necessary”) in status for the knower.

answer *ad* (1)), and the sense of everything he says, and how to answer to [Scotus’] objections to it, all become clear. Blessed be God.

Three doubts about the answer *ad* (2)

xviii. In the answer to the second objection, three points are vulnerable to doubt.

I. The first is his claim that the antecedent in question [God knew that this would happen] is necessary independently.

II. The second is his rule of interpretation, saying that when the antecedent [of a conditional] posits a thing pertaining to an act of the mind, the consequent should be taken according to how it is in the mind, not how it is in itself.

III. The third is the application of this rule to get the conclusion wanted.

Resolving doubt I

xxix. As to the first point in doubt, pay heed to the fact that equivocating on this matter is offering pabulum to our critics. So it is a disgrace that certain Thomists go blind at this point, in the middle of the light, and gloss the text in a fashion contrary to its intended meaning. Please understand, therefore, that, relevantly to present purposes, the question of the necessariness of God’s knowing or foreknowing *vis-à-vis* future contingencies can be discussed on two levels.

• On this level, one is asking whether God *necessarily* knows that *e* will happen. Here the issue has already become clear. God does not know *necessarily* (in the unqualified sense of ‘necessarily’) but *freely* that *e* will happen; and consistent with this freedom is the fact that He necessarily (in the sense of *immutably*) knows that *e* will happen, as said above. On this level, I don’t know of a single theologian who disagrees. But this consensus is outside the scope of the present debate, where we are disputing the force of propositions, not the reality independently of propositions.

• On the other level, the necessariness of the divine knowing can be discussed as it is described by **such-and-such propositions**,[†] and this is what we are talking about in the current debate.

So, on the first level, where we talk in independently real terms, there is no difference between

(a) God knows that *A* will happen,

and

(b) God knew that *A* would happen,

because God’s knowing is in itself eternal and does not recede into the past, *etc.* Nevertheless, there is a big difference between (a) and (b) on the second level. For in (a), God’s knowing is described as present, but in (b) it is described as past. So there is as much difference between them as there is between the necessariness of a present-tense proposition in contingent matter and that of a past-tense proposition in

^{*} *absoluti et secundum rem*

[†] *ut significatur per tales propositiones*

such matter (taking 'contingent' here as it is used to differentiate the matter of propositions, when this latter is distinguished into three types, namely, the removed, the necessary, and the contingent).³⁰ It is clear from general principles that the difference between a true proposition in the present tense in contingent matter, say,

Socrates is sitting
and a true one in the past tense in such matter, say,
Socrates sat,

is this: the one in the present tense is not necessary without further ado, but only with the further qualification, 'while he is sitting', as it says in *Perihermeneias I*,
19a 23 while the one in the past tense is necessary without further ado. One sees this by looking at their contradictories. For the contradictory of the latter,

Socrates did not sit,
is flatly impossible [as of now], even by the power of God, while the contradictory of the former,

Socrates is not sitting,
is possible in its own right. For although he truly is sitting, he is not necessarily sitting. But once a man did sit, he not only truly sat, but it is necessarily the case that he sat, because it is [now] impossible that he did not sit. "This alone is beyond God: to make not-done what

has been done," said Agatho in *Ethics VI*.³¹
c 2, 1139b 10 xxx So, since every true proposition in the past tense is necessary, it follows that even though

³⁰ The matter of a proposition was what could be put into different tenses, variously quantified, etc. Removed matter was any part of this that fell under a negation. 'Necessary' and 'contingent', as descriptions of the remaining matter, were the same as 'necessary-in-nature' and 'contingent-in-nature'.

³¹ The modal doctrine in this paragraph will make sense if one thinks of time as generating a series of D-models of the \mathcal{M}_2 -type explained above. At the start of the series, put model $\mathcal{M}_2 A$, in which w_0 is how things are at a time t_0 , and each w_i accessible from w_0 is how things may be at a time t_i later than t_0 , so that each w_i accessible from w_0 represents a possible future from w_0 . Suppose 'Socrates runs' is true in w_0 , so that we have as true 'Socrates runs at t_0 '. Suppose 'Socrates sits' is true in one of the accessible futures, w_m , but not in another, w_n ; then we have, as true at t_0 , 'Socrates sits at t_1 & Socrates sits at t_1 '. Now shift the time forward to t_1 , and suppose that how things turn out at t_1 is how they are in the world w_m . Before capturing this in a new model $\mathcal{M}_2 B$, in which w_m becomes the new w_0 , etc., retain $\mathcal{M}_2 A$ long enough to think of its accessibility relations in a new light. In this light, w_0 represents the immediate past, w_m is the actual present as of t_1 , and each world accessible from w_0 is another way the present-at- t_1 could have turned out. Since 'Socrates sits' is true in w_m but false in w_n , we now have as true 'Socrates sits at t_1 & Socrates sits at t_1 '. Thus the contradictory of a present-tense truth in contingent matter is possible in its own right. But no proposition true in any w_i accessible from w_0 is a contradictory of 'Socrates ran at t_0 '. Now proceed to model $\mathcal{M}_2 B$ by relabeling w_m as w_0 , so that the world marked ' w_0 ' now captures how things actually are at t_1 , and all the further worlds accessible from the new w_0 capture how matters may be at a time t_2 later than t_1 . No proposition true in any of those worlds is a contradictory to 'Socrates ran at t_0 '. And so on, until the end of time. Thus the contradictory of a past-tense truth never becomes futureible.

God wants e to happen
is contingent,

God wanted e to happen
is necessary. And likewise, even though
God knows that e will happen
is contingent,

God knew that e would happen
is necessary. And it becomes clear that St. Thomas spoke quite well and quite subtly in the text, when he said that this antecedent,

God knew that this would happen,
is necessary in its own right — and one sees that he did not mean 'necessary' in the sense of immutable, as some gloss him, wrongly (for then his saying 'independently' would have been pointless, and he would have been wasting his time in criticizing the other opinions).

It also becomes clear that the independent necessity of this antecedent is not hindered by the fact that the act of knowing bears upon a future contingency — even though this would make a big difference if one were talking about God's knowing independently [of tensed propositions].

It also becomes clear that later writers did not understand this passage. That is why, in airing this argument, they turned aside to God's knowing as taken in itself, independently [of tensed propositions], and to present-tense propositions, as if these latter were equivalent to past-tense ones. So much for the first doubt.

Resolving doubt II

xxxv. As to doubt II, Gregory of Rimini makes remarks on *I Sent.* d. 38 [q. 2, a. 3] in which he argues that Aquinas' rule [to the effect that when the antecedent posits something pertaining to an act of the mind, the consequent should be taken according to how it is in the mind] is false. The following inference is valid:

I know that a stone is matter;
ergo a stone is matter;
and yet the consequent [*i.e.* the point inferred] is obviously understood to be talking about a stone in itself, and not according to how it is in the mind. A thousand more counterexamples are just as easily adduced, *e.g.* 'I know that Socrates is running; ergo Socrates is running,' etc.

xxxvi. My response to this is that the rule in question, when taken formally and interpreted correctly, is perfectly true. It needs to be taken formally

- because it addresses the consequent just to the extent that what is inferred in it comes from the force of the mental act posited in the antecedent, not from anything else assumed in it;
- and because it needs to be taken as talking about what is inferred from the force of the mental act *as so inferred, i.e.* insofar as it is inferred from such an act, and not independently.

It needs to be interpreted correctly because 'how it is

in the mind' and 'how it is in itself' are not to be interpreted as it seems they should be at first sight, *i.e.*, as being-in-the-mind is distinguished from being-in-the-real. Rather 'how it is in the mind' has here the broader sense of what is common to (a) the manner of being by which items in the mind are set apart from items outside it and (b) the being or disposition with which an item terminates a mental act. At the same time, 'how it is in itself' is taken quite narrowly here, to mean how the item has to be independently as such, *i.e.* insofar as being[- ϕ] attaches to it independently [of mental acts] — whether being- ϕ attaches to it thanks to quidditative predicates (as [being-true attaches to] 'A man is an animal') or thanks to predicates of existence (as [being-true attaches to] 'Socrates exists' or 'Socrates runs'). In sum, the sense of the rule is this:

when something pertaining to a mental act is posited in an antecedent, the consequent drawn therefrom, to the extent it follows from the force of that mental act, should be taken according to how it is in the mind, that is, according to how it is in being-an-object or according to the conditions in an object terminating that mental act, and not according to how it is in itself, that is, it [the consequent] is not to be taken independently and unqualifiedly, as such.

xxxiii. That the rule is quite true when so construed, is proved as follows. The mental acts meant are immanent ones, and so they are just cognizing and desiring [*cognoscere et appetere*]. But such acts, being immanent, posit nothing in their objects; so what is inferred to hold of those objects from the force of those acts, as so inferred, does not attach to the *things* which are the objects-taken-independently.³² I say 'as so inferred', because, thanks to the subject matter, by a coincidence of traits belonging independently to something with traits inferred of it from the force of mental acts, it may happen that what is inferred from a mental act [also] attaches to the item independently and in itself; but this is accidental to the trait inferred insofar as it depends on a mental act. Thus, the inference,

I know that Socrates will run;

ergo Socrates will run,

is perfectly good, and drawing it is sound because of the force of the act of knowing, since that act is certain [*certus*],³³ [bears on the] true, and can't go wrong; and

³² For the basic distinction between *things [res]* and objects [*objecta*], see q. 1, a. 3, note 4. The passage we are now reading is misleading because Cajetan speaks very broadly, so as to cover objects of accusative knowing as well as objects of propositional knowing. In fact, the present focus is on propositional knowing, so that *res vs. obiectum* contrasts a proposition taken in itself (*alias* a state of affairs) with a proposition taken as known, and the "traits" in question are traits of these, like obtaining or being-true, being-definitely-so, being-hard-to-make-a-mistake-about, *etc.*

³³ What Aquinas meant by '*certus*' is best seen at 2/2.ST q. 4, a. 8. Basically, a thing was *certus* when it was well-determined by its causes (including its formal cause). This meaning was applied to cognitive acts: they were *certi* when adequately determined by their causes. Their causes included

therefore, the consequent is not to be taken "in itself," that is, is not to be taken as a true, certain, and mistake-proof proposition thanks to itself standing alone, but thanks to its following from this sort of antecedent. In other words,

ergo Socrates will run

has the truth, definiteness, and unmissakeability with which it is known that he will run. The reason I say this is because the mental act does not introduce into his running any *other* definiteness, truth, or unmissakeability.³⁴ Now, this other inference,

I know that man is [material and so]

subject to corruption;

ergo man is subject to corruption,

is sound, like the previous one; and when taken formally, it implies a consequent which should be taken the same as in the previous one; but, thanks to the subject matter, the consequent is also definitely so when taken as standing alone.³⁵

xxxiv. That this was St. Thomas' thinking becomes clear from the fact that, in the text, two things are brought under the description 'how it is in the mind'. The one pertains to being-an-object and appears in the example, "I understand stone, and so stone is matter-independent." The other pertains to a condition inhering in the thing made-an-object, whereby the thing terminates the mind's act, and appears in the proposition which is the consequent of the conditional set forth, namely, [if God knew something will happen, then] it will happen, which he expounds as needing to be taken "as subject to the divine knowing," *i.e.* as it is "lying in His present." For it is quite clear that he is talking about the present being-in-act of [the event] itself in the real: that is the condition, after all, given which the event terminates the divine purview, as came out above [§§ vi and xiv]. And if you throw in the joint facts that

the cognitive faculty itself, strengths (if any) enhancing the faculty, the intensional form (*species*) of something within the faculty, *etc.* In other words, a "sure" cognition was one caused to happen by these largely externalist factors. Well, it also had among its causes or requirements the object known. Since the thing or object had to be the object of *knowing*, it had to be in shape to be such. A cognition could not be *certa* unless its object was a certain way, and that way was: definite, nailed-down, causally determined in the real. Thus '*certus*' was also applied to the object. See next note.

³⁴ If my knowing is to have the object, 'Socrates will run', that object has to be settled in its truth-value. A future-tense proposition about a contingency has no definite truth-value "in itself" or "on its own." So if you treat it as having one (as you do if you claim to derive it from a *true* claim about knowledge), it can only be getting this truth-value from its status "as a known." This is the force of Aquinas' rule.

³⁵ The proposition that man is material or 'that man is subject to corruption' is definitely true independently of any knowledge-claim, because the state of affairs which it picks out is fully determined by its "causes," *i.e.* by the makeup of human nature taken as a formal cause.

- (a) being-in-act suits the event "in itself," but
 (b) taking the event as it terminates God's knowing,
i.e. according to His present, is not taking the event
 "in itself" but "as it is in the mind,"

you will see quite clearly that the event is not being taken "according to how it is in itself" unless it is being taken according to what goes with it independently, as such, and not when it is being taken just to the extent it can be inferred from the mental act, as we have explained above [§ xxxii].

Thus the answer to the objections becomes plain: they are making trouble about the rule taken materially, not formally, and with a bad interpretation of 'how it is in the mind'. So much for doubt II.³⁶

Resolving doubt III

xxxv. As to the third area of doubt, namely, the application of this rule to get the conclusion sought, doubt arises on three grounds.

(1) The first is because, in the text, Aquinas commits a fallacy of implication *in adjecto* when he says the consequent ['it will happen'] is taken as subject to God's knowing, "*i.e.* as it lies in His present." This involves

³⁶ In light of the distinctions drawn in this commentary, it is advisable for the reader to review at this point what the second objection to this article was trying to prove, what strategy Aquinas had for breaking it, and what rôle his rule of interpretation was playing in that strategy. The objector was trying to prove that no future event known-by-God-as-to-happen was a contingent future event. If he had been trying to prove that no such event was contingent *in nature*, this second objection would have had much the same force as the third, and Aquinas could have replied (as he did at the end of the *ad 3*) that no case of knowing (not even God's knowing) alters the nature of the thing known. But no: the objector was trying to prove that no future event known-by-God-as-to-happen was contingent *in status*. So if his argument succeeded, it would prove that (unless much of the future was flatly unknown to God) no future event was really such that it "could go either way," every future event was fully determined to happen, and the apparent unsettledness of the future was a human illusion. Now Aquinas could not deny that an event *as known* (by God or anyone else) was non-contingent in status. So he had to show that the status of a future event-as-known-by-God ≠ the status of such an event in itself. This was not hard; for the status of a future event-as-known-by-God = present at eternity, while the status of such an event in itself = future in time and underdetermined by its causes in time. But then he had to show that the right way to interpret a consequent like '*p* is true' in a conditional of the form 'If God knows that *p*, then *p* is true' is to take the '*p* is true' as belonging to *p*'s status as known-by-God, not to its status as independent thereof "in itself." This is the rôle of the rule of interpretation that Cajetan has been defending with his subtle construal of its "formal" sense. If the rule holds up, the truth of 'God knows that *p*' (even when enhanced with the necessariness of 'God knew that *p*') will leave completely untouched the unsettled character of whether *p* is true in time. From Cajetan's perspective and Aquinas', what was at stake in the defense of this rule was the real existence of indeterminacy in the temporal universe (alongside gap-free knowledge in God).

saying that something taken as future, as so taken, is taken as present. Obviously, an event *e* is taken as future in a consequent saying '*e* will happen'. So it is inconsistent to say that this consequent, describing *e* as future, is taken as present. Granted, it is consistent to take a future *thing* as present; but a judgment about the thing itself, taken independently, is one thing, and a judgment about it as described by a future-tense proposition is another (as I made clear above). So it seems unintelligible to say that the consequent,

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e will happen,
 is taken as present. For if it is taken as present, the proposition is no longer '*e* will happen' but '*e* is happening', and if the proposition is '*e* will happen', it is no longer taken as present.

(2) The second ground for doubt is that Aquinas' answer does not seem to hang together. The antecedent takes the knowing to be described in the *past tense*, and not as measured by eternity; yet he says the consequent is to be taken as present. These ideas do not fit together, because (as emerged above) a thing as present corresponds to eternity and to a cognitive act as measured by eternity [not to the past, nor to a cognitive act described as past].

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(3) The third ground is that Aquinas' answer, even if true, does not go far enough. The whole answer boils down to the necessariness of an event *e* in its status as present. But it is clear from points made above that, if one subtracted that presentness of events to eternity, God would still have sure knowledge of contingencies because He has before Him the "reasons for things." So, since this objection opposes the article's conclusion as a whole, and not just that one reason for reaching it, Aquinas' answer should have met the objection's whole force, not just its force against that one reason, as the text does. Ergo his answer is not enough.

xxxvi. To CLEAR THESE DOUBTS UP, I need to first clarify the sense of the text. To see it aright, notice that this *true* consequent,

e will happen,

includes two points: that *e* is future, and that *at some time e* is present. Both have to come together, in order for the consequent to be *true*, namely,

- that *e* is future, and
- that at some time the corresponding present-tense proposition '*e* is happening' is true.

But (as emerged above), *e* looked at purely in its future status is not in shape to be known surely, because of its defect: it does not have what it takes to be known for sure. Rather, *e* has to be taken as present in order to serve as the terminus of a sure knowing. So since the *e*-is-future point in '*e* will happen' does not offer a terminus for knowing-for-sure that *e* is at some time happening, it remains for the corresponding present point, *e*-is-happening, to provide what it takes to terminate sure knowing. The result is that the consequent,

e will happen,
is known for sure to be true on no other basis than that a point corresponding to it and included in it, namely, that *e* is happening *at some time*

is seen to be true. The sense of the text, therefore, is that this proposition, '*e* will happen', which stands as the consequent in the conditional put forward, can be taken two ways. (1) It can be taken independently [in isolation from the antecedent mentioning divine knowing]; and so taken, it is not necessary. (2) It can be taken as subject to divine optimal knowing, *i.e.* as the terminus of a sure and mistake-proof seeing; and so taken, it is necessary with the kind of necessariness that '*e* is happening while *e* is happening' has. For '*e* will happen' is a terminus of divine seeing just to the extent that it includes within itself the point about the present, '*e* is happening', and not to the extent it is future.³⁷

xxxvii To answer the first ground for doubt, then: I deny that there is a fallacy here of implication *in adjec-tio*. A formally future proposition is not being taken as present here; what is going on is rather an explication and a distinguishing of points included in a proposition about the future. Aquinas distinguishes *e*'s future being-present from its being-future, and both are included in this consequent. He is teaching that this consequent is open to sure cognition by reason of its present-status, and not by reason of its future-status. And since it has a necessariness under its present-status, when the consequent is taken according to the status it has as subject to divine knowing, it is necessary. No fallacious implication is being drawn.

To the second ground for doubt, the answer is easy. The verb in the past tense does not indicate God's act of knowing as a past act (for then it would indicate falsely)

³⁷ What Cajetan was doing in this remarkable paragraph was pioneering the job of stating truth conditions for a future-tense sentence. It is widely agreed today that, while tensed sentences cannot be "translated" with full success into tenseless ones, it is at least possible to provide tenseless truth conditions. This is (or is very nearly) what Cajetan has done. If one is making at the time *t* the judgment, '*e* will happen'. The truth of what one is saying requires

- (1) that *e* (tenselessly) happens at some time *t'* such that
- (2) *t'* is (tenselessly) later than *t*.

As was noticed above in notes 7 and 9, Cajetan identified the perspective of true tenseless statements with God's "present" at eternity. Hence he calls condition (1) the "present point" involved in '*e* will happen.' But rather than state condition (2), which is genuinely tenseless, he paraphrases '*e* will happen' into the present-tense form '*e* is future' (or, what would have been better: '*e* is not happening yet'). This allows him to say, quite correctly, that the truth of '*e* will happen' is flatly not knowable on the basis of that paraphrase; it is only knowable by the fulfillment of condition (1). To a knower immersed in time, of course, it is precisely the fulfillment of condition (1) that is typically not knowable until *t'* arrives (the only exceptions being cases where the causes of *e* are sufficiently deterministic to make *e* "inevitable" at *t'*—hence not a future contingency). But for the God whose conscious being is a tenseless present, the fulfillment of condition (1) is knowable in all cases.

but as co-existent with the past. There is nothing wrong with saying that an eternal act coexists with a past time; indeed, 'eternal act' implies as much.

Re the third ground for doubt, the short answer is that the objection comes from a poor understanding of the text. Aquinas' response is not based on the eternalness of God's act, nor upon the co-existence of events with eternity (as the objection supposes), but on the status thanks to which an event is knowable or not knowable. A contingent future event, as contingent future, is not knowable; rather, it is knowable as present, as has emerged in points already made. And this is true whether the present-status of the event is known

- by reason of eternalness, or
- by reason of the "ideas" in God's mind representing the event under conditions of existence, or
- by reason of the divine essence representing the above after the fashion of an intensional form, or
- by reason of forms infused in someone's mind (say, an angel's or that of Christ's human soul).

It makes no difference for present purposes how one posits the present-status of the event to be known. It is enough that the consequent here is not knowable for sure on any basis except that of the corresponding "present" point included within it.

Understanding the answer *ad* (3)

xxxviii. All the points made in answer to the third objection are clear enough from remarks already made. Pay attention, however, to the difference drawn at the beginning of the answer between

- the necessariness of a point known to us, and
- the necessariness of a point known to God, namely, that a point known to us has to be fully determined [*certum*] both in itself and as subject to our knowing, while a point known by God has to be fully determined only as subject to His knowing. Note that the reason for this difference is drawn from the eternalness of God's purview. The reason is good, indeed, and sufficient. But it is not the *only* reason. So take care not to go wrong.³⁸

³⁸ The other reason, of course, is God's possession of His plan-like "ideas."

At the end of this famous text, it is in order to make a final remark. By holding that God knows future contingencies, Aquinas was upholding the comprehensive character of divine foreknowledge. He was resolved to do so without sacrificing the fact that, in the physical structure of the universe, it is really unsettled whether these events will occur. To make sense of his position, one must realize that, for him, a full description of the universe, tenselessly distributing facts over times, is not physics. It is God's view from eternity, and the God's-eye view is not ideal physics. It is a view transcending human science. This answer may be hard to swallow, but it is what allowed Cajetan to maintain that the determinate status of temporal events *at eternity* did not imply that status in the physical reality measured by time. Aquinas does leave events with a real "being" at eternity; but since this being is tenseless, it does not generate the paradoxes some have alleged.

Does God know propositions?

In I Sent. d.38, a.3; d.41, a.45; I CG cc.58-59, De Veritate q.2, a.7

* *enunciabilia* It seems that God does not know propositions.*

(1) Because our mind composes affirmations and denials, knowing propositions is a trait of our understanding. No composing goes on in the divine mind. Therefore, God does not know propositions.

(2) Besides, cognition comes about in every case through some sort of likeness [to the thing known]. In God there is no likeness to propositions, because [they are composite structures, while] He is utterly simple. Hence God does not know propositions.

Fig. Ps. 93 ON THE OTHER HAND, there is Psalm 94:11, "The Lord knoweth the thoughts of men." Well, propositions are contained in the thoughts of men. Hence, God knows propositions.

I ANSWER: since forming propositions lies in the power of our mind, and God knows whatever lies in His own power *or* that of a creature (as I said above), God must know all the propositions that can be formed. But just as He knows material things in an immaterial way and composed things in an uncomposed way [*simpliciter*], so also the way He knows propositions is not a propositional way of knowing, as if a putting together of affirmations or denials occurred in His mind. Rather, He knows each through a simple understanding in which He understands the essence of

each thing. It is as if we, in the sheer act of understanding what a man is, grasped every point that could be said of a human being. This does not happen in our intellect, where thought moves* from one aspect to another, because the intensional form¹ we have so represents one aspect as not to represent another. When we understand what a man is, we do not in that very act understand the other traits that are present in him; we rather come to understand them separately and successively, in a certain order. As a result, we have to put the items that we grasp separately back together as a propositional whole² (affirmative or negative) by forming sentences. But the divine intellect's intensional form (His essence) suffices to indicate everything perfectly. The result is that by understanding His own essence, He knows the essences of all things plus whatever accidents they can acquire.

* *discurrit*
† *species intel-*
ligibilis

‡ *in unum redigere*
per modum compos-
itionis vel divis-
ionis

TO MEET THE OBJECTIONS — *ad* (1): this argument would work if God knew propositions in a propositional form of knowing.

ad (2): the structure of a proposition indicates that a thing [referred to by the subject] has some being or other [say, being- ϕ]. Thanks to His [all-inclusive] being, which is His essence, God is a likeness of all the things meant by propositions.

Cajetan's Commentary

The title is clear. — In the body of the article, he does two jobs: answers the question with a yes and tells how.

Analysis of the article

ii As to job (1), the conclusion answering the question is: God knows propositions. — The support is that God knows whatever lies in His power or a creature's; propositions are within our power to form; ergo God knows them all.

iii As to job (2), he shows how God knows them in a single conclusion reached: how He does it is not by forming affirmations and denials but by simple understanding (*i.e.*, He knows not after the fashion of our intellect's second operation, but after that of its first).¹

¹ The second operation was judging; the first, simple understanding. Judging was second because it came into language as an interpreted sentence and so presupposed a prior operation by which one got its interpreted components.

This is supported in two ways.

• First, by a comparison. God knows material things immaterially, composed things uncomposedly; so propositions, too, not by forming them but by seeing. — How this could be is illustrated with an imaginary case of human understanding: suppose in grasping what a man is, we understood him to be white, *etc.*

• Secondly, by an argument. [*Antecedent:*] The divine intellect's intensional form (*i.e.* God's essence) suffices to show all things perfectly; [*inference:*] so by understanding His own essence, God grasps the essences of all things plus whatever accidents they can have. — The antecedent is clear. The inference is supported on the ground that what makes it necessary to form affirmations and denials in order to understand, is the fact that one's intensional form is limited in its representing. This claim is supported in the text on the following ground. Suppose an intentional form *S* so represents ϕ as not to represent ψ ; then in understanding

ϕ (say, what man is) through S , one is not understanding ψ (say, an accident or possible accident of man); ergo, a man and his accident are being understood separately; so they need to be brought back together by forming a composition, if we are to understand that the one is present in the other; therefore [by transitivity of inferences] from first to last:

if form S so represents ϕ as not to represent ψ , the intellect has to form a composition.

And then if, in a line of distinctive reasons, an affirmative [antecedent] is the reason for an affirmative [consequent], and negation [of the antecedent] is the reason for negation [of the consequent], it follows that

if form S so represents ϕ as also to represent

ψ , there is no need to form a composition;² rather, everything will be understood by a simple grasp of the object represented by that form, as Aquinas was saying in drawing his inference.

² An explanatory reason R was a "distinctive reason" for an explanandum E , when R was the unique reason, the only reason, for E . In that case, R was equivalent to E ($R = E$). Here Cajetan is assuming that limitation in what an intensional form represents is the "distinctive reason" for the intellect to form propositions, so that he can use the well-known logical point that where $R = E$, $\sim R = \sim E$.

An ambiguity about limitation

iv. Observe here that the relevant words of the text can be taken two ways: (1) First, they can be taken to say that *sheer limitation* of the intensional form in representing is the reason to form propositions. This interpretation is false and contrary to the thinking of St. Thomas; for it would imply that angels understand by forming propositions, because they have limited intensional forms. (2) The other way to take his words is to say that *such-and-such limitation* (i.e. in the forms we are suited by nature to have) is the reason for proposition-making. This is true and is the sense intended.

– It is true because proposition-making arises out of the fact that a form so represents a subject as not to represent its predicate — not out of the mere fact that a form represents a subject without representing everything else, however irrelevant to that subject.

– It is the sense intended because, even in the text, it is twice insinuated: once in the example about man, where it says we would grasp "every point that can be said of a human being," and then again in the argument following that example: "we do not in that very act understand the other traits that are present in him."

The truth about this matter will be discussed extensively below, in the treatise on the angels.

Is God's optimal knowledge open to change?

In 1 Sent. d.38, a.2, d.39, q.1, aa.1-2, d.41, a.5; *de Veritate* q.2, a.5 ad 11; a.13

* *variabilis* It seems that God's optimal knowledge [*scientia*] is open to change.*

(1) After all, 'knows optimally' is predicated of God in relation to a knowable object. But predicates that involve relation to a creature are attributed to God from time and are adjusted in keeping with the changes in creatures. Therefore, God's optimal knowledge is adjustable in keeping with the changes in creatures.

(2) Besides, whatever God can make, He can know optimally. But God can make more things than He does make. Ergo He can know more things optimally than He does know. So His optimal knowledge is open to change by augment and diminishment.

(3) Furthermore, God knew Christ as going to be born. But now He does not know Christ as going to be born, because Christ is not "going to be born." So it is not the case that everything God did know, He does know. And thus His knowledge is seen to be revisable.

ON THE OTHER HAND, James 1:17 says that with God "is no variableness, neither shadow of turning."

q 14, a.4
q 9, a.1 ANSWER: since God's knowledge is His substance (as came out above), and His substance is altogether changeless (as was shown above), it has to be the case that His knowledge is altogether unalterable, too.

TO MEET THE OBJECTIONS — *ad* (1): predicates like 'Lord' and 'Creator' involve relations to creatures as they are in themselves. But 'God knows' involves relation to creatures as they are in God, because this is how anything is in act as understood: it is "in" the one understanding. Well, created things are in God unchangeably but exist in themselves changeably.

— An alternative solution is to say that predicates like 'Lord' and 'Creator' involve relations arising from actions that are understood to terminate at creatures themselves, as they are in themselves; such relations are predicated of God variably, in keeping with changes in creatures. Predicates like 'knows' and 'loves', however, involve relations arising from actions that are understood to be [immanent] within God, and so they are predicated of God invariantly.

ad (2): God also knows what He can but does not make. So from the mere fact that He can make more than He does, it does not follow that He can know more than He knows, unless you are talking about His "sight-knowledge," by which He is said to know the things that actually occur at one time or another. And even there, all that follows, really, is that He knows the changeability of things; it does

not follow that His very knowing is open to change, because He knows that certain things can occur which do not, and that others do occur which need not. Rather, the only way His knowledge would be open to change is if there were something that God did not know at first but subsequently came to know. This cannot happen, since God knows in His eternalness whatever does or can turn up at each time. So if something is posited to turn up at any time, it must for that very reason be posited as a "known" to God from eternity. Hence, one ought not to concede

God could know more than He does, because this proposition implies that God did not know previously and does know subsequently.¹

ad (3): the nominalists of former days said that

'Christ is being born',
'Christ is going to be born', and
'Christ has been born'

were the same proposition,* because the same reality (Christ's birth) was meant by all three.² From there it would follow that whatever God did know, He does know, since He now knows that Christ has been born, which means the same as that He is going to be born. — But this opinion is wrong. For one thing, [it misses the fact that] a difference in the parts of speech makes a difference in the proposition. For another, it implies that a proposition' once true would always be true, and that is contrary to Aristotle [*Categories*, c. 5], who says that the sentence³ 'Socrates is sitting' is true while he sits and that the same sentence is false when he gets up. And so one ought to admit that

Whatever God did know, He does know is not true, if it is talking about propositions. But this admission does not imply that God's knowledge is vulnerable to change. For just as He knows *without*

¹ As this reply makes clear, the only thing Aquinas was at pains to exclude was a change arising in God's knowledge on the basis of time, as if an event could emerge in time that God did not foresee, or (what amounts to the same thing) as if God, having known the contents of time, could shift plans so as to provide more for Himself to know. Aquinas interpreted 'God can know more than He does' to insinuate the possibility of just such a shift, and he rejected it as so insinuating. For, given God's free self-determination to create precisely *this* temporal universe, His knowledge of its entire temporal content, from beginning to end, is immutable. But this is not to deny (nor does this reply in fact deny) that God's free self-determination at eternity could have been otherwise.

² Abelard (*Intro. ad Theologiam III*, c.5) identified a proposition (*enuntiabile*) with a timeless state of affairs. Past, present, or future-tensed sentences could then pick out (from different angles) the same "proposition." Aquinas preferred an account of *enuntiabilia* that stuck closer to language.

* *enuntiabile*

† *propositio*

‡ *oratio*

change in His knowledge that one and the same thing exists at one time and not at another, so also without change in His knowledge He knows that a given proposition is true at one time and not at another. Again, the only way His knowledge would be open to change is if He knew propositions in the propositional manner, *i.e.*, by making affirmations and denials, as we do in our intellect. This is why our cognition slips from truth to falsity, *e.g.* if a thing changes while we keep holding onto the same opinion about it,³ or if our mind shifts from one

³ From this answer, it becomes clear that Aquinas used '*enuntiabile*', '*oratio*', and '*propositio*' interchangeably. By all three, he meant what we now call an interpreted sentence (type or token). In an interpreted sentence, the reference of the subject term(s) is fixed, as is the sense of the predicate(s); and Aquinas took the *tense* of the verb(s) to be part of the sense of the predicate(s). It is controversial today whether the title "proposition" should be given to a sentence whose interpretation is fixed in just these two ways. Most modern writers think not. They prefer to withhold the title of 'proposition' unless the interpretation of the sentence is fixed in yet a third way, namely, in the time (or date) to which the sentence is pegged — I mean, the time as of which the sentence is meant to hold true. For

view to another (*e.g.* if we first think that somebody is sitting and later think that he is not). Neither shift can happen in God.

these writers, 'Socrates is sitting' (where 'Socrates' refers to the famous philosopher, and a certain bodily posture provides the sense of 'is sitting') does not become a proposition unless the sentence or its context also provides enough information to specify the time about which the sentence allegedly captures the truth. In other words, for these writers, every proposition is at least implicitly timed or dated, so as to be something which, if true, is always true, like 'Socrates is sitting at t_2 '. Aquinas, however, followed Aristotle into the (now minority) view that a time-peg is not needed, so that 'Socrates is sitting' is a complete "proposition" already, true at some times and false at others. For Aquinas, then, a proposition that did not mention a date contained the force of a tense (so that 'Socrates will sit' is a different proposition (so that 'Socrates is sitting') but did not contain a time-peg (so that 'Socrates will sit' is true at some times future to the speaking of it but false at others, *e.g.* at the future times when 'Socrates is sitting' is true). This is why Aquinas could not represent the immutable content of God's knowledge in the form that he (with Aristotle) was prepared to call *propositional*. He could only represent the immutable content in the form of timeless meta-propositions about when propositions are true (or false).

Cajetan's Commentary

The title is clear. — In the body of the article, there is one conclusion, answering the questions with a yes: God's knowledge is not open to change.¹ — The support goes thus. [*Antecedent:*] God's substance is entirely immutable; [*inference:*] ergo His knowledge is entirely unchangeable. — The support for drawing the inference is that God's knowing is His very substance.

Things vs. propositions in the answer ad 3

ii. In the answer ad (3), on the point, "whatever God did know, He does know" is not true, if it is talking about propositions," doubt arises on three grounds.

[a] The first goes as follows. [*Antecedent:*] Just as a proposition is at times true and at times not, so that from being a known it becomes a not-known,² so also a certain thing, *e.g.* Socrates, at times is a being and at times is not; [*1st inference:*] so a corruptible thing, too, from being a known becomes a not-known; [*2nd inference:*] therefore, there is no difference between propositions and things in this respect, contrary to what Aquinas says in the text. — Drawing the [second] inference is obvious. And the comparison [stated in the antecedent] is supported

on the ground that being-true contributes no differently to [a proposition's being] an object-of-knowledge than being-a-being does [to a thing's being such]; after all, any item is cognizable insofar as it is a being. — And here is a confirming argument. Just as God saw from eternity Christ's birth at such-and-such a time, so also He saw the proposition, 'Christ is being born', [to hold] at the same time; and just as He saw Christ's birth as not-occurring at other times, so also He saw the falsehood of the proposition [at those other times]; ergo, just as we do not concede that God "does not know" a birth that He did know, so also we should not concede that He "does not know" a proposition He did know.³

[b] The second ground for doubt is that the following inference,

God does not know something He did know;
ergo He knows less than He did,
is perfectly in order. In his answer ad (2), Aquinas said that the point just inferred should not be admitted, because it implies a composed sense.⁴ Yet inferring that point is supported: the number of points known is in fact diminished.

³ In other words, 'if God knew that *p*. He knows that *p*' should be conceded for any proposition *p*.

⁴ The composed sense of 'God can know less than He does', taken as it stands, is $\Omega(\text{God knows so-much} \ \& \ \text{God knows less than that much})$. This obviously inconsistent formula is not, I think, what Aquinas worked to exclude. But he may well have meant to exclude this $\Omega(\text{God knows so-much at } t \ \& \ \text{God knows less than that much at } t')$.

¹ This is a slip of the pen on Cajetan's part. The question is obviously being answered with a no.

² If a proposition *p* is false, it cannot be known that *p*.

[c] The third ground for doubt goes thus. [*Antecedent:*] Suppose there is a proposition *p* such that God knew that *p* but does not [now] know that *p*; then [*1st inference:*] His knowing has passed into not-knowing; in that case [*2nd inference:*] there is changeability in God's knowing. The response offered in the text (*i.e.*, that one judges the talk of propositions differently from the talk of things) does not seem to meet the difficulty.

iii. To CLEAR THIS MATTER UP, two points need to be noted.

• Between a proposition and a thing, there is this difference relevant to the purpose at hand: a proposition, while staying the same proposition and perduring, shifts from being true to being false, hence from being an object-for-knowledge to being not-an-object-for-knowledge, and *vice-versa*, as is obvious; but a thing, if it changes from being to not being, or *vice-versa*, does not perdure. One cannot point to one and the same thing going from being knowable at one time to not-knowable at another, as one can with a proposition.

• Second, one must note that "God's knowledge" can be assessed for changeableness in two ways.

(1) In one way, what is being assessed is God's act of knowing. And that is utterly immutable, both in act and in potency, as Aquinas said in his answer *ad* (2), although, absolutely speaking. His sight-knowledge could have been determined to more things or to fewer from eternity. But once it has been determined, God's knowing is utterly immune to change on God's side.

(2) In the other way, what is being assessed is items-known. This time, if you mean propositions, not things, nothing prevents the known from changing, because such change posits no change in God but only in the proposition known: it shifts from being a knowable to being a not-knowable, and *vice-versa*.

iv. From these points, the answer to the objections becomes clear.

ad [a]: the difference between a thing and a proposition about it has already been stated, and so an argument will not work the same for both, *etc.* — Against the confirming argument, though, I need to add a further point. A thing, such as Christ's birth, carves out for itself a definite time of occurrence;* but the proposition, 'Christ is being born', conveys no definite time, but just a general or vague "pre-

sent" in keeping with the time when it is formed or uttered.⁵ So it is now true, now false, corresponding to one present and not to another, while yet perduring as entirely the same proposition. The same cannot be said of a thing, which has a definite "present time" of its occurrence.

ad [b]: I grant the inference, if it is talking about items-known, and the latter are taken to be propositions. But Aquinas did not teach the contrary, in the text of the answer *ad* (2). He spoke of increase or decrease of the divine knowing on God's side. He held an increase to be unacceptable either *de facto* or as a possibility. Thus [he said], as far as God's part is concerned, one must deny that He can know more than He does.⁶ That this was the intent of the text is clear enough, because the text is treating God's power to determine His sight-knowledge, inferring that one should not concede 'God can know more than He does' because its composed sense would imply mutability on God's part, *i.e.*, it would imply that God can change His [sight]-knowledge, once He has determined it.

ad [c]: I deny its [second] inference, on grounds already made clear. What is going on is not a change in God's knowing but in the object-known. And while the talk of a thing and the talk of a proposition is not the same for purposes of the question whether they perdure through a change from being a knowable to not-being a knowable, the talk of them is nevertheless the same for purposes of the point that a change in either of them does not amount to a change in the divine knowing. It was in this latter respect that the text was comparing them, not the former.

⁵ Given what Aquinas meant by a proposition, a present-tense sentence-type (if the sense and reference of relevant terms is kept constant) is the same proposition whenever a token of it is uttered, but each token (because of its present tense) is pegged to the time of its utterance. Because utterance sometimes occurs at a time when events correspond to a sentence of that type, and sometimes occurs when they do not, the sentence-type is said to be now true, now false.

⁶ Although Cajetan is right about the sense of Aquinas' answer *ad* (2), he should not have conceded that 'God does not know some point that He did know' implies 'He knows less than He did.' The problem concerns 'God knows that *p*' for tensed values of *p*. But for each future- or present-tensed *p* that becomes time-false with the unfolding of events, there is a corresponding past-tense *p* that becomes time-true and which God knows to be so. ∴ He does not know "less" than He did.

* determinat sibi certum sui esse tempus

Does God have a theoretical knowledge of things?

De Veritate, q.3, a.3

It seems that God would not have a theoretical knowledge of things.

14.14, a.8 (1) After all, God's optimal knowledge is a cause of things, as was shown above. A theoretical science is not a cause of the things known in it. Therefore, God's optimal knowledge is not theoretical.

(2) Besides, a theoretical science arises by abstraction from things, as God's optimal knowing does not. Ergo the latter is not theoretical.

982a.1 ON THE OTHER HAND, the higher attainment should be the one attributed to God. Theoretical science is higher than practical knowledge, as Aristotle's remarks make clear at the beginning of the *Metaphysics*. So, God has a theoretical knowledge of things.

ANSWER: optimal knowing comes in three kinds: the purely theoretical, the purely practical, and a third kind that is theoretical in one way and practical in another. To justify this division, one needs to see that a case *K* of knowing can be called theoretical by three tests:

(1) because of the subject matters known in *K*, *i.e.* because they are not things which the knower does or produces; our knowing natural or divine matters meets this test;

(2) because of the manner of knowing in *K*; *e.g.*, if a builder ponders "housing" by defining and classifying its types and studying the universal traits of housing; this is considering doable/productive things but in a theoretical way; for a thing is "producible" by applying form to matter, not by analyzing a complex whole into its universal formal principles;

c 10; 433a 14 (3) because of the purpose of *K*: "practical understanding differs in purpose from the theoretical kind," says *De Anima III*. Practical understanding is for the sake of doing, while the aim of theory is having the truth. So, suppose a builder studied how a certain house could be built, not in order to build it, but just to know. His thinking would be theoretical in purpose, even though it was about a producible thing [as such].

[Next, here is how the tests determine the kinds.]

— A case of knowing which is theoretical because of the things known in it is purely theoretical.

— A case which is theoretical just because of the how or the purpose is theoretical in one aspect, prac-

tical in another.

— A case which is ordered to the purpose of doing things is purely practical.

Given these results, the thing to say is that God has purely theoretical knowledge about Himself (He is not producible, after all). But about *all other things* He has both a theoretical knowledge [in some respect] and a practical knowledge. Because of how He knows, His knowledge [of all producibles] is theoretical: for whatever we get to know of things theoretically by defining and classifying, God knows, as a whole, in a far more complete way. [As to His practical knowledge, producibles divide into those never actual and those at some time actual.] About the things that God can make but never does make, His knowledge is not practical by the purpose-test [but only by the subject-matter test]. But He does have practical knowledge by the purpose test of the things which He makes [to be] at some time. Evils, though not producible by God, still fall under His practical knowledge (as do goods), insofar as He permits, impedes, or orders them to a purpose; in much the same way, sicknesses fall under the practical knowledge of a physician, as he cures them through his art.

TO MEET THE OBJECTIONS — *ad* (1): God's knowledge does not cause Himself [so the objection fails there] but only other things. Some of them it "causes" act-wise* (namely, the ones that are made to be at some time), but others it only "causes" power-wise† (namely, the ones that *can* be made but never are).

* *actu*
† *virtute*

ad (2): the trait of being acquired from the things known is not an intrinsic [*per se*] trait of theoretical knowledge; it just happens to characterize it in human beings.

TO MEET THE CASE ON THE OTHER SIDE — one does not have a complete knowledge of producible things, unless one knows how to produce them. So, since God's knowledge is in every way complete. He must know the things producible by Him in that way, too — as to how to produce them — and not just as objects of theoretical knowledge. Yet His knowing does not fall short of the loftiness of theoretical science: for He sees all things other than Himself "in Himself," and He knows Himself theoretically; thus, in a theoretical "science" of Himself, He has both theoretical and practical knowledge of all other things.

Cajetan's Commentary

The title is clear. — In the body of the article, two jobs are done: (1) he makes the general division of optimal knowledge into theoretical and practical, and (2) he answers the question.

Analysis of the article, I

ii. As to job (1), the division goes as follows. Some cases of knowledge are purely theoretical, some purely practical, and some practical in one respect but theoret-

retical in another. — How this is so is clarified as follows. [*Antecedent:*] A case of knowing is called theoretical by three tests: from its object, or else from its manner, or else from its purpose. [*Inference:*] Ergo some cases are purely theoretical, etc. — The antecedent is illustrated with examples. Drawing the inference is supported as follows: a case that is theoretical by the subject-matter test is purely theoretical; one that is theoretical only by the test of its manner, or only by that of its purpose, is practical in one respect but theoretical in another; a case of knowing which is theoretical by none of these tests is, by elimination, purely practical.

Three observations

iii. Concerning this part of the text, observe first that “theoretical” and “practical” are not being taken here as traits of the knowledge just in itself but also as traits of the knower. This is why it says that architectural know-how, in a person who does not intend to build [but just to know how] is theoretical from its purpose, even though practical from its manner and object. So “purpose” has to be glossed as *intention of the knower*, not as *function of the science itself*. For if we talk about the function of the science or know-how itself, it, too, is “practical from its purpose.” Since the purpose of knowing how to build is to build. If you pay attention to this, you will escape the mockery of our adversaries.

Observe secondly that, as being theoretical has three tests, so does being practical. First comes a case of knowing that is practical from its subject-matter, its manner, and even from the knower’s intent; this case is purely practical. Second comes the case that is practical from its matter, manner, and end of the know-how, but not from the intent of the knower; this case is really one of practical knowing, but in the text it is called theoretical in one respect, *i.e.*, from the knower’s purpose. Third comes the case that is practical from its subject-matter but not from its manner and end-of-the-knowledge: this case is practical in one respect (by its subject) but theoretical in others: by the manner and end-of-the-knowledge. These latter go together; if something is known in a practical manner [*i.e.* known as to how-to-do-it], the knowledge is already ordered, of itself, to doing, and conversely.

Observe thirdly that knowledge which is “theoretical from the manner alone” (*i.e.* where a producible object is known in a theoretical way) is not taken to be knowledge of how-to-make in its most general features (for a science of how-to-make stays practical whether it studies the how-to through proximate principles of production or through remote and general principles of it). Rather, it means a knowledge of the producible which does not investigate how-to-make-it but what-it-is, etc., as the text says. Such knowledge does not pertain to craftsmen [*qua* craftsmen], after all, but to philosophers, who, even when they know

what a guitar is, or a house, still lack the knowledge of how to make one.

Analysis of the article, II

iv. As to job (2), Aquinas says three things: he compares God’s knowledge (a) to God Himself, then (b) to other things, then (c) he answers a tacit objection.

- As for (a), the conclusion is that God’s knowledge of Himself is purely theoretical. The support is the fact that He is not a doable or producible thing.

- As to (b), the conclusion is that God’s knowledge of other things is theoretical as well as practical, the latter in different ways. — Its being theoretical is supported on the ground that God knows all things in a theoretical way (knows what they are, etc). — It is practical in different ways because

- about makeable things that are never made, He has knowledge that is virtually practical, *i.e.* it is practical from its object, manner, and end-of-the-knowledge, but not from the intent had by the knower, while

- about makeables that come to be at some time, He has a knowledge that is purely and act-wise practical.

- The objection to which he responds is that God does not make evils. They are not among the makeables-by-God nor among the things-made by God. How, then, does God’s practical knowledge concern them? — He answers that, just as medicine is not just knowledge of the well but also of the sick, so also God’s knowledge [covers evils], not by producing them, but by permitting, ordering, impeding, etc.

v. At this point, please observe that there are two ways to talk of God’s knowledge:

(1) The one way is *independently** [of any given type of known], as it exists in God Himself. So taken, His knowledge is one and simple, pre-possessing in itself in a higher manner every complete trait of knowing; so taken, God’s knowledge is neither practical nor theoretical but a Higher Thing containing both in a loftier fashion, as said in the Introductory Inquiry. q 1. a4

(2) The other way to talk about it is *in relation to thus-and-such a known*. This is the kind of talk in which His knowing is called theoretical or practical. *Vis-à-vis* the known which is His essence (taking His essence not as the equivalent object of His knowledge, as it pertains to the independent talk of His knowledge, but as a special known distinct from others, *i.e.* from the knowns other than God), it is theoretical; *vis-à-vis* the other knowns, it is practical, as the text says.

Two doubts from Scotus

vi. On the conclusions just stated, doubt arises from Scotus. In remarks on the Prologue to *I Sentences*, he defends the opposite of our first conclusion by classifying God’s self-knowledge as flatly practical, or at least lacking nothing needed for it to count as practical, except perhaps for the fact that God’s will is good naturally, of itself, rather than by conformity to norm. Then, in remarks on *I Sent.* d.38, he holds the opposite of our second conclusion (that God has practical know-

ledge of other things). He wants God to have not practical but theoretical knowledge of them.

[1a] Scotus' argument against our first conclusion is this. [*Antecedent:*] God's knowledge of His essence is naturally prior to His love for it and serves to make that love right; [*inference:*] ergo, it is practical.

[1b] Against our reason for our conclusion (because God is not a producible), Scotus rejoins that God is producible [in being-loved], i.e. a thing attainable through an immanent doing of His, namely, His loving.

[2a] The argument against our second conclusion is this. [*Antecedent:*] Prior to the determination of His will, no knowledge that God has of things dictates that things are to be made; [*inference:*] ergo no practical knowledge of things occurs at that point. The antecedent is obvious, and drawing the inference is supported by the point that practical knowing dictates doing.

[2b] In remarks on the Prologue to *I Sent.*, he supports drawing this inference with [another claim about] priority: no knowledge of things [as to-be-done] etc. is prior to the act of God's will, etc.; ergo no such knowledge is practical.

q.1, a.4 with § vii in the commentary

vii. ANSWERING THESE is not difficult, given what was said in the Introductory Inquiry and in the special inquiry *De praxi* [*On the Practical*].

ad [1a]: In the first argument, I reject his inference (never mind the antecedent), because more than this is required for knowledge to be practical, as he made clear there. — *ad* [1b]: His rejoinder to our reason would have merit, if God (or His loving Himself) were produced or even regulated by practical knowledge. Every cause, after all, has to be either the cause of a doing or the cause of an effect, and "practical knowing" bespeaks a cause, as is clear from the term and from *Metaphysics LX* [c. 5]. And *vis-à-vis*

1047b 31ff

makeable creatures, a cause of the effect is posited in God (though not a cause of the doing or making, because that is God's substance). But *vis-à-vis* God Himself, no cause of either can be posited. Neither He nor His doing comes-to-be; neither depends [on a cause]. It is laughable to hear that God is a thing producible by His own practical knowledge.

ad [2a]: as for his case against our second conclusion in the first passage, I deny the inference. It is blatantly false that practical know-how has to dictate doing; it just has to be regulative. Architectural know-how does not dictate that anything be built; it is quite indifferent between doing it or not, as you see from *Metaphysics IX*.

ad [2b]: This also gives the answer to the case he made in the second passage. His case makes a false assumption. As you see in *Metaphysics IX*, a rational ability (which is what practical understanding is) is determined by appetite, not *vice-versa*, and so is posited to be indifferent prior to appetite. It is amazing that this fellow's outstanding genius did not see this:

JUST AS a builder's know-how, as it is in itself, precedes the act of his will but, as determining him to build, follows his will and yet precedes the execution (the very doing of the building), SO ALSO accounts* of all God can make naturally appear in His essence, prior to any act of volition, but His volition has to precede those accounts *qua* determined towards producing.

So some of the accounts are determined towards producing, and some are not, as the text says. And even those that are so determined precede the execution (the making *ad extra*). And it is just irrelevant whether the "executive power" in God is His will or some third power; it is still the case that the will-as-determining precedes [accounts so determined], and the will-as-executing follows [them].

c 5,
1048a 8-10

c 5, 1048a 10

* *rationes*

Inquiry Fifteen: Into God's *ideai*

After studying God's optimal knowing, one should go on to study His *ideai*.¹ On this topic, three questions are asked:

- (1) are there *ideai* in God?
- (2) are there many, or just one?
- (3) is there an *idea* for each thing God knows?

¹ *Idea* 'is a Greek word (plural: '*ideai*'); hence my italics. The English word 'idea' would be too misleading. In current English, any thoughts or impressions I have about a topic will be called my "ideas" of it. But this use is no older than Locke. For Aquinas, '*idea*' was still a Greek loan-word, having the technical force given it by Platonic philosophers. According to them, a perceptible object got its properties by participating in one or more things outside itself, namely, in imperceptible forms. These self-standing forms were called *ideai*. They were universals but served also, according to some, as the models on which perceptible objects were patterned by the Demiurge. Platonizing Church Fathers retained these doctrines but identified the Demiurge with the Biblical God and re-located the *ideai* to exist in the mind of God. Aquinas abandoned the Platonic doctrine on universals but felt obliged to retain the patristic account of "divine *ideai*," namely, the point that God's knowledge includes patterns or models of the things He can make. So in what follows, unless a Platonic writer is being quoted, '*idea*' just means ideated pattern or mental model.

article 1

Are there *ideai* in God?

1 ST q.44, a.3; In 1 Sent d.36, q.2, a.1; De Veritate q.3, a.1;
In 1 Metaphys., lectio 15, De spiritualibus creaturis a.10 ad 8

It would seem that *ideai* do not exist.

PG 3, 869 (1) In chapter 7 of *De divinis nominibus*, Denis says that God does not know things by their *idea*. But the only reason to posit *ideai* is so that, through them, things may be known. Ergo, there are no *ideai*.

q.14, a.5 (2) Besides, God knows all things "in Himself," as said above. But He does not know Himself through an *idea*; so He does not know other things that way either.

(3) Furthermore, an *idea* is supposed to be a source of knowing and achieving. But God's essence is a sufficient source of His knowing and achieving everything. So there is no need to posit *ideai* in Him.

ON THE OTHER HAND, there is what Augustine says in his *Book of 83 Questions*: "There is such force in *ideai* that no one can be wise without grasping them."

Q. 46; PL 40, 29 I ANSWER: one cannot avoid positing *ideai* in God's mind. '*Idea*' is a Greek word corresponding to Latin '*forma*'. '*Ideai*' is being used here to mean "forms of things existing outside those things." Well, the form of a thing existing outside it can have two functions:

- * *exemplar*
 - to be a model* of it, or
 - to be a source of knowing it, as the forms of items-knowable are called sources in the knower.¹

For both reasons, *ideai* have to be posited in God.

One sees why as follows. Set aside anything produced by chance; in all other cases, the producing of a thing has to aim at the form of that thing. An agent-cause will only aim at a form insofar as a likeness of it is within the agent. This condition is met two ways:

(1) The form of the product-to-be exists in some agent-causes by way of natural being;* such is the case in those that act by nature, as a man begets a human being, and as a fire starts a fire.²

(2) But in other agents [the form of the product-to-be exists] by way of intensional being,[†]

such is the case in those that act by intellect; a likeness of the house, for example, pre-exists in the mind of its builder.³ One can call this likeness an *idea* of the house, because the builder intends to pattern the house on this form which he has conceived in his mind.

So since the world is not a product of chance but was made by God acting through His intellect (as will become clear below), there has to be in God's mind a "form" "on whose pattern" the world was made. And these are the defining ingredients of "an *idea*."⁴

* *secundum esse naturale*

† *secundum esse intentionale*

q.19, a.4;
q.44, a.3

² This is production not by chance but by natural necessity; the talk of "aim" means that the natural form of the productive cause so contains that of the product as to render it predictable.

³ This is production not by chance but by design.

⁴ The Christian neo-Platonists had a definition of "divine *idea*." Aquinas has deftly taken a part of that definition — the part that could stand up in an Aristotelian theory of art — and made it the whole definition. Creation is divine artisanship, and the *ideai* are God's designs for things creatable.

¹ In Aristotelianism, the form of each ϕ -thing was naturally within it, so an "outside" form could only be a homeomorphism of ϕ -things existing in a mind conceiving them or in a model (say, a blueprint) for them.

997b.6,
1031a.28

TO MEET THE OBJECTIONS — *ad* (1): [Denis meant that] God does not understand things by an *idea* existing outside Himself. Aristotle also [in *Metaphysics III* c.2 and *VII* c.6] criticized Plato's theory for making *ideai* exist on their own, rather than in a mind.

ad (2): while God knows Himself and other things through His essence, it is still the case that His essen-

ce is a source of His producing other things but not a source of His producing Himself. So His essence has what it takes to be an *idea* when compared to other things, but not when compared to God Himself.

ad (3): it is by His essence that God is a likeness of all things. So an *idea* in God is not another *thing* from His essence.

Cajetan's Commentary

There is nothing to remark about the title, except that the verbal meaning of '*idea*' is explained in the body of the article.

Analysis

In the body of the article, three jobs are done: (1) he puts forward a conclusion answering the question; (2) he assigns a verbal definition to '*idea*'; (2) he supports the conclusion.

ii. As to job (1), the conclusion answers the question with yes: one has to posit *ideai* in the divine mind. Notice here that 'in the mind' is used formally, *i.e.* 'in the divine mind *qua* mind', which is being in it object-wise (as a thing understood is in the mind understanding it), and not as a form is in the thing whose form it is.¹ So the sense of the conclusion is that one has to posit *ideai* as objects in God's understanding.

iii. As to job (2), '*idea*' means the form of a thing existing outside that thing itself. This is explained from the Greek. — If you want to see the definition set forth at length, read q.3 of *De Veritate*, a.1

iv. As to job (3), the proposed conclusion is supported as follows. [*Antecedent: 1st part:*] The world is not a product of chance, but [*2nd part:*] has been made by God acting through His intellect; [*1st inference:*] so the production of the world has aimed at the form of the world; [*2nd inference:*] so there is in the divine mind a form on whose pattern the world has been made; [*3rd inference:*] so there is in the divine mind an *idea*.

Both parts of the antecedent are assumptions at this point; they will be shown to be true below, at the proper place. — The first inference is supported by the very broad principle that,

in all cases where a thing is not produced by chance, the form of that thing is what the producing of it is aiming at.

— The second inference reaches two points, *i.e.*, (a) that the "form on whose pattern" *etc.* is in God, and (b) that it is in God in such-and-such fashion, *i.e.* in the divine mind, as an object thereof. Both points are supported in the text: the first, on the ground that

every productive agent pre-possesses a likeness of the form it is aiming at; the second is supported by the difference between a natural agent and the kind relevant here, in how it possesses the likeness just mentioned, namely, that a natural agent possesses it in natural being (as is clear in the case of fire), while the other kind of agent possesses it in intentional being (as is clear in the case of an artisan). Ergo, if God is an agent through His intellect, then [He possesses the form of His product in intentional being] *etc.* — Finally, the third inference is supported on the ground that the scientific definition of an *idea* comprises just these elements. The support for this is the fact that what it takes for \bar{I} to be an *idea* is that \bar{I} be a form outside the thing *x*, as a model for *x* and a source of knowing *x*, *etc.*

Two vital clarifications

v. Pay close attention here to the fact that the text is speaking with great care when it posits an *idea* [of *x*] as "a model" [*exemplar*] for *x* and not as "a source of being" [*principium essendi*] for *x*. "Source of being" [for *x*] would sound like the form *with which* the agent acts. '*Idea*' does not mean that sort of form; it means a form that the agent conceives and towards whose likeness he acts — this, properly speaking, is a model — not the form with which the agent acts. This is why Aquinas, in his example of the house-builder, adds explicitly that the *idea* of the house is "the form he conceives in his mind," not his architectural skill [*ars*].²

Again, when the text said an *idea* was a "source of knowing," it immediately added the limiting clause, "as the forms of items-knowable are called sources in the knower." It is as if Aquinas said: I am not saying that an *idea* is just a source of knowing (because that sounds like saying that an *idea* explains why cognition occurs, in the way an intensional species* does); rather, an *idea*

* species intel-
ligibilis

¹ The contrast here is between form in its normal rôle as a specifier and form in the unusual rôle of a pure object-understood.

² This is a valuable distinction. The form (*i.e.* the internal specification) *with which* a builder acts as a builder is his skill or talent for such activity (which Aquinas called *ars*). This skill may indeed include a talent for thinking up models, but it is not itself a model, nor is his skill what the builder holds in mind as he builds. Similarly, the form with which a musician composes is his musical talent, which is quite different from the "form" he has conceived and is striving to realize in his current *opus*. Ditto for literary talent and the "form" an author seeks to give to a poem or novel.

is a source of knowing *in the manner in which the forms of items-knowable existing as objects in the knower are called sources of knowing the items themselves.*³ And since all this, namely,

* *causalitas exemplaris*

– the form of the world existing outside the world,
– this form’s causality as a model,*
– and how it exists (intentionally or object-wise),
is contained in the next-to-last inference [in § iv], the last inference was rightly supported with the pregnant words, “And these are the defining ingredients of an *idea*,” because it was already imposed by the ingredients just listed.

Troubles over the answer *ad* (3)

vi. In the answer to the third objection, doubt arises, because Aquinas’ identification, *idea* = the divine essence, seems false and incoherent.

† *esse objectivum*

* It is false, says Scotus, writing on *I Sentences* d. 35. He argues as follows. [*Antecedent:*] A stone having objectual being[†] in the divine mind fits the full definition of an *idea*. [*Inference:*] So an *idea* in God is not the divine essence. — The antecedent is seen to be true by running through the whole definition of *idea*. It can also be confirmed by using the definition given in *De Veritate* q.3, a.1, along with the one given in this article, namely, that an *idea* is “the form of some *x* outside *x* itself, a model of it, and thus a source of knowing it.” — The inference is then supported as follows: objectual being is not real being but a diminished being;[‡] so it is not the divine essence.

‡ *esse diminutum*

* It seems incoherent, because either *idea* = the divine essence *as it is*, or else *idea* = the divine essence *as it is an object of the divine intellect*.

– If we take the first alternative (as the next article, where it says an *idea* is God’s essence “imitable in this way,” suggests we should, since being-thus-imitable belongs to the divine essence as a real entity), then the main question of the present article has been answered very badly. Here is why. [The main question is ‘Does such a thing exist?’ and is asked about *ideai*.] When the does-it-exist question is asked about an item that would have being in the real as well as in the mind, a “yes, in the mind,” saying nothing about being in the real, is a bad answer. If somebody asks, “Is there a sphere of fire?” and you

say, “Yes, in the mind,” your answer is a bad one.⁴ For being-in-the-mind is being with a qualifier, whereas being-in-the-real is being unqualifiedly. Now, the does-it-exist question asks about being unqualifiedly. So, if you answer it in terms of being in the mind, you insinuate that the item in question has no other being — that being-in-the-mind is flatly all there is to its being. So: if *idea* = the divine essence in its real being, then

“One has to posit *ideai* in the divine mind”

is a bad answer to the question.

– If [we take the other alternative, where] *idea* = the essence as the latter is an object for God’s intellect, then Aquinas’ answer *ad* (3) has gone wrong in just saying that *idea* = the divine essence. For the divine essence as object does not have real being but objectual being. And if (*per impossibile*) the divine essence were not in the real but were just an object of His understanding, it would still satisfy the definition of *idea*. So the identification, *idea* = essence, has a merely accidental basis; indeed, it is superfluous. After all, the nature of anything you please is an object for the divine intellect, albeit secondarily, even if it were never identified with the divine essence as object; for God knows any nature you please not only as contained in that prior object but also in itself.

These arguments [for the identity’s incoherence] are not lifted textually from Scotus. Rather, I have made them up myself, partly from him and partly from the text, the better to bring the truth out.

Solution begun

vii. To clear these troubles away, two issues need to be looked into, on which the entire solution depends. The first is how an *idea* stands to being. The second is what “objectual being” amounts to.

Issue (1): how *idea* stands to being

From texts already cited, please realize that it is in the definition of “an *idea*” that it be a model. Well, it is in the definition of “a model [of *x*]” that it be formative [of *x*] *via* an agent who causes through intellect.

This is why it says in the same passage [*De Veritate* q.3, a.1] that, if all things acted by necessity of nature, *ideai* would not be posited. Again by definition, to be formative *via that way* is to be in a mind. For (unless you are talking about remote potential) a model is never formative *via that way* unless it is *in a mind*. And if it is *just in a mind*, that is enough to make it formative *via* that way. So the manner of being that a model has to have is its being-in-a-mind, while other modes of being are (absent further considerations)* incidental to it.⁵ This is why the text answered the do-they-exist question

* *absolutè loquendo*

³ Cajetan is contrasting the *idea* of *x* with the *species intelligibilibus* of *x*. Either can be called a “form” of *x* in that either is a homeomorphism of *x*, but they differ in how they contribute to the cognition of *x*. The *idea* contributes by being an object understood in its own right, while the *species intelligibilibus* of *x* does not become an object (but subconsciously specifies the mind to have *x* as its object). In contemporary terms, Cajetan is trying to express the cognitive role of what we now call a model. If I do not understand a physical structure, and you show me a diagram of it, I come to understand that structure through grasping the diagram. Such a diagram is a very simple case of a “model.” A model is or exhibits a “form” which, when understood as an object in its own right, contributes to understanding any thing structured according to that form.

⁴ A sphere of fire, above that of the fixed stars, was a real question in medieval Christian cosmology. See q.66, a.3.

⁵ Whatever counts as a model, just in order to so count, must exist in a mind. But this is consistent with the further consideration that such-and-such a model (say, a mock-up or blueprint) may also exist extra-mentally.

about *ideai* with “they are in the divine mind.” After all, being-in-a-mind is, without qualification, the being that *ideai* have to have, and it goes formally with *idea qua idea*. Aquinas made no mention of the extra-mental status of *ideai*, which Plato is said to have upheld, because he was doing theology here and discussing the divine intellect. (The other business is metaphysics and belongs to a treatise on matter-independent substances.) Clearly, then, and formally speaking, an *idea* in God = the divine essence *as it is in the divine mind*. The up-coming article says nothing to the contrary; for ‘imitable’ is understood to imply ‘having what it takes to be a model’. Thus, in line with remarks I already made [in § v], what is called an *idea* is the divine essence as a model, *i.e.* as formative of a thing *via* the mediation of an intellect. And the reason this trait attaches to the divine essence is not “just because it naturally is,” obviously, but “because it is an object to God’s mind.”

Issue (2): what being-an-object is

viii. But what does being in this way — being an object — amount to? In remarks on *I Sentences* d. 36, Scotus decides that being-a-known is not real being, absolute or relational; nor is it thought-produced relational being;* rather [he says], it is a thing’s (absolutely or relatively) “diminished being,” which he calls being-in-some-respect, such that, once a thing has this mode of being, it grounds a thought-produced relation to the intellect. He thinks that rock and other entities have been brought into this mode of being from all eternity by an act of God’s intellect; and he thinks that such entities-in-some-respect both are and are called *ideai*, because all the defining traits of *ideai* attach to them, as I mentioned in raising his objection [in § vi].

Well, I was weaned on the milk of the Peripatetics and never learned to talk “airy fairy,” as they say. So beyond the extension of ‘a real being’, the only thing I know is ‘a thought-produced being’ (*Metaphysics* V [c.7] and *Metaphysics* VI [c.2]). Plus, I learned from St. Thomas’ *De Veritate* (q.21, a.1) that a thought-produced being is either a relation or a negative. So since being-an-object is not a way of being in the real, and it is not negative, the remaining option, *generally speaking*, is that being-an-object is thought-produced relational being.⁵ But the divine case is peculiar. For since God’s act of being [*esse divinum*] is of such high excellence as to pre-possess every mode of being, intra- or extra-mental, in one higher mode,[†] it has to be the case that the divine essence’s natural being is not only its being-intelligible to His intellect (and in utterly pure act) but is also (and on no accidental basis) its being-an-object of the same — otherwise, it would not contain all modes

of being in a single, supremely higher mode.⁶ In consequence,

- (a) the divine essence does not have “diminished being” as an object of God’s intellect, and
- (b) neither does anything else.

Consequence (a) follows, of course, because the divine essence’s objectual being is God’s own natural existence, thanks to His higher manner of being. Consequence (b) follows from the fact that the only way the other things can be objects for God is “in the object which is the divine essence.” For God understands nothing “outside Himself,” but only grasps all things “in Himself.” The result is that He knows *all of the following* “in Himself.”

- rock in His essence-as-object and
- rock absolutely and
- this rock and
- rock in my mind. *etc.*

All these He knows, but the “how” in “how they are objects for Him” is one, unique “how,” namely, “in the divine essence.” And so the being-an-object that things have to the divine intellect is not relational being but absolute, utterly real being, namely, God’s act of being. Ergo, since ‘*idea* in God’ (to get back to the phrase in question here) means a thing-in-virtue-of-this-sort-of-being [being-an-object-to-God’s-intellect], Aquinas quite rightly said that *idea* in God is the divine essence itself, *etc.*

⁶ Scholastic thought distinguished three “modes” in which a form could be said to “be.” (1) As mind-independently specifying how something was, the form was “in” that thing with (second order) *esse reale*; (2) as specifying an intellect to conceive thus-and-so, the form was “in” that intellect with *esse intelligibile*; (3) as a pure object understood by an intellect, the form was “before” that intellect with *esse obiectivum*. The same scheme of analysis applied to the divine essence: as the “form” really specifying how God is, it had *esse reale*; as the *species* specifying God’s intellect to know Himself, it had *esse intelligibile*, and as the object terminating God’s act of self-knowing, it had *esse obiectivum*. Cajetan’s point here is that, although this scheme yields very real and very sharp distinctions indeed when applied to creatures and their forms, it yields no real distinctions when applied to God and His essence. God = His essence = His being not only in the mode of *esse reale* but also in the other two modes; and in Him the three modes themselves unite in one, higher mode. This last, it seems, is what Scotus could not accept. He thought *esse reale* had to remain distinct from *esse obiectivum* even in God, and he offered his own account of the latter as, in all cases, an *esse diminutum*. This account Cajetan had already rejected (see previous footnote). Now he is attacking the basic idea that the modes remain really or formally distinct in God. (They are conceptually distinct, of course.) The reader should see that Cajetan’s point here is fully consistent with his earlier critique. He never said that the being of an object *O* was thought-produced relational being in God. His point was just to deny that ‘x understands *O*’ carries the implication,

$$\exists y(x \text{ entertains } y \text{ as } O),$$

regardless of whether the value of *x* is God or any other knower, and regardless of whether the ‘ \exists ’ means real or “diminished” being.

* *esse relativum secundum rationem*

1017a 7 – 1017b 9
1026a 34 – 1026b 25

† *eminenter*

⁵ Up to this point, Cajetan has been repeating or summarizing a critique he already launched in his commentary on q 14, a.5, against Scotus’ account of being-an-object; see §§ xi-xii. Now he is about to break new ground.

Solution finished: point-by-point replies

ix. *ad* (1). So my answer to the first objection [*i. e.* Scotus' claim that the identification, *idea* = divine essence, is false] is that I deny the inference it makes. Against Scotus' support for that inference, I am saying that while in general being-an-object is not real being, still, being-an-object to the divine intellect is real.

ad (2). In answer to the second [which said the identification was incoherent], it has already become clear that *idea* in God = the divine essence as an object for the divine intellect, *etc.* When the objection then infers that, on this alternative, "Aquinas's answer *ad* (3) has gone wrong in saying that *idea* = divine essence," I deny the inference. In the first place, Aquinas did not say

idea = divine essence insofar as the latter has natural being.

Secondly, if he had said this without reduplication [in other words, if he had said just the above without adding "*qua* natural being" at the end], it would still have been true, because of the oneness of the two modes of being in God. For the divine essence has both modes of being in a higher way, in its single, supremely excellent mode of being; and therefore affirming

idea = essence does not entail the formal claim (humanly formulated)

idea = essence *qua* being in the real.

And the text does not allege this. It just says

idea = essence.

And so the two consequences which the objection then draws, namely, that

idea = essence is true on an accidental basis and

so the identification is superfluous, are both invalidly drawn. For '*idea* = essence' is an identity that is true of itself* and necessary, thanks to the fact that nothing can be an object-to-God's-intellect without being "in the divine essence." Hence, necessarily, the "how" in "how objects are objects" is "by being in the essence-object." Otherwise, God would be understanding something outside Himself, and His intellect would be put in an inferior position, as is made clear in *Metaphysics XII* [c.8]. So a point the argument assumes and presupposes (in ignorance of metaphysics), *viz.*, that "rock" could be an object to God's mind in such a way that how it was an object would be just "in the rock itself," is false and impossible.

1073b 15ff

§ w

I turn now to the counterfactual argument. [It contained both a counterfactual and an inference from it:]

[*counterfactual:*] if the divine essence were not in the real but were solely an object of God's understanding, the definition of *idea* would still be satisfied; [*inference:*] ergo the identity, *idea* = essence, is purely coincidental.

I waive the counterfactual and deny the inference. Indeed, the opposite inference is in order; for given that counterfactual, *idea* would = the divine essence *qua* object. — If the rejoinder is made: "but then *idea* = divine essence in real being would be a coincidental identity," I deny that inference, too. For it is not coincidental that the divine essence's being-an-object before the divine mind is its real being; rather, the one act-of-being = the other act of *itself*, thanks to the higher mode of being unique to the divine essence. Admittedly, a lot of people happen to go wrong on this. They think of being-an-object without any further qualifier and of real being without any further qualifier; and these, indeed, are not the same. But the topic here is such-and-such being-an-object and such-and-such real being, and from there an identity arises — though we are stammering obscurely, of course, when we try to say so.⁷

⁷ A logical point deserves further comment. When one is reasoning with univocally-used terms, what is said of a genus must hold in all its species, and what holds of ψ -things must therefore hold of such-and-such ϕ -things. This is the rule made familiar to us in all forms of standard predicate logic, including the syllogistic of Aristotle. But when one is reasoning with analogously-used terms, one must be more careful. If such a term, ' ψ ', used without further qualifier, delimits a "class," it is still the case that ' ψ ' shifts in definition as it applies now to one, now to another analogate within that "class." And so if being- χ is true of all ψ -things, it will only be so because ' χ ', too, shifts in definition over the several analogates. So while it may be true that all items which are ψ -in-some-way are χ -in-some-way, one must not leap to the conclusion that they are all χ -in-this-way. Being- χ -in-this-way may not apply to such-and-such ψ -things at all. Since every term applied both to God and to creatures (including any transcendental term like 'being' or 'one') is analogously used, the theologian must continually use a care in reasoning which is rare or unknown in other sciences. Thus whatever is "essence" in any way is no doubt "distinct" in some way from what has it; but such-and-such essence (God's) is not really distinct from what has it (q 3, a.3). In all "living beings," no doubt, the attributes picked out by 'alive', 'wise', and 'powerful' are "distinct" in some way; but in such-and-such living being (God) they are only conceptually distinct *quoad nos*, so that within that being (God Himself), they are *aufgehoben* into the one attribute with which God is divine (q.13, a.4). In all cases, the factors involved in being a knower (the known, the knower, his intellect, the intensional form with which it is in act, and that act itself) are "multiple" in some way; but in such-and-such knower (God) they all unite in real terms into one, unique factor (q.14, aa.3-4). Cajetan's reasoning in this commentary is another example of the same schema.

Are there many *ideai*?

1 *ST* q.44, a.3, 1 *ST* q.47, a.1 *ad* 2, *In I Sent* d.36, q.2, a.2, *In III Sent* d.14, a.2, q^o 2;
1 *CG* c.54; *De Veritate* q.3, a.2, *De Potentia* q.3, a.16 *ad* 12, 13; *Quodl. IV*, q.1

It looks as though the *ideai* are not “many.”

(1) After all, an *idea* in God is His essence. God has but one essence. So He has but one *idea*, too.

(2) Besides, an *idea* is a source of knowing and doing, as artistic skill is, and as wisdom is. But there are not many artistic skills in God, nor many wisdoms. Neither, then, are there many *ideai*.

(3) If the suggestion is made that the count of *ideai* rises with the count of relations to diverse creatures, it is rebutted as follows. The count of *ideai* is an eternal number. So if the *ideai* are many while creatures are temporal, a temporal total will be the cause of an eternal total [which is impossible].

(4) Besides, these relations are either real in creatures alone or else real in God, too. If they are real only in creatures, then, since creatures do not exist from eternity, the number of *ideai* will not be settled from eternity, if the count of the latter only rises with the count of such relations. But if the relations are real in God, too, there is another real multitude in God besides that of the Persons — and this last is contrary to John Damascene [*De fide orthodoxa* I, 10], who says that in God everything is one, except for [the distinctives of the Persons, *i.e.*] Unbegottenness, Generation, and Procession. Thus, there are not “many” *ideai*

PG 94, 837

PL 40, 30
• rationes

ON THE OTHER HAND, there is what Augustine says in his *Book of 83 Questions*: “The *ideai* are primordial forms or accounts* of things — permanent and unalterable because they themselves are not formed (and hence are eternal and always in the same state) — which are contained in the divine understanding. Although they never come to be, nor perish, everything that can or does arise and perish is said to be patterned on them.”

ANSWER: one has to posit multiple *ideai*. To see why, one needs to consider the following. [In any product of design, the ultimate end in it is the chief good in it.] What stands as the ultimate end in any product has been focally[†] intended by the principal agent, as an army’s good order has been intended by its general. But the chief good[‡] produced in things is the orderly arrangement of the universe, as Aristotle made clear in *Metaphysics XII* [c.10]. So the orderly arrangement of the universe has been focally intended by God: it has not arisen incidentally as a side-effect, while a parade of [lower] agents each caused its own effect, as some writers have alleged. They say God created only the first creature, which then created a second, and so on, until the count of things-produced became as great as it is.¹ On that

† propriè

‡ optimum

1075a 13

view, God would have but the one *idea* of that first creature. But if the arrangement of the universe was created by God in its own right, and intended by Him, then He must have the *idea* of the universe’s orderly arrangement. Well, one cannot possess the correct account* of a whole unless one has distinct and correct accounts of the elements of which the whole consists. as a builder cannot conceive the design[†] of a house without having in mind a correct account of each of its parts. So God must have in mind correct accounts of all things. This is why Augustine says in the *Book of 83 Questions* that “all particulars were created by God, each according to its own account.” Thence it follows that the *ideai* in the divine mind are many.

Now, as to whether this conflicts with God’s simplicity, it is easy to see that it does not, if one heeds the fact that how the *idea* of a work is in the mind of the worker is this: it is there as WHAT is understood,[‡] not as the specification WHEREBY it is understood[§] (that specification is the form that puts his intellect into act). After all, the form of a house in the mind of its builder, in the likeness of which he forms the house itself in matter, is something understood by him. It does not go against the simplicity of God’s intellect that He should understand many things; what would contravene His simplicity is if His intellect were formed by many specifications. Thus the many *ideai* in God’s mind are there as objects-understood by Him.

The situation can be visualized as follows. God takes cognizance of His own essence completely; thus He takes cognizance of it in every way in which it can be known. Well, it can be known not only as it is in itself but also as it is possible for creatures to participate in it along some line of resemblance. Each creature has its own specific nature whereby it partially resembles God’s essence one way or another. Thus, as God knows His own essence as imitable-this-way by such-and-such a creature, He knows His essence as a distinctive account and *idea* of this creature. Ditto for the rest. Thus it becomes clear that God understands many accounts unique to many things, *i.e.* many *ideai*.

TO MEET THE OBJECTIONS — *ad* (1): the term ‘*idea*’ does not name the divine essence *qua* essence but *qua* a likeness or an account of this or that thing. So, since many such accounts are understood on the basis of one essence, many *ideai* are said to be.

fail to be reminded, however, of Adam Smith. His idea that a prosperous economic order arises coincidentally, as the side-effect of many individual pursuits, has been extended repeatedly and incautiously, first to the social order as a whole (by anarchists), then to earth’s ecosystem as a whole (by Darwinists), and now to the order of the cosmos as a whole (by many physicalists). But the place to argue this out is below, at qq 45–47.

¹ The allusion is to the disciples of Avicenna. See his *Metaphysics*, tract IX, c. 4. The modern reader can hardly

* ratio

† specificiter

PL 40, 30

‡ quod intelligitur
§ species qua intelligitur

ad (2): 'wisdom' and 'artistic skill' are terms for the factor WHEREBY God understands, but 'idea' names WHAT He understands. By one factor, God understands many items; and how He understands them is not only as they are in themselves but also as they are understood by Him, and this last is understanding "many accounts" of things. The case is similar in any artisan: when he understands an already built house's form, we say he "understands the house"; when he understands the form of a house envisioned by him, then, because he understands that he understands this, [we say] he "understands the idea or account" of the house. Well, God not only understands many items through His essence but also understands that He understands these many through His essence. This is understanding "many accounts" of things; differently put, this is "many *ideai*" being in His intellect as objects-understood.

ad (3): the relations by which the count of *ideai* rises are not caused by the things but by God's intellect, as He compares His essence to the things.

ad (4): the relations that raise the count of *ideai* are not in created things but in God. Yet they are not real relations (like the ones distinguishing the Persons) but relations *understood* by God.²

² If *x* bore relation *R* to *y*, *x* was called the subject of the relation; *y*, the terminus. The objector supposed the relations multiplying the *ideai* would be real ones. Aquinas held them to be thought-produced. They take the form '*E* models *O*', where *E* is the divine essence as an object understood, and each *O*, is a possible way for *E* to be partially resembled. The several such relations have the same subject, *E*, but distinct termini, *O*₁, *O*₂... *O*_n. Divine thought founds these relations just by understanding that *E* can be partially resembled in the way *O*₁, via which *E* models a possible creature *c*.

Cajetan's Commentary

The title is clear. — In the body of the article, he does three jobs: (1) he answers the question with yes; (2) he shows that this many does not conflict with divine simplicity; (3) he shows how they get to be many.

Analysis of the article, I

ii. As to job (1), the conclusion that gives the answer is this: one has to posit many *ideai*. — The support for it goes as follows. [*Antecedent*:] The ultimate end in any product is focally intended by the principal agent; [*1st inference*:] so the orderly arrangement of the universe was thus intended by God and was created in its own right; [*2nd inference*:] so the *idea* of the universe's orderly arrangement is in God's mind; [*3rd inference*:] so distinctive accounts of all things are in His mind; [*4th inference*:] so many *ideai* are in His mind.

The antecedent is illustrated by an army's good order and its general. The first inference rests on the fact that the chief good produced in things is their order, which is corroborated by *Metaphysics XII*. The truth of the point inferred is also confirmed by knocking down Avicenna's opinion, etc. The second inference is obvious in itself. The third inference rests on the fact that the correct account of a whole cannot be had without correct accounts of all the elements whereof it consists, as one sees in the case of a house and its parts. The truth of the point inferred is confirmed by the authority of Augustine. — The last inference needs no support.

Two points to note

iii. It is important to notice that in the initial antecedent, the text does not say "ultimate end of" any product but "in any product;" for the kind of end under discussion here is the kind internal to the ef-

fect, not the kind outside it. As you see from *Metaphysics XII*, text 52, 'good of the universe' names two goods, one immanent within the universe, and the other outside it. The former is its orderly arrangement; the latter is God, for whose sake even the orderly arrangement exists. So the universe's good order, which is the chief good within the whole universe, has to be the ultimate end in the product which is the universe, and so must go back to the principal agent, which we assume to be God. Thus God is the direct* author and end of this good order, as the general is of the army's good order.

Notice secondly that Avicenna's opinion (to be discussed officially below) about how the plural number of creatures arose has been mentioned here just to show the force of the means by which Aquinas chose to secure a plural number of *ideai* in God. For if the distinction of one creature from another were not intended by God directly, but were a coincidence from God's point of view, i.e. something arising from the parade of [lower] agents (or however else you please), then we would have no way to conclude to models of many things in God; the argument would stall at just one. For no artisan needs *ideai* of things arising by accident.

Analysis of the article, II

iv. In job (2), to show that a plural number of *ideai* does not conflict with divine simplicity, he uses the difference between the WHAT someone understands and the WHEREBY. The reasoning goes thus. [*Major*:] Multiplying the WHAT does not compromise simplicity but multiplying the WHEREBY does. [*Minor*:] An *idea* is a WHAT, not a WHEREBY. [*Conclusion*:] So a multitude of *ideai* does not compromise divine simplicity. — The major is supported on the ground that understanding many items does not introduce composition

c. 10,
1075a 12-15

* per se

or imperfection; rather, understanding through many *species* does this. The minor is supported by a sample case:^{*} the *idea* of a house in the mind of the builder, *etc.*

* *inductivè*

Doubts about WHAT vs. WHEREBY

v. Concerning the text's appeal to the difference between what is understood and whereby it is understood, doubts arise.

(1) First, either the topic here is real plurality, or else it is thought-produced plurality. If real, a plurality of WHATs compromises the divine simplicity as much as a real plurality of WHEREBYS would. But if thought-produced, a plurality of either is possible. For the divine essence *qua* intensional species contains every intensional species, just as the same essence *qua* object contains every object. So the two thought-produced pluralities are equally harmless.

1075a 5-10

(2) What God understands can only be one thing numerically, as you see in *Metaphysics XII* [c.9]. So multiplying WHAT God understands goes against this. It is therefore false to say that a plurality in WHAT is understood does no harm.

(3) In God there is wisdom and artistic skill and scientific ability; so WHEREBY a thing is understood is multiple in God. This inference is supported by the fact that these each stand as a WHEREBY God understands, as Aquinas admits in his answer *ad* (2).

Solution begun

vi. To clear these doubts away, please realize that the topic here, as far as the WHAT and WHEREBY are concerned, is these items in exercised act; that is, the topic is the defining items (or real factors) that exercise the actualness of the WHEREBY or the actualness of the WHAT. Thus, in the present context '*idea*' means WHAT is understood in exercised act, because it means that which stands as object or terminus to the act of intellection; and '*artistic skill*' means a WHEREBY in exercised act because it betokens that which stands as a form-wise source to the act of intellection (ditto for '*wisdom*' *etc.*).

But as far as multitude or plurality is concerned, please realize that the topic here, formally speaking, is neither real nor thought-produced plurality; rather, the topic is "plurality" without further qualification. In other words, the intent of the text is to locate the difference between WHAT and WHEREBY just here:

what it takes to exercise actualness as a WHAT becomes flatly multiple and can be called "many" without further qualification, whereas what it takes to exercise actualness as a WHEREBY cannot become multiple in such a way as to be called "many" without further qualification.

Point-by-point replies

vii. *ad* (1): our answer to the first argument, then, is obvious. We say that, because '*idea*' means WHAT is known, and because any thought-produced

distinction is enough to raise the count of what-is-known (so that a point beginning-a-line-segment is one "known," and the same point ending-a-segment is another), the relative distinction with which God's essence imitable-this-way is one known, and the same essence imitable-that-way is another, is enough to raise the count of *ideai*. But when it comes to "source WHEREBY" knowing takes place, it is not the case that just any thought-produced distinction is enough to raise the count of such sources: rather, one source has to be distinct from another according to the distinctive and intrinsic reason why it is a source of understanding.* So, what yields many in the WHEREBY is not the same as what yields it in the WHAT. Ergo, when the argument says,

God's essence *qua* cause-why contains just as "many" as it does *qua* object-which,

we grant the premise, but we are denying [the parallelism assumed, *i.e.*] that as a manyness understood in the [essence *qua*] object is enough to flatly pluralize the WHAT, so this manyness understood in the essence *qua* cause (intentional species) is enough to pluralize the WHEREBY. This we deny for the reason stated.¹

ad (2): here two replies are made. Our first is that what God understands is "one" as opposed to "many *wholly disparate*" objects, but not as opposed to "many" without qualification. The *ideai* are not many wholly disparate knowings. They are not so disparate from each other, nor from the divine essence, since each is that essence. Admittedly, it goes against a mind's simplicity to have many knowings wholly disparate *as knowings* (we are talking formally here), as happens in us when we understand a triangle and a cow. But having many knowings that are not thus disparate as knowings but share in numerically one source [of knowability] does not prejudice a mind's simplicity: — Our second reply is that the object understood "of itself" by God in the first sense of "of itself" has to be one.

¹ In us, there are many sources of knowing. The impressions on our senses and the intensional specifications in our minds differ in why they are distinctive and intrinsic sources of knowing. But since God knows everything not just "in" but also "because of" His essence, the latter is His sole source of knowing. Any distinction between the role of His essence as model, as skill, as wisdom, *etc.*, is just a thought-produced distinction and does not raise the count of wherebys in God.

² To our understanding, a geometrical figure like the triangle and an animal like a cow (a) fall under no common classification, and (b) share no common explanation of why they are understood. This is what it means to be wholly disparate *as knowings*. Hence there is no basis on which they could both terminate a single act of our understanding. Hence a mind like ours, taking knowings that are wholly disparate as knowings, must shift from one act of understanding to another, must be in potency to one of these acts while exercising the other, cannot be flatly identical to any of its acts, and thus cannot have the simplicity of the divine mind. God escapes such complexity, we are being told, because His essence, pre-containing all the categories (q. 4, a. 2), is a common explanation for knowing any possible being or abstraction.

* *secundum proprium et per se rationem principii intelligendi*

But an *idea* is an object understood by Him “of itself” in the second sense of ‘if itself’, and so there can be many of them.³ The text does not say, after all, that every *WHAT* can be multiplied. It just says that multiplying a *WHAT* does not contravene simplicity. This is sufficiently verified if *WHAT* [is understood] of itself in the second sense of ‘of itself’ can be multiplied.

ad (3): The reply is that it labors under an equivocation. The intent of the text is not to deny that more than one definitionally different *WHEREBY* can be posited in God. The point is that none of them can be pluralized: there are not “many wisdoms” in God, nor many artistic skills. But there *are* in God many *ideai*.⁴

Analysis of the article, III

viii. As to job (3), he shows how the plurality of objects occurs in the divine intellect. [*Antecedent:*] God understands His essence completely; [*1st inference:*] so He knows it in every way in which it can be known; [*2nd inference:*] so He knows it not only as it is in itself but also as it can be shared-in in any way by a creature; [*3rd inference:*] so He knows it as imitable-this-way by such-and-such creature; [*4th inference:*] so He knows it as a distinctive account of this creature; [*5th inference:*] so He knows many accounts of things, and these we call *ideai*.

The antecedent is obvious, as is the first inference. The second is supported by the fact that God is knowable in both ways. [The third inference is obvious.] The fourth rests on the fact that creatures’ specific natures lie along lines of partial resemblance to God’s essence. The fifth inference is then obvious; for what has been said about one creature applies to any other.

³ ‘Of itself’ translates ‘*per se*’. When a ϕ -thing is *per se* ψ in the first sense of ‘*per se*’, being- ψ is contained in a ϕ -thing’s defining makeup. Replace ϕ with ‘God’s essence’ and ψ with ‘understood by God’. The proposition, ‘God’s essence is understood by God’, is true *per se* in the first sense of ‘*per se*’, because God is an infinite act of being in all the modes of being, including the cognitional modes, so that God is a reflexive act of infinite understanding (q. 14, aa. 3-4), and so being-understood-by-God is a defining trait of God’s essence. By contrast, when a ϕ -thing is *per se* ψ in the second sense of ‘*per se*’, ϕ -things are included in the defining makeup of being- ψ . This time replace ϕ with ‘*idea*’ but ψ with ‘understood by God’. The proposition, ‘An *idea* is understood by God’ is true *per se* in the second sense, because each *idea* emerges in a full account of what it takes for a thing to be understood by God.

⁴ Cajetan’s reply to his own objection (3) in § v is the following. Wisdom and skill in God are not like wisdom and skill in us. They can be pluralized in us, because their count rises with the count of things we can be wise about or skilled at doing. (In us, moreover, the rôles of wisdom and skill are played by thing-wise distinct factors.) But God has only one thing to be wise about, it seems, *i.e.* benefiting creatures, if he creates any; and being omnipotent, He hardly needs multiple skills beyond His own es-

On the answer *ad* (1)

ix. In the answer *ad* (1), pay special attention to the fact that the topic here is not just any resemblance but only model-wise resemblance.* Nothing is imitable model-wise but an object of understanding. So, although the divine essence, taken just in itself, is imitable ahead of its being an object, it is still not imitable model-wise ahead of its being an object: for it is in the definition of a model (as I said before) that it be an object. For this reason, if God were not an intellectual agent, His essence would be imitable, to be sure, but not model-wise; and so it would not have what it takes to be an *idea*. The text insinuates as much by saying that ‘*idea*’ does not name the divine essence [*qua* essence] but [*qua*] an account understood therefrom.

* *similitudo essentiarum*

On the answers *ad* (2) and *ad* (3)

x. To have a clearer grasp of Aquinas’ doctrine in his answers to the second and third objections, you need to bear in mind three points at once.

(1) ‘*Idea*’ means God’s essence as imitable model-wise. Since ‘the imitable’ can be taken two ways: (1) basis-wise (as standing for the [underlying] non-relational entity) or (2) form-wise (as standing for the relation), three interpretations can be imagined for ‘*idea*’:

- (a) as meaning just the non-relational [underlying] entity,
- (b) as meaning just the relation, or
- (c) as meaning both.

Well, ‘*idea*’ can’t just mean the basis for imitability, as is proved by the fact that this, non-rationally taken, is one and the same in all *ideai*: it is the utterly simple divine essence itself, in which one cannot distinguish a non-relational component imitable by a rock, another imitable by a lion; and so a plurality of *ideai* in God could not be sustained on this interpretation. After all, it is impossible to understand plural *ideai* unless the items indicated by ‘*idea*’ are understood to be plural. But ‘*idea*’ also can’t just mean a relation, as becomes clear from the fact that ‘*idea*’ is said to mean the divine essence. What remains, therefore, is that it should mean both — not as ‘a shirt’ would also mean a white man, if it were used for both (because ‘*idea*’ would not have one definition if it were used that way)⁵ — but as certain nouns indicate an absolute thing relationally — nouns like ‘Savior’ and ‘Creator’. In this way, what belongs to the defining account of *idea* in God is both His essence and a relation. These are there not as “parts” composing a definition common to them, but as a thing-and-its-manner, as a determinable-and-its-determination, as common-element-and-distinguisher.

(2) The second point to bear in mind is that both in

ence. For the divine essence plays, in its single, higher manner, all the rôles which it takes many distinct factors to play in creatures. So, it is not as though He needs one wisdom/skill (say, for world making) and another for soul saving.

⁵ Cf. the slang use of ‘a suit’ to mean a manager, a boss.

artisans and in God, “*ideai*” may turn out to be understood two ways: (1) as *ideai* of other things, or (2) for what they are in themselves. The text of Aquinas’ answer *ad* (2) gives examples of both. When an artisan contemplates a house to build, his act of understanding terminates at the house’s *idea* as it is the *idea* of the house; but when he considers in a reflexive act the very *idea* which his mind has conceived, his act of understanding terminates at the *idea* as it is in itself. It happens the same way in God. On the basis of this distinction, you can see easily that *ideai* are not constituted through being understood for what they are in themselves but through being understood as *ideai* of other things. And it makes no difference for present purposes whether this being-understood is actual or habitual. Hence we concede that the presence of many *ideai* in God comes ahead of their being understood for what they are in themselves. This is why the text at the end of the answer *ad* (2), talking about the second way *ideai* are understood, says, “this is many *ideai* being in His intellect as objects-understood.” For

(a) many *ideai* are in His intellect
is one thing, and

(b) many *ideai* are there as understood
is another. (a) says the many are object-wise in His intellect as accounts of other things; but (b) says they are there object-wise as understood for what they are in themselves. Hence Aquinas added “as objects-understood.”⁶

⁶ Cajetan has hold of an important distinction, but has it provided a plausible interpretation of Aquinas’ answer *ad* (2)?

Given that a model \mathcal{M} is a what-is-understood, there is still a difference between understanding \mathcal{M} as a model-of- x and understanding \mathcal{M} as a structure of some sort in its own right. In our experience, the former understanding is part of the science of x , while the latter is an exercise in model-theory. No doubt, the latter has a reflexive, secondary character; and no doubt God has, in His own way, both. Cajetan’s points are all in order; they just don’t happen to be what Aquinas’ text was talking about (I think).

His text had to establish that an *idea* was a WHAT of understanding, by overcoming a strong appearance to the contrary. If God understood x through a model of x , it looked obvious that a model was a WHEREBY. Aquinas rejoined that God understood not only x but also the account with which He understood x (so as to conclude that

(3) The third point to bear in mind is that the relations which distinguish the *ideai* are also constitutive of them: hence they do not arise as consequences of God’s act of understanding *ideai* but come to be *in and through* His act of understanding His essence comparatively. You are not to imagine, then, that God first understands His essence as imitable, and then these *idea*-making relations follow in consequence [and then *via* them He gets to understand creatures]. Rather, the act of understanding the essence as imitable is the establishing of these relations. — From this you have it that *idea*-making relations are not posited as *prerequisites* for God to understand creatures distinctly (as some interpreters seem to have thought); God’s perfectly complete intellection does not go hat-in-hand to thought-produced relations. Rather, these relations are posited as items necessarily established by God’s perfectly complete intellection. This is why Aquinas said, in the body of the article, that *because* God understands His essence with utter completeness, He *therefore* understands it as imitable in all these ways. For this last

- = the being-established of all these *idea*-making relations and
- = the being-understood of all these *ideai* as accounts of other things and
- = God’s understanding creatures distinctly in the divine essence before Him as Object.

Once you have thought these points through quite well, you will chuckle at the objections raised by other writers. I have not even bothered to bring them forward, because they do not do any damage to St. Thomas’ doctrine as I have expounded it.

grasping this account was having an *idea* as a what-is-understood). *En route* to this conclusion, Aquinas offered ordinary-language examples of how we speak about an artisan, an architect or a builder. We often say that a builder “understands a house.” Do we ever say that he “understands an account or plan” for a house? If we do, we acknowledge cases where an *idea* is a what-is-understood. Aquinas answered these questions as he raised them. We say that a builder “understands a house” when he derives his concept from one already built. (This case has no analogy to God’s way of knowing, so set it aside.) We say that a would-be builder “understands the account or plan” when he envisions a house as buildable according to the form he has conceived. Here the form-conceived is exactly what-is-understood, and God’s case is analogous. Ergo an *idea* in God is an object-understood, whereof there can be many. So went the answer *ad* (2).

Are there *ideai* for all the things God knows?

*In 1 Sent d.36, q.2, a.3; De Veritate q.3, aa.3-8;
De Potentia q.1, a.5, ad 10, 11, q.3, a.1 ad 13; In De Div. Nom c.5, lectio 3*

It does not seem that God would have *ideai* in Him for everything He knows.

(1) After all, there is no *idea* of evil in God (because if there were, it would follow that there was evil in God). Yet evils are known by God. Ergo, there are not *ideai* of everything known by God.

(2) Besides, God knows items that neither are, nor ever will be, nor ever have been, as was said above. Of these items, there are no *ideai*, because, in chapter 5 of his *De divinis nominibus*, Denis says the *ideai* are "divine volitions, determining things and effectuating them." Ergo, God does not have in Him *ideai* of all the items He knows.

(3) Moreover, God knows prime matter, and there cannot be an *idea* of that, because it has no form.¹ Ergo, as before.

(4) Furthermore, it is agreed that God knows not only species but also genera, individuals, and accidental traits. But there are no *ideai* of these, according to Plato, who first introduced the doctrine of *ideai*, as Augustine says [in the *Book of 83 Questions*]. Ergo, there are not in God *ideai* of all the items He knows.

ON THE OTHER HAND, *ideai* are correct "accounts" existing in the divine mind, as Augustine also makes clear. But God has correct and distinctive accounts of everything He knows. Therefore, He has an *idea* of everything He knows.

ANSWER: since Plato posited *ideai* as sources both for knowing things and for making them, *ideai* as posited in the divine mind have bearing on both functions.

— *Qua* a source of making things, an *idea* can be called a model [*exemplar*] and pertains to practical know-how.

— *Qua* a source of knowing, an *idea* is properly called an account [*ratio*] and can also belong to theoretical science.²

So, insofar as it is a practical model, it bears on anything produced by God at one time or another. Insofar as it is a source of knowing, it bears even on never-produced things known to God and on all the

items He knows, whether by an account of their own or by way of some broader theory.*

* *speculatio*

TO MEET THE OBJECTIONS — *ad* (1): evil is not known by God through an account of its own, but through the account of good. Thus evil does not have its own *idea* in God, either in the sense of a practical model or in the sense of a theoretical account.

ad (2): of items that neither are nor ever will be nor ever have been, God does not have practical knowledge (except in the sense that He has the power to have it). So with respect to those items, there is no "*idea*" in God in the sense of a practical model but only in the sense of a scientific account.

ad (3): according to some commentators, Plato took matter to be uncreated and so posited no *idea* of matter but made matter and *idea* to be co-causes [of empirical things]. But since we posit matter to be created by God (though not without form), matter has an *idea* in God, but it is not different from His *idea* of a [form-and-matter] composite. Matter just in itself [minus form] has no existence and is not knowable.

ad (4): insofar as '*idea*' means practical model, genera can have no *ideai* other than those of their species, as a genus can only be produced in one or another of its species. The same holds for any accidental traits that go with their subjects inseparably: they are produced together with their subject. But the accidents which supervene upon an already constituted subject have an *idea* of their own. After all, by producing the form of the house, the builder produces all the accidents that go with it from the beginning; but he produces *via* another form those that supervene upon the already built house, such as painting, *etc.* Now as for individuals, Plato maintained that they have no *idea* but that of their species. His reasons were (a) that particulars are individuated by matter (which he took to be uncreated, some say, and a co-cause alongside the *idea*), and (b) that nature aims at species and produces particulars only to safe-guard the species in them. The fact is, however, that divine providence extends not just to species but also to individuals, as we shall see below. [So, God has an *idea* for each individual.]³

Philebus 16 DE
Timaeus 41

q.20

¹ Every material thing was structured in some way, but the possibility for any such thing to break down and be replaced by a thing with a different structure, led Aristotle to posit "prime matter" as a factor explaining such possibilities; it was unstructured potential-for-form.

² Evidently an *exemplar* was a model in the practical sense of a design or plan, so that Aquinas needed another word, "*ratio*", to mean an artifact of theoretical knowing. He would have welcomed the current usage, in which "model" means both. Innumerable scientific accounts today contain or appeal to mathematical models.

³ The answers to the objections clarify the statement in the last sentence of the *corpus*. The best way to summarize the upshot is with first-order and second-order variables. The first-order schema, 'if God knows *x*, God has a distinct *idea* of *x*' comes out true for any value of *x* (because all such values are individuals, and God possesses for each individual a practical or theoretical *idea*). But a second-order schema: 'if God understands *X* (say, ϕ -ness), God has a distinct *idea* of *X*', is not safe; it fails for values of *X* like evil and prime matter. It needs amending to: if God understands *X*, He has at least one *idea* covering *X* somehow (e.g. indirectly).

Cajetan's Commentary

The title is clear. — In the body of the article, he does two jobs: (1) he draws a distinction, and (2) he answers the question.

Analysis of the article

ii. As to job (1): 'divine *idea*' is taken two ways: as a model and as an account. — The distinction is shown to emerge from two pieces of evidence: first, from the two rôles assigned to *ideai* by Plato (to produce and to make known); second, from the difference between practical know-how and theoretical understanding.

iii. As to job (2): he answers the question with two affirmative propositions, one for each side of the distinction just drawn. The first is this:

In the sense of a practical model, there is an *idea* for each thing made by God at any time.

The second is this:

In the sense of an account, there is an *idea* for each item makeable or knowable (be it knowable theoretically or knowable practically) by a distinctive account.

These propositions are not otherwise supported in the text, because they are obvious from q.14 [a.6] and from points made in the previous article. But don't forget that when '*idea*' means an account, it means an account serving as an object understood, as Aquinas explained in the first article of Inquiry 15. So it means an object-wise account of things. Which is exactly how a Platonic *idea* was supposed to be a reason-for-knowing.

On the answer *ad* (3)

iv. In the answer *ad* (3), notice that St. Thomas is retracting here what he had said earlier about an *idea* of prime matter in *De Veritate* q.3. a.5 and in his last article on *I Sentences* d.36. One must not try to come up with harmonizing glosses, because the middle term he uses here, 'is not knowable in itself', explicitly strikes down the remarks made in the other places. An insightful reader will have no trouble seeing this.

The doubt that remains, rather, is which composite's *idea* serves as prime matter's. Well, if the text is looked at acutely, it will be easy to see that the account-*idea* corresponding to prime matter is that of body, a genus in the category of Substance. For prime matter would be defined according to the form of body, if it were defined at all. For there is an account-*idea* of every item knowable through its own account, as the text says. But a model-*idea* of prime matter is not to be looked for, any more than such an *idea* of genera, about which the text says that they have no *idea* distinct from their species.¹

¹ Note the difference between a genus's determinability and prime matter's. A genus is definable in its own right, abstracting from its species, but is not producible apart from (an individual in) one or another of its species. So genera have an account-*idea* of their own but not a model-*idea*. Prime matter is not even definable in its own right but only in relation to form; so God knows prime matter only via the account of some form (as potency thereto). Cajetan insisted on asking which form and picked that of body because, in his physics, it set the genus under which all forms receivable in matter fell.

Inquiry Sixteen: Into truth and realness

After studying God's optimal knowing, one needs to look into truth and realness, since optimal knowing has objects that are true or real.¹ Eight questions are raised about it:

- | | |
|--|---|
| (1) is trueness in a thing, or only in an understanding? | (5) is God Truth or Realness itself? |
| (2) is it only in an understanding which is judging? | (6) are things real by one true/realness? |
| (3) how does 'true/real' compare with 'a being'? | (7) is truth eternal? |
| (4) how does 'true/real' compare with 'good'? | (8) is it unalterable? |

¹ The Latin adjective 'verus' applied both to thoughts ('true') and to things ('real', 'genuine', 'true-to-form'). Hence 'veritas' meant both a trait of thoughts and a trait of things. With the possible exception of 'factual' and 'factuality', nothing in current English has this ambiguity. 'True' no longer applies to things except in special contexts (a true gentleman); 'real' and 'genuine' cannot be used to call thoughts true. Yet Aquinas' Latin authorities used 'verus' and 'veritas' with both meanings at once, so that Aquinas had to sort them out. As a result, the translator is often forced to provide both meanings, as here.

article 1

Does trueness/realness lie only in an understanding?

In I Sent. d.19, q.5, a.1, I CG c.60, De Veritate q.1, a.2, In I Periherm., lectio 3, In VI Metaphys., lectio 4

It seems that trueness/realness is not just in an understanding but more properly in things themselves.

*Solit. II, 5;
PL 32, 888*

(1) Augustine in the *Soliloquies* rejects an account of the real as "what is seen to be the case," because, on this account, rocks lying at a hidden depth of the earth would not be real rocks, since they are not seen. He also rejects this amended version: "The real is that which is such as to appear to a knower if he can take notice of it and chooses to do so," because, on this account, it would follow that nothing was real if no one could take notice of it. So Augustine defines it this way: "The real is that which is." So, it seems that realness/trueness is in things themselves, not in the mind.¹

(2) Besides, anything true is such by virtue of truth. If truth lies only in understanding, nothing will be true except "as understood" — which is the mistake of the ancient philosophers who used to say that whatever is taken to be the case is true. From there it follows that contradictories are both true at once, if both are taken to be the case by different minds.²

(3) Also, [as language shifts a word from one kind of referent to another] "the one from which it is deriv-

ed fits the word in a more proper sense." as you see in *Posterior Analytics I* [c. 2]. But "whether a thought or speech is true or false derives from whether a thing is or is not," as Aristotle says in the *Categories* [c. 5]. Ergo truth is more properly in things than in the mind.

72a 29

4b 8

ON THE OTHER HAND, there is what Aristotle says in *Metaphysics VI*: "true and false are not in things but in an understanding of them."³

c 4,
1027b 25

I ANSWER: as 'good' names what yearning* tends toward, so 'true' names what understanding tends toward. But there is this difference between yearning and understanding (or any cognition): cognition takes place by the known coming to be within the knower, while yearning takes place by the seeker inclining toward the thing sought. So, the terminus of yearning (a good) lies in a thing worth pursuing,¹ while the terminus of cognition (the true) lies in an understanding.

* appetitus

Now, just as "good" is in a thing *qua* related to a yearning, and so an account of 'good' shifts from the pursuit-worthy thing to the yearning for it, according to the rule that a yearning is called "good" if it is *for* a good thing, so also, since "true" is in an understanding *qua* conforming to the thing understood,² an account of 'true' has to shift from the understanding to that thing, so that it, too, is called "true [real]" because it has a relation to the understanding.³

† res appetibilis

‡ res intellecta

¹ Augustine had a good argument for the meaning of 'real' but construed it as settling the meaning of 'true', as his language used the same word for both. With no such excuse, English-speaking pragmatists have used a sense of 'true' (*empirically* true) to settle the meaning of 'real'. Their argument is that if no observation can settle a question, no 'matter of fact' is at stake in that question. Then explicitly or implicitly, they identify the real with the matters of fact. Thus reality becomes limited to the scientifically observable, in an updated version of the definitions Augustine rejected.

² This is Aristotle's critique of Protagoras in *Metaphysics IV, c.5* (1009a 5ff).

³ Alternatively: "true and false are not in things but in the intellect." The ambiguity fails to matter here, since, for Aristotle as for Aquinas, the act or object counting as "an understanding of x" was immanent within the faculty called "intellect." The next article will remove the ambiguity.

⁴ This super-quick presentation of an important linguistic

But a thing can relate to an understanding of it either intrinsically* or coincidentally. It relates intrinsically to the understanding it depends on for its being: coincidentally, to one by which it can be known. For example, we may say that a house is related intrinsically to its builder's understanding and coincidentally to one on which it does not depend. Now, good theory[†] about a topic should not be drawn from what attaches to it coincidentally but from what attaches intrinsically. So, absent a qualifier,[‡] 'true [real]' applies to each thing thanks to the relation it has to the understanding on which it depends. Our artifacts are called "true [real, genuine]" by their relation to our understandings. A house that achieves likeness to the form in its builder's mind is called true [genuine, true-to-form]; an utterance that serves as the sign of a true understanding is called a true saying. By the same token, natural things are called true [real, genuine] because they achieve likeness to the forms in God's mind. A rock is called a real one in case it attains the proper nature of rock as the divine intellect conceived it originally.

The upshot, then, is that trueness lies primarily in an understanding but comes to lie secondarily in things *qua* related to an understanding serving as their source.

This is how truth/reality has acquired its various accounts. In *De vera religione* [c. 36] Augustine says, "Truth is that whereby WHAT IS is manifested," and Hilary [in *De Trinitate V*] says, "The true is declarative or manifestive of being." This pertains to trueness as it resides in an understanding. But Augustine's other account in *De vera religione* pertains to the trueness in a thing *qua* related to an understanding. It says, "Truth is a supreme likeness of the source — a likeness that has no unlikeness." Ditto for a definition that Anselm gives [in his dialogue *De veritate* c. 11]: "Truth is a rightness[§] perceptible by the mind alone" (for what has been "made right" is what accords with its causal principle). Ditto for a definition of Avicenna's: "The truth of each thing is the distinctiveness of the being which has been fixed for it." — By contrast, the account that says, "Truth is the correspondence of thing and understanding," can be taken either way.

phenomenon addresses the spread of a word's application by analogy. A word tends to spread along a relation; once applied to one relation, it tends to be applied to the other relation with an altered definition. Because the giver is generous (has a virtue), the gift comes to be called a "generous" gift (one that shows the virtue). Because an animal is healthy (thriving), what it eats comes to be called a "healthy" diet (one that causes thriving). *Etc.* Notice that in these examples the new definition retains an element from the original definition and contains a relation to it. That to which the word applied under its original definition (the giver, the animal) was said to satisfy the word's *ratio* more properly [*magis proprie*] or "non-derivatively" [*per primum*]. That to which the word applied under one of the related, derived definitions was said to satisfy the *ratio* of it *minus proprie*, as a secondary analogate. But with a word like "true" (or "wahr" or "verus"), the deriva-

TO MEET THE OBJECTIONS — *ad* (1): Augustine is talking about the trueness of a thing, and he is excluding a relation to our understanding from the account of *this* trueness [*i.e.* from the account of realness]. For [reality's relation to our intellect is coincidental, and] the coincidental is excluded from any proper account.⁵

ad (2): the ancient philosophers maintained that the species of natural things did not come from any mind, but arose by chance; then, because they thought 'true [real]' implied a relation to understanding, they were forced to hold that the realness of things lay in their relation to our understanding. Thence followed the embarrassing consequences that Aristotle criticized in *Metaphysics IV*. The embarrassments do not arise if we posit that the realness of things lies in their relation to the divine understanding.⁶

ad (3): granted, the trueness of our understanding is caused by the thing [understood]; but it does not have to follow that the definition of 'true' is satisfied non-derivatively [*per primum*] in the thing. [Medicine causes animal health, but] the definition of healthiness is satisfied less derivatively in an animal than in medicine. After all, what causes health is the *power* of the medicine, not its "healthiness." For medicine is not a univocal agent-cause.⁷ Likewise, what causes the truth of an understanding is the *being* of a thing, not its trueness [or genuineness]. This is why Aristotle says the truth of thought and speech "derives from whether a thing is," not from whether the thing is true [genuine].

tive definitions could be many (besides "genuine/true-to-form," there is "makes true" or even "honest"), and which of these is actually used is language-specific.

⁵ This brusque remark is the best response to a recently rife assortment of constructivists, anti-realists, neo-pragmatists, *etc.* Because our cognitions are coincidental to what there is, it is flatly ridiculous to limit reality to what we could observe if . . . (or to what we would believe in, if . . . — e.g. if we had the benefit of tomorrow's science). And if it is ridiculous to limit reality in this way, how can it not be ridiculous to limit the "matters of fact" in this way?

⁶ It is surprising how often modern physicists and mathematicians, with no serious belief in a designed universe, nevertheless appeal to "what God knows" as a way of holding onto the reality of things inaccessible to human cognition. And failure to hold onto inaccessible facts still carries embarrassing consequences. C.S. Pierce sought to dodge them by eschatology, appealing to the ultimate consensus of science. But picture a future state of ideally completed science in which loyalties are divided between two rival theories, whose contradictory predictions are such that it is physically impossible for us to determine which is right. Are both theories true, because some ultimate scientists take them to be so? Then contradictories are simultaneously true. Is there no matter of fact at stake? Then both contradictories are truth-valueless, and the classical logic of negation has to be abandoned.

⁷ A univocal agent-cause was one which, in being- ϕ under definition D_1 , produced things that were ϕ under the same D_1 . Such is obviously not the case when ' ϕ ' is 'healthy' and the agent-cause is a chemical agent in veterinary medicine.

* *per se*† *iudicium*‡ *absolutè*

PL 34, 151

PL 10, 131

PL 34, 152

PL 158, 480

§ *rectitudo**Metaphys. VIII, 6*c 5. 1099b 6
c 6. 1011a 3

Cajetan's Commentary

The title is clear.¹ — In the body of the article, he does two jobs: (1) he answers the question; (2) he explains how the many accounts of trueness fit together, at [the paragraph beginning] “This is how ...”

ii. As to job (1), the conclusion answering the question is: Trueness lies primarily in an understanding but secondarily in things *qua* related to the understanding on which they depend. This conclusion has three parts.

• The first [‘trueness is primarily in an understanding’] is supported as follows. [*Antecedent:*] The true is the terminus of understanding; [*inference:*] ergo it lies in the understanding. — The antecedent is shown by comparing ‘true’ and ‘good’: as ‘good’ names what yearning tends to, ‘true’ names what understanding tends to. The inference is supported by a difference between yearning and cognizing, taken from *Metaphysics VI* [c.4], namely, that the former reaches its terminus outside itself; the latter, inside.

1027B 25 • The second part of the conclusion [‘trueness is secondarily in things’] is supported at [the paragraph beginning] “Now, just as ‘good’ ...” [*Antecedent:*] Being true is in an understanding *qua* conforming to the thing understood; [*1st inference:*] so an account of ‘true’ shifts from the understanding to the thing understood; [*2nd inference:*] so the thing understood is called “true [real]” *qua* related to an understanding. — The antecedent is shown by comparing ‘good’ and ‘true’: as being-good is in a thing *qua* related to a yearning, so being-true is in an understanding [*qua* related] etc. Both inferences rest on the same underlying doctrine [about language]: the first, because [the talk of] goodness in the yearning is derived from [the talk of] goodness in the thing; the second, because this is why a yearning for a good thing is called a good yearning.

• The third part of the conclusion [‘*qua* related to the understanding on which they depend’] is supported two ways (at the paragraph starting “However, a thing can relate...”). The two ways are (a) by argument, (b) by [linguistic] effects. The argument is this. [*Antecedent:*] good theory about anything is not drawn from what attaches to it coincidentally but intrinsically; [*inference:*] so, absent a qualifier, each thing is called true [real] by its relation to the understanding on which it depends. — The antecedent is obvious. Drawing the inference is supported by the difference between a thing’s relation to a mind causative of it and its relation to a mind merely cognizant of it, i.e., that the thing relates to the latter coincidentally but to the former of itself; this is illustrated with the case of a house *vis-à-vis* its builder and *vis-à-vis* one who didn’t build it. — The [linguistic] effects giving evidence on these points concern our artifacts and things occurring in nature.

¹ The title was clear to those who possessed the following facts. (1) ‘*Verus*’ applied both to things and to understandings. But (2) it was under debate which application was primary, how they were related, how to define ‘*verus*’ in each. The title showed that Aquinas meant to enter these debates.

Our artifacts, whether blue-collar* ones like a house or white-collar¹ ones like a lecture, are true [genuine] without qualification if they measure up to our arts. Things in nature are also true [real, genuine] without qualification if they accord with their Maker, which we assume to be the primordial Mind.

iii. Concerning the above points, two propositions deserve attention. The first is that the true is what understanding tends toward, as the good is what ... etc. This will be discussed below at article 3, in [comments on] the answer *ad* (3). The other one is that cognition occurs by the known coming to be in the knower; yearning, by [the yearner’s] inclining towards a thing. This will be defended at q. 82, in [comments on] article 3, where the will is compared to the intellect.

iv. As to job (2), Aquinas explains six accounts of trueness/realness, showing that three of them pertain to being-real in a thing, two pertain to truth in an understanding, and one pertains to both. All points are clear.²

² In fact, this article is deeply confusing, because Aquinas left too much unsaid. To bring it out, compare two stories.

The first is about truth. It says that truth is a relation of understandings to the things they are understandings of. Let *x* be a thing, and let *U_x* be a human understanding of it. Being-true is the relation, “*U_x* is true of *x*” (for short: *U_x R x*). If a relation holds, its converse automatically holds. The converse is that *x* verifies *U_x* (for short: *x R U_x*). Logically speaking, these relations are equivalent (*U_x R x* ⇔ *x R U_x*). In an equivalence, both sides hold, or else neither does. If both hold, the situation is unique: *U_x* conforms to *x*, and *x* has what it takes to verify *U_x*. If neither holds, the situation is not unique but may be either (a) *U_x* occurs but does not conform to *x* or (b) *x* has what it takes to verify an understanding, but none occurs. Having what it takes to verify is thing-*veritas*: to define it, the first story says that *x* has what it takes to do this if, and only if, *x* is in some way (e.g. is φ). To mark what is coincidental to *x* in this context, the story says it is coincidental to *x* whether *U_x* occurs (so *U_x R x* is coincidental to *x*); but it need not be coincidental that *x* has what it takes to verify an understanding (even if none occurs)

In the article above, Aquinas agreed that truth is primarily a relational trait of understandings, such that *U_x R x* holds because *U_x* conforms to *x*; but he said nothing about the converse *R*, except to agree with Aristotle that the reason it holds is because *x* “is.” Instead, Aquinas got into another story.

In artisanship, one finds an understanding of specifications (call this *U_s*) guiding the production of a thing *x* (for short, call this relation *U_s R* x*). The converse relation is that *x* is made true to the specifications (*x R* U_s*), and this is thing-*veritas* in the second story. Aquinas took up this story not because he thought *R** was the converse to *R*, nor because he thought *R** was the reason for *R*, as his answer *ad* (3) showed, but because he was looking for a less coincidental relation than *R*. Well, *x R* U_s* was no coincidence to any artifact, *x*. Even better: if *U_s* was a divine understanding, the *R** relation attached to any creature and added a theological layer deeper than Aristotle: the reason *x* “is” is because *x* has been created true to divine specifications.

What the two stories had in common was the fact that, in both, thing-*veritas* involved “relation to understanding.”

* *mechanica*
† *liberalia*

Does truth lie in the sort of understanding that affirms and denies?

In I Sent. d.19, q.5, a.1 ad 7; *1 CG c 59; De Veritate* q.1, aa.3, 9;
In I Periherm., lectio 3; *In VI Metaphys.*, lectio 4; *In III De Anima*, lectio 11

It seems that truth does not lie exclusively in the sort of understanding that affirms and denies.

c 6;
430b 27
* propria
sensibilia

(1) Aristotle says in *De Anima III* that an intellect's grasp of its concept [*quod quid est*] is always "true," just as the senses always register accurately the pure sense-qualities.* But affirming and denying are not in the senses, nor in the intellect as it grasps a concept. Therefore, truth is not solely in an intellect's affirming and denying.

(2) Isaac says in his *Book on Definitions* that truth is a correspondence of thing and understanding.¹ If an understanding of propositions can correspond to things, so can an understanding of isolated terms. Even a sensation can do it, by registering a thing as it is. So, truth is not only in an intellect's affirming and denying.

c.4,
1027b 27

ON THE OTHER HAND, there is what Aristotle says in *Metaphysics VI*, to the effect that in connexion with isolated terms and concepts, the issue of their being true does not arise, either in the understanding of them or in the things themselves.

a.1

ANSWER: "true" under its primary definition applies to an understanding, as I said above. But since [under a secondary definition] each thing *x* is "true [genuine]" by having its nature's distinctive form, and the form of an understanding-*qua*-cognizant-of-*x* is a likeness of *x*, it has to be the case that an understanding-of-*x* is true [genuine] by possessing this likeness.² This is why trueness is defined in terms of a sameness-of-form[†] between the un-

† *conformitas*

derstanding and the thing. So, to cognize this sameness-of-form is to cognize trueness. Well, no sense-power cognizes this in any way; for even though one's eye takes in a likeness of the thing-visible, the eye does not cognize the match-up between the thing-seen and what the eye itself takes in. Rather, it is an understanding that can cognize its own conformity with the thing-understandable. But even an understanding does not do this by getting a concept of something; rather, the point at which an understanding first knows and says a truth [*verum*] is when it is judging that the thing *x* so stands as the understanding's own form apprehends it. And this it does by affirming and denying. For in every proposition, a *form* conveyed by the predicate is applied to or removed from some *thing* indicated by the subject. So, while one finds, indeed, that a sense sensing or an intellect conceiving is true [to-form] about something, it does not cognize or say a truth. The same for words put together or standing alone.³ Trueness, then, can be in a sense or an intellect conceiving as in a true [to-form] thing, but not as a known in a knower, which is what 'true' [in its primary sense] implies. For ['true' names the terminus of understanding, and] the terminal stage of understanding is the true *as a known*. So "truth" in the proper sense of the word lies in an understanding affirming and denying, not in a sensation, nor in an act of conceiving.

HOW TO MEET THE OBJECTIONS is clear from remarks already made.

¹ The reference is to Isaac Ben Solomon, a Jewish physician-philosopher in North Africa, ca. 900. A Latin translation of his Arabic was known to Aquinas and has been published in our time by J. T. Muckle in *Archives d'histoire doctrinale et littéraire du moyen âge* 12-13 (1937-1938).

² Let *x* be a thing, and *U_x* be an understanding of it. The point here is best seen by observing that *U_x* can be looked at two ways: specifically, as an understanding, or generically, as a second-order "thing." Looked at the former way, *U_x* takes the

primary sense of 'true'. Looked at the latter way, it takes only the secondary sense: i.e., once informed with an intensional *species* of *x*, *U_x* is a "genuine [true-to-form]" mental entity.

³ What turns a noise into a "word" of a language *L* is an understanding among the speakers of *L*. The point here is that such words and their combinations are nothing more than that — words and syntax — apart from some *further* understanding, without which words lack definite reference, so that their grammatical combination cannot be assigned a truth-value.

Cajetan's Commentary

The title is clear for those who bear in mind that 'an understanding that is affirming and denying' does not mean a substance or a faculty, but an operation of understanding, the one called "affirming and denying" in *De Anima III*.

c 6;
430a 26ff

Analysis of the article

ii. In the body of the article, a single conclusion answers the question with yes: truth properly speaking is only in an understanding that is affirming and denying. — This conclusion has two logical parts, viz.: (a) truth

properly speaking is in an understanding doing these, and (b) is nowhere else. The two parts are supported together, as follows. [*Antecedent:*] Each thing is true [to-form, genuine] by having its nature's distinctive form. [*1st inference:*] So an understanding *qua* cognizing *x* is true [to-form, genuine] by being assimilated to *x*; [*2nd inference:*] so being-true is conformity of understanding and thing; [*3rd inference:*] so knowing truth is knowing this conformity of cognition and thing-cognized; [*4th inference:*] so what first knows and says a truth is neither a sensation nor a conceiving but an understanding judging that the thing is as apprehended; [*5th inference:*] so the intellect judging knows truth; [*6th inference:*] so it is in judging alone that "the true" lies, in the distinctive way implied in the word "true"; [*7th inference:*] so "the true" properly so-called lies only there.

The first inference is supported on the ground that a likeness of the thing known, *x*, is the distinctive form of the understanding *qua* cognizing *x*. The second inference obviously holds good from the support for the one preceding it, taken in conjunction with the proposition set down at the outset of the article, namely, that 'true' under its primary definition applies to an understanding. For if that is so, and the trueness of an understanding comes from its assimilation to a thing, then 'trueness' is to be defined by conformity of understanding and thing.¹ The third inference is left as obvious, and it really is obvious. For if a cognition's truth lies in likeness or conformity of understanding and thing, it has to be the case that knowing trueness is knowing this conformity (and conversely, that knowing this conformity is knowing trueness.) The fourth inference, as to its negative parts, is exemplified by sight and simple understanding.² As to its affirmative part, it needs no support or illustration. The fifth inference, however, is supported, on the ground that, in every proposition, one applies (or denies) some form conveyed by the predicate to some thing indicated by the subject. The sixth rests on the ground that the true as known is the final stage of understanding. This is shown by the difference (which follows from the points made above) between

- (a) the cognitive act's being true [to-form] and
- (b) the cognitive act's knowing truth.

¹ Cajetan's statement of the matter is not very helpful. What Aquinas was doing was (a) taking the secondary sense of 'true', in which it meant 'genuine/true-to-form' as said of things, (b) applying this sense to the "thing" which is an understanding-of-*x* (*U_x*), (c) observing that the result of this application is that *U_x* is genuine/true-to-form just insofar as *U_x* is informed with a homeomorphism of *x*, and (d) deriving therefrom the primary sense of 'true', which applied only to understandings and meant 'corresponds or conforms to thing'.

² 'Simple understanding' was another term for conceiving. An act of understanding was mere conceiving, stimulated by a thing *x* (or by things *x, y, etc.*), when all that happened in this act of understanding was that the mind acquired a concept representing some intelligible aspect of the thing or things — round, next to, dog, father of, etc. A simple understanding did not apply this conceived aspect to any thing or things; that was the job of judging (= complex or propositional understanding).

(a) is being-true [to-form] in a *thing*, and so it characterizes a sense, an intellect conceiving, and words standing alone.³ (b) is being-true as a known in a knower, and so it characterizes the intellect affirming, words put together [sententially] as signs, etc. — The final inference is, of course, self-evident.

A superficial interpretation

iii. To get clear on these inferences, notice that, to go by the surface of the text, its plain sense seems to be this: a perception (say, a seeing) or even a simple understanding is in conformity with a thing and so can be called "true," but because it can't know the conformity between simple cognition and thing, it can't know the true.

Reasons to reject it

But the above interpretation is in fact foreign to this text. For one thing, it is false that simple understanding does not cognize the said conformity. The conformity is something definable and hence graspable by simple understanding.⁴ For another thing, the conformity at issue is only known reflexively by the understanding, while the true is known directly and not just reflexively.⁵ For still another thing, [if the superficial interpretation were correct,] the middle term introduced in the text to prove that the conformity wherein truth lies is known by an understanding that affirms and denies, would be irrelevant, as anyone can see who looks at the matter closely.⁶

How to avoid it — Point I

iv. In order for the present text and others like it to become fully clear, four points need to be noted.

First, it is one thing to talk about an understanding, even an understanding in operation,^{*} and quite another to talk about an understanding *qua* knowing *x*. Also, it is one thing to talk about the trueness of the former, and another to talk about the trueness of the latter. For the trueness of an understanding in operation requires no more than the trueness of a sense in operation. This is why, when a cognizing is informed by a likeness of the thing cognized, an understanding-in-act or a sense-in-

^{*} *in actu secundo*

³ Here 'word' means a lexical item of some language *L*. Each such item is a genuine word.

⁴ Because 'true' is a lexical item of English, an English speaker understands what it means (knows how to use it), quite apart from applying it to anything in a judgment.

⁵ If Cajetan is right about this, his problem is a real one. Since 'true' is a predicate of the understanding *U_x*, meaning that *U_x* conforms to *x*, 'true' will only emerge in a reflexive understanding *U_{U_x}*. Compare: as a predicate of the proposition *p*, 'true' only comes up in '*p*' is true', which is a (meta-)proposition about a proposition.

⁶ If truth is a reflexive affair or predicate of propositions, what goes on in every proposition does not suffice to reach it. Aquinas' middle term was that every proposition applies/denies a form to a referent. If this describes *p*, but truth is not reached until '*p*' is true' is reached, his middle term is idle.

act is called “true” as a *thing* is called “true [genuine].” But the trueness of an understanding *qua* knowing *x* requires that trueness be in it *qua* cognizing *x*, which can’t be unless the trueness is in it as a *known*. Hence the text, asking where the true properly-so-called resides, proceeds from the understanding’s distinctive form — not its distinctive form as a faculty, nor as operating — but its distinctive form *qua* knowing *x*. And the text means to say that this distinctive form and completion is a likeness of the *x* known — not the likeness which is the *source* of cognizing, but the one which is its terminus or quasi-terminus, the final stage, by the attaining of which cognition is completed.

Point II

v. For the same reason, ‘likeness of the thing known’ is taken two ways, relevant to present purposes:

- (1) for an intellectual or sensorial *species* that is simple, that is, working as a non-propositional representer, whatever else that *species* may be;
- (2) for a *species* representing the known as known, be it propositionally known [as in man] or non-propositionally known [as in God], whatever else that *species* may be (impressed, expressed, the very act of cognizing — none of that matters here).

In the text above, ‘likeness of the thing known’ is not being used the first way, which is how the superficial interpretation takes it, but the second way. As a result, the meaning of the text is that

the likeness of *x* attained or achieved by *knowing x* is the distinctive form and completion of the understanding *qua* knowing *x*,

and that

the cognizing of *x* that cognizes its own conformity to *x* is the only cognizing that knows a truth, regardless of the “how” of the conformity, be it propositionally [as in man] or non-propositionally [as in God].

Point III

vi. This business of cognizing its own conformity to the thing *x* that is cognized turns up two ways: in signified act, and in exercised act.

- (1) To cognize the conformity in signified act is for the cognition to terminate at the *relation* of conformity.
- (2) To cognize conformity in exercised act is to cognize something within the cognition as matching *x*.

For the sake of clearer apprehension, the act of speaking will serve to illustrate, because the difference at issue is easier to see there. A man expresses

conformity of understanding and thing

in *signified act*, when he says mentally or out loud these very words (or ones meaning the same in general or in the particular material he is understanding). A man expresses the same in *exercised act* when he just says something to match the realities. He never says anything to match or diverge from reality, so long as he is saying something non-propositional. When I utter ‘homo’ or ‘centaurus’ or ‘vacuum’, I am saying nothing to match or

diverge from any reality. But as soon as I utter ‘homo est’, I say something to match or diverge from a thing, because I am uttering something that means he is a man, of course. The difference I have just illustrated with speaking holds up likewise for believing and cognizing. Thus [a cognition’s] cognizing its own conformity to a thing *x* is nothing but its cognizing something within itself as matching *x*. And this is nothing other than coming up with a proposition; for by apprehending *that he is a man*, I apprehend something as matching him.⁷

In the text at hand, the talk of cognizing the conformity is not being employed the first way, as the superficial exposition takes it, but the second way. This is why the text uses the point that

every proposition applies something to (or removes something from) the subject

to support the claim that cognizing its own conformity to the thing is unique to the understanding affirming and denying. For if [a cognition’s] cognizing its own conformity to *x* is cognizing something within itself as matching *x*, and something within itself is cognized as matching only when a proposition is cognized, and a proposition admittedly lies within the cognition putting it together and admittedly implies conformity to or divergence from *x*, it has to be the case that, uniquely, the understanding that is putting a proposition together cognizes and “says” the matching or divergent as such. And since this alone is cognizing and “saying” a truth in exercised act, only an understanding affirming or denying cognizes and “says” a truth; and a truth in exercised act is only in an understanding affirming or denying as a known is in a knower and as a point-said is in a sayer. For the distinction between cognizing a truth in exercised act and doing so in signified act is to be drawn as it was above. If you don’t grasp this distinction, even a novice can get the force of it from the following distinction. “Signifying a truth,” as discussed in the logic textbooks, is done two ways: in exercised act, and in signified act. For the word ‘true’ signifies a truth but does not exercise being true, while ‘man is two-footed’ signifies a truth because it exercises trueness. And ‘man is winged’ signifies falsehood in exercised act. *Etc.* This is why *Perihermeneias I* says that a proposition is a sentence signifying a truth or a falsehood, *i.e.* in exercised act, which is what it is to signify matching as such or diverging, as such.⁸

⁷ Remember that the topic is truth, not optimal knowing, nor warrant. To have in my mind a cognized truth about *x*, all I do is come up with a proposition that in fact conforms to *x*. If I am to hold this proposition as *scientia*, more is no doubt required, and how scientific knowing may be warranted is another large story. But to know a truth about *x*, I don’t need to know that I know; I just need to assert a proposition *p*, and *p* just needs to match *x* in whatever respect is in question.

⁸ Cajetan’s three points have been valuable. He admitted in Point I that understanding is a process, differently specified at its different stages. He admitted in Point II that a “likeness of *x*” need not be a non-propositional homeomorphism but can also be

Point IV

vii. From the above points, it becomes clear what introduces so much obscurity into this topic. The culprit is the definition, "truth is a conformity of understanding and thing." For this can be understood

- in terms of the trueness/genuineness of a thing, or
- in terms of truth in its unqualified sense.

Taken the first way, the definition is perfectly well made; for the trueness/genuineness whereby each and every thing, on its own level of being, is called true/genuine, whether it is a cognizant thing or not, depends on the conformity of these two [understanding and thing], as emerges in this article and the preceding one. Taken the second way, however, as it seems on its face it should be taken, the definition is tolerably well made but needs to be understood in a particular way, because truth is not conformity to just any understanding but to a propositional understanding, as I made clear above.

But if we look into the matter more deeply, we find that, universally and properly speaking, this definition fits *only* "truth" unqualifiedly taken, *not* the trueness/genuineness of things (except extensionally). For "conformity of understanding and thing" can be found

a proposition about x — which nicely enlarges the cast of likenesses allowed to play a rôle in cognition theory. Best of all, in Point III, he identified the truth that matters with truth in exercised act, demoting, in effect, the truth that emerges in the predicate 'is true' (truth in signified act). This has some relevance to more recent work on truth.

The recent work has sprung from Tarski's celebrated "convention T," of which Cajetan gave this instance.

'he is a man' is true = he is a man.

Besides showing that truth is a conformity of interpreted language to reality, and that the predicate 'is true' applies to language mentioned, not to language used, Tarski's equivalence shows that the truth-predicate *cum* quotation marks can be replaced by a plain proposition stating what used to be in the quotation marks: he is a man. Since the rôle of the truth-predicate thus looks to be trivial, this aspect of Tarski's work has spawned "deflationary" theories of truth, which have then been harnessed by skeptics about correspondence-truth itself.

Cajetan's remarks show that he would have welcomed a deflationary account of the truth-predicate (truth in signified act) in many of its uses, but he would have been amazed at the idea that this imperiled in any way a robust correspondence-truth (truth in exercised act). A full discussion is out of the question here, but suffice it to make one more remark. The nasty paradoxes about truth (the Liar *et al.*) spring from a too native, too liberal use of the truth-predicate; so, a distinction like Cajetan's, that separates the vagaries of that predicate from the substantive issue of truth-as-correspondence, is bound to be welcome.

(1) accidentally, and (2) of itself [*per se*].

Of-itself conformity to a thing never belongs to a non-propositional understanding as such, because the non-proposition as such exercises no matching or mismatching with another, even though it may be *de facto* co-extensive* with the other, as one sees case by case.⁹ But every mentally formed proposition exercises, in its own makeup, its matching or not matching the thing it is said about,[†] since it is essentially a likeness which is in x or not in y ; and if what it represents to be in x is in x , it is called conforming; if not, divergent. So since some kind of understanding is, by its own defining makeup, conforming or divergent, and it belongs to the definition of 'truth' in the unqualified sense that it be the conformity of an understanding, the talk here should rightly be about the kind of understanding to which conforming belongs "of itself."¹⁰ So the sense of the definition is this: truth is a conformity of understanding and thing, *i.e.* truth belongs to an understanding that of-itself conforms to a thing — or truth is the conformity (to a thing) of an understanding which is of-itself the subject of conformity [to thing] — so that the "understanding" mentioned in the definition of truth is the kind that is not accidentally but of-itself a subject of such conformity. But that kind of understanding is the kind that affirms [or denies], as already said. This is why Aristotle, in *Metaphysics IV* text 27 [c.7] defined 'true' and 'false' in terms of the proposition, saying that the true is *that a being is* and *that a not-being is not*, while the false is *that a being is not* and *that a not-being is*.¹¹ Thus the propositional defines 'true', and 'true' [defines] the propositional, so as to show that being-true, properly speaking, is found only in the putting together of the latter, as being-true in exercise.

⁹ He probably means that an isolated word like 'dog', as standardly used, may in fact designate all and only dogs, but it does not "conform" to them, any more than 'chien' does.

¹⁰ In contemporary terms, what Cajetan is expressing here is the concept of truth-valuedness. A propositional understanding is inherently truth-valued; it is by its nature such as to be true-or-false.

¹¹ This shabby "translation" shows what Aristotle's text looked like to his ancient and medieval readers. A proper translation of his thought would go like this: the true is *that a ϕ -thing is ϕ* and *that a non- ϕ -thing is not ϕ* , while the false is *that a ϕ -thing is not ϕ* and *that a non- ϕ -thing is ϕ* — where ϕ is any phrase containing a one-place predicate or containing an n -place predicate together with n -minus-1 other relata. In current idiom, Aristotle was defining truth- and falsity-conditions for atomic well-formed formulae.

* *adaequatum*

† *enuntiatione rei*

1011b 25

Are 'a true/real thing' and 'a being' interchangeable?

In *I Sent.* d.8, q.1, a.3, d.19, q.5, a.1 *ad 3* and *ad 7*; *De Veritate* q.1, a.1, a.2 *ad 1*

It looks as though 'a true/real thing' [*verum*] is not interchangeable* with 'a being' [*ens*].¹

* *non convertitur*

aa. 1-2

(1) In the proper sense of the word, after all, 'true' applies to an understanding, as was already said. 'A being', however, applies to things. Therefore, the two are not interchangeable.

(2) Besides, a term that covers non-being as well as being is not interchangeable with 'a being'. But 'true' covers both; for it is true not only that *what-is is* but also that *what-is-not is not*. Therefore 'true' and 'being' are not interchangeable.

(3) Moreover, when terms are such that one is prior to the other, they are not seen as interchangeable. But 'true/real' is seen as prior to 'being'. For nothing is understood to be "a being" unless it has what it takes to be true/real. So they are not seen as interchangeable.

c. 1,
993b 30

ON THE OTHER HAND, there is what Aristotle says in *Metaphysics II*, to the effect that how a thing stands up to being spoken of as "being" is the same as how it stands up to being called "true."

c. 8,
431b 20ff

ANSWER: as the good has what it takes to be an object sought [and thus relates to yearning], so the true/real relates to cognition. But the extent to which an item is open to cognition [*cognoscibile*] is exactly the extent to which it has being [*esse*].² This is why *De Anima III* says that the soul, because of its powers to sense and understand, is somehow "all things." So 'true/real' is just as interchangeable with 'a being' as 'good' is. Still, what it takes to be 'true/real' adds to the account of what it takes to be 'a being': it adds a relation to understanding, much as being good adds what it takes to be sought.³

¹ Two terms are interchangeable *in a sense of each*, in case they are materially equivalent, *i.e.* coextensive, in that sense. Recall from q.5, a.1, that terms can be coextensive without being synonyms or having the same scientific analysis; *cf.* 'renates' and 'chordates'.

² Since cognition terminates in the kind of understanding that is true or false (propositional), being "open to cognition" is having what it takes to verify such an understanding, and this a thing can do just to the extent it is thus or such.

³ This short corpus omits what had been a second story in a. 1. There we were told that thing-*veritas* was a matter of being made true-to-specifications set by the thing's maker (God or man). Now we are told that thing-*veritas* is a possible relation to cognition that every being *qua* being has, *i.e.*, an openness to cognition. If the reader will review note 2 on p. 368, it will be easy to say what has gone on here. Aquinas has stuck entirely to his first story. If *x* is a thing and *U_x* is an understanding of *x*, then 'true' is properly a relational predicate of *U_x*, to the effect that *U_x* is true of *x*.

TO MEET THE OBJECTIONS — *ad* (1): 'true/real' applies to things as well as to their understanding, as I said already. In the sense of it that applies to things, 'true/real thing' interchanges with 'a being' subject-wise.* In the sense of it that applies to an understanding, 'true' interchanges with 'a being' in the way 'manifests' does with 'is manifested'.⁴ For this is involved in one of the accounts of 'true/real' mentioned above.⁴ — One could add, however, that 'a being' applies both to things and understandings, just as 'true/real' does, but 'true/real' in its principal sense applies to understanding, and 'a being' in its principal sense applies to things, because of how 'true/real' and 'a being' differ in definition.

ad (2): what-is-not does not have in itself the wherewithal to be cognized, but it comes to be cognized by an understanding's making it cognizable. Thus [even in the case of a true negation] 'true' is based on a being inasmuch as what-is-not is a thought-

i.e. (*U_x*, *R*, *x*). But the converse is now amended. It is that *x* can verify *U_x* or "has what it takes" to do so: *x*:*R* *U_x*.

Well, having what it takes to verify is a *de re* modal or dispositional property, whereby *x* can verify a cognition whether or not one occurs. According to Aquinas, this *de re* modal property is a straight consequence of *x*'s actual being (*esse*, which includes both *x*'s existing and its being thus-and-such). Thus, Aquinas has found in article 3 a secondary sense of 'verus' which applies universally to things, without making any appeal to divine or human artanship or to the relations *R** and *R** arising in such artanship.

The question, then, is why the shift? The present translator's conjecture would be the following. The story of *R* and *oR*, with their respective explanations in *conformitas* and *cognoscibilitas*, the latter being further explained by *esse*, is a purely philosophical story. It is Aristotle's story, and so it is Aquinas' story, too, *for philosophical purposes*. The present article is pursuing a philosophical purpose, to defend the philosophical doctrine that 'true/real' is one of those "transcendental" terms that applies to everything in any category, like 'a being' and 'good in some respect'. One cannot defend a philosophical doctrine with revealed information, and the claim that the First Cause made everything else as an artist designs his works is revealed information. By contrast, article 1 in this inquiry was able to take advantage of revealed information because it was pursuing a theological agenda. It was wrestling with the Patristic accounts of 'true', and it was securing the nexus between truthness and God's *idea*. The specifications to which things in nature are made "true" are contained in God's *idea* of them. So the shift in how to explain thing-*veritas* was mandated by the difference in agenda between aa. 1 and 3.

⁴ The subject-wise interchangeability is: *x* is true/real (open to cognition) *if*, and only *if*, *x* is (in some way). The other interchangeability is between a relation and its converse: *U_x* manifests *x* *if*, and only *if*, *x* is manifested by *U_x*.

in the corpus

* *secundum substantiam*

† Hilary's definition in a. 1

produced being, *i.e.* one apprehended by thinking.⁵

ad (3): when someone says that an item *x* cannot be apprehended as a being apart from what it takes to be true/real, the claim can be construed two ways:

* *assquatatur*

(1) to mean: *x* is not apprehended as a being unless what it takes for *x* to be true/real pertains* to the said apprehension (so taken, the claim has truth to it);

⁵ Negation is a tool with which thought fabricates alternatives to the given. Confronted with a yellow wall, I fabricate its not-being-pink, the set of non-pink things, the class of non-walls, *etc.* Then, thinks Aquinas, the truth of judgments like 'This wall is not pink', 'This non-pink is not a non-wall', *etc.* rests on these thought-fabricated "entities."

(2) to mean: *x* cannot be apprehended as a being unless its having what it takes to be true/real is being apprehended (and this is false).

Quite the reverse: *x* cannot be apprehended as true/real unless its makings as a being are apprehended; for 'being' appears in the account of 'true/real'. Compare the case of 'intelligible' and 'a being': *x* cannot be grasped as a being unless *x* is intelligible, but one can grasp *x* as a being without grasping that it is intelligible. Just so, an *understood* being is true/real, but its being so is not understood just in understanding that it is a being.⁶

⁶ I translate Aquinas' '*apprehendere ens*' with 'apprehend *x* as a being' because he is talking about a cognition in which one forms and accepts the proposition that *x* is a being.

Cajetan's Commentary

In the title, 'true' is taken in its analogical breadth of meaning, as it says in the answer *ad* (1).

Analysis of the article

In the body of the article, a single conclusion answers the question with yes: 'a true/real thing' and 'a being' are interchangeable. — This is supported by an argument that includes at once the force of a middle term and the light shed by a proportional likeness between 'true' and 'good'. The force of the middle term is this: [*Antecedent:*] The extent to which each thing has being is the extent to which it is open to cognition. [*Inference:*] So 'a being' and 'a true/real thing' are interchangeable. — The antecedent is shown to be right by the authority of *De Anima III*, in which the soul is said to be all things because the soul gets to be all things open to cognition, which would be a bad argument, of course, unless being open to cognition were equivalent to being. — Drawing the inference rests on the ground that 'true/real' implies a relation to cognition, *i.e.* being open to it.

A doubt

ii. One doubt arises about this. The force of the middle term lies in the fact that 'true/real' implies 'open to cognition' *in its full generality* [*i.e.* open to cognition one way or another], as one sees both in the text of the article and in the passage in *De Anima III*. But the last sentence in the article's body says this is false; it says 'true/real' implies a relation to understanding; so it implies 'open to cognition *this way*', by an intellect, and not 'open to cognition *one way or another*'. This position is the right one, because (as Aquinas said in a. 1) 'true' names that to which *understanding* tends.

Resolving it

iii. The SHORT ANSWER is that the force of the middle term does not require 'true/real' to indicate 'open to cognition *one way or another*'. It suffices that it indicate 'open to cognition *in any way or in such-and-such a way*', provided that the latter is broad enough to extend to everything to which 'open to cognition one way or another' extends. Nothing in the force of the middle term turns on whether it implies 'open to cognition generally' or something equivalent to it: either way, the equivalence of 'a true/real thing' with 'a being' follows. Well, such is the situation here: openness to understanding* is coextensive with openness to cognition; for everything open to cognition is open to understanding, and the extent to which each thing has being is just the extent to which it is open to being understood. The text starts with 'open to cognition' and ends with 'open to understanding', in order to teach from the easier point, leaving what I have just said to come across tacitly. In much the same way, it says, "The extent to which each thing is open to cognition is the extent to which it has being," leaving "and conversely" to come across tacitly — and this last has to come across, to make the equivalence of 'being' and 'true/real' follow.

* *intelligibilis*

Problems in the answer *ad* (3)

iv. In the answer *ad* (3), doubt arises because the answer given seems to conflict with what Aquinas said above and elsewhere. For he said in a. 1 that the true is that towards which understanding tends, as the good is that towards which yearning tends. Elsewhere, he says the true is the object of understanding. But here he is saying that what it takes for *x* to be true/real follows

q 54, a2
q 55, a1

upon the apprehension of *x* as a being. [These clash because] the *object* of understanding does not come after the act of understanding but precedes it. — Aquinas' position in this answer also seems to conflict with the truth of the matter. For it is not the case that the reason a being is true/real is because it is apprehended; rather, the reason it is apprehended is because it is true/real.

Resolving the problems

v. My response to this is [to remind the reader] that the word 'true' is used for two different topics, as was made plain by earlier remarks, namely,

- for the being-true/real of a thing, and
- in its primary sense [for the truth of an understanding].

It is the "true" in the primary sense that is (a) the intrinsic terminus of an act of understanding, (b) the intrinsic object thereof, and even (c) the distinctive object-wise completion of one who understands. So taken, the "true" neither follows nor precedes the act of understanding but is simultaneous with it, completing it. *And truth so taken is not the topic of this text.* (It was the topic in a.1, where Aquinas inferred that truth resides in an understanding.)

By contrast, the being "true" [in the secondary sense, *i.e.* the being real] of a thing *x* is posterior to *x*'s being but prior to cognition of *x*; it is not the intellect's formal object (that rôle belongs to "a being") but just a distinctive condition of its formal object.¹ Granted, "a being" terminates understanding under all its conditions, modes, and accounts, since all the conditions, modes, *etc.*, are *understood* (actually or potentially); still, "a being" needs to meet a certain general condition if it is to do the job of completing understanding object-wise; and this is what 'true/real' adds to "a being".² For a being does not complete understanding just any old way, as it does not complete yearning any old way, and does not act in just any old way. So while a "good" and a "true/real" agree in both being an object and in both terminating something, they still differ in that

- 'good' means the formal object of the will, while

¹ The "formal object" of a faculty *F* was the description *D* as fitting which an item could be the object of an act of *F*. An item could be seen by the eye, for example, only *qua* having color in a light, and so "lighted color" was called the formal object of eyesight. An item could be sought after or yearned for only *qua* good, and so "good" was called the formal object of appetition. An item could be understood only as a being (real or thought-produced), and so "a being" was called the formal object of the intellect. *Etc.*

² Aquinas said that 'true/real' added a modal property of openness to cognition. Does a being *x* get in shape to terminate an understanding *U_i* by being open to cognition? Yes, if one understands that openness to cognition = having what it takes to verify. A being *x* gets in shape to terminate an understanding *U_i* by having what it takes to verify *U_i*.

- 'true/real' seems to mean a condition of the formal object [of the understanding].

As a result of this difference, every act of yearning is, formally speaking, "a yearning for good," but not every understanding is, formally speaking, "an understanding of true/real," as the text makes clear, but "an understanding of a true/real thing," so that 'thing' indicates the object understood, while true/real' points to the condition in which the thing is understood. In comments on *I Sentences* d.3. q.3 or 5, Scotus launched arguments attacking the idea that "true/real" is the distinctive object of the understanding. We have no need to break those arguments, because they are talking about the formal object [of understanding], and the very point being made in this answer *ad* (3) is that "true/real" is not the understanding's formal object.

vi. To answer the objections, then, let it be said that St. Thomas' remarks conflict neither with each other nor with the truth of the matter. The text does not intend to say that what it takes for *x* to be true/real follows on the heels of *x*'s apprehension (as a being), but that what it takes for *x* to be true/real accompanies or assists the apprehension. This is what he means by '*assequatur*': properly speaking, '*assequi*' does not mean 'follow' but 'pertain to'. The text clearly shows that it means to assert nothing but what is the case when

it is a being

is understood and yet

it is true/real

is not understood. The example about intelligibility shows this. For it is obvious that the object is intelligible in [logical] priority to its being apprehended.

Nevertheless, we are not saying that being-true/real is in a thing apart from all relation to understanding. Rather, we posit first "a being," then "a being as complete of understanding," and thirdly "intelligible" <*sic*: read apprehended?>. For *x* is intelligible <*sic*: read apprehended?> because it is true/real, and not vice-versa. In the trait of being complete of understanding, there is clearly a relation to understanding.³

³ I have inserted '*sic*' twice in this final paragraph, because it looks as though the text contains a slip of the pen: '*intelligibile*' has been written where '*apprehensum*' or '*apprehenditur*' was wanted. The objection (stated at the end of § *rv*) said, "it is not the case that the reason a being is true/real is because it is apprehended; rather, the reason it is apprehended is because it is true/real." Cajetan is now answering this objection. He should be conceding that an item *x* is apprehended because it is true/real, not vice-versa, but arguing that this concession does no harm to Aquinas' doctrine, since the relation-to-understanding which being-true/real adds to being "a being" does not arise in *x*'s being apprehended but lies further back, in *x*'s being complete of understanding, *i.e.* in *x*'s having what it takes to verify an understanding. Thus the amendment which I propose makes Cajetan's text responsive to the objection and also perfectly in line with the doctrine advanced in the corpus of a.3 and in the earlier sections of this commentary. By contrast, the unamended text makes no sense.

Explanation-wise, does 'good' have priority over 'true/real'?

De Veritate q.21, a.3; *In Epist. ad Hebraeos*, c.11, *lectio* 1

* *secundum rationem* It looks as though 'good' has priority in explanation* over 'true/real'.¹

c.5; 189a.5 (1) After all, the more universal term has explanatory priority, as one sees from *Physics I*. But 'good' is more universal than 'true', because the true is a particular sort of good, that of the intellect. Therefore 'good' has explanatory priority over 'true/real'.

a.2 (2) Besides, 'good' applies to things, while 'true' applies to the affirming and denying done in understanding, as I said above. But the traits that appear in things are prior to those that appear in an understanding of them. Ergo [what it takes to be] good is prior to [what it takes to be] true.

c.7; 1127a.29 (3) Moreover, trueness is a certain kind of virtue, as one sees in *Ethics IV*. But a virtue is classified under good, since it is "a good quality of the mind," as Augustine puts it [in his *De libero arbitrio II*]. So, again, 'good' is prior to 'true'.

c.19
PL.32, 167

ON THE OTHER HAND, what is found in more things has explanatory priority. But 'true' applies to some items to which 'good' does not, such as mathematical items. So 'true' has explanatory priority over 'good'.²

† *suppositio* I ANSWER: although 'a good' and 'a true/real thing' have the same extension* as 'a being', they still differ in the philosophical accounts explaining them [*rationes*]; and thanks to these, 'true/real' is prior to 'good' for overall purposes.† Two pieces of evidence show this.

‡ *absolutè loquendo*

* First, 'true/real' stands closer to 'a being', which is prior, than 'good' does. For 'true/real' concerns [a thing's] very being [*esse*] directly and without further ado, while what it takes to be "good" comes in consequence, once its being is in some measure complete, because that is how it is pursuit-worthy [*appetibilis*].³

¹ The issue is priority as to *ratio*. The *ratio* of ϕ = the reason a thing is ϕ = what it takes to be ϕ according to science (or philosophy). ϕ was counted prior to ψ in *ratio* if ' ϕ ' had to be used in defining ψ scientifically, but not *vice-versa*. Such was always the case when ' ϕ ' named a genus, ' ψ ' a species in it, since the genus-term was used in defining the species but not *vice-versa*. Thus, if truth is a species of good, as objection (1) alleges, the rule will require that 'good' be prior in *ratio* to 'true'. For a similar debate, see above, q.5, a.2.

² This *sed contra* is not an authoritative statement which Aquinas felt he had to follow; it is just a point on the other side.

³ Aquinas is using here the case he made in q.5, a.1, in the long answer *ad* (1). When a being is of the kind *K* but is an inchoate, immature, or unripe *K*-thing, it is not unqualifiedly a "good" one; the completeness that makes it unqualifiedly good comes when it is ripe, mature, finished.

* The second piece of evidence is that cognition naturally precedes yearning or appetition. So, since the true/real bears on cognition, the good on appetition, 'true/real' has explanatory priority over 'good'.

TO MEET THE OBJECTIONS — *ad* (1): will and intellect are such that each takes in the other: the intellect understands the will, and the will wants the intellect to understand. As a result, the items ordered to the will's object include those pertaining to the intellect, too, and *vice-versa* [the items falling under the intellect's object include those pertaining to the will]. So in a ranking by pursuit-worthiness, good stands as a universal, and true is a particular case of it. But in a ranking by openness to understanding, the reverse holds [true/real is universal, while the good is a particular case]. What follows from the fact that truth is a kind of good, then, is only the fact that 'good' is prior in the ranking by pursuit-worthiness — not that 'good' is prior overall [*simpliciter*].⁴

ad (2): what gives a term explanatory priority is its coming into the understanding first. Well, the very first thing is that one's intellect apprehends a being; next, that one understands a being; thirdly, that one seeks a being. So what it takes to explain a being comes first, then what it takes to explain true, then what it takes to explain good, even though goodness is found in things.

ad (3): the virtue called trueness [or "authenticity"] is not true/realness in the general sense but the particular genuineness with which one shows oneself as one is, in word and deed. Another particular sort of trueness is that of one's biography,* by which one fulfills in one's career the purpose assigned to one by divine understanding; in this sense a life is true [to-form] in the same way as I said other things are true [to-form]. Yet another trueness is that of honest dealing,† whereby one is observant of one's legal obligations to another. The point is that, from [the fact that] these particular sorts of trueness [are kinds of goodness], one may not jump to a conclusion about trueness/realness in general.

* *vita*

† *iustitia*

⁴ In other words, because the truth of one's understandings is among the things one wills (and one wills everything one does will as a good), truth counts as a good; but that is only a limited perspective, because, at the same time, any good one wills is among the things one understands and forms propositions about, and so any good counts as true/real. So a decision about which is prior overall in the order of explanation, 'good' or 'true/real', cannot be reached on this basis. Rather, the right basis for the decision is worked out in the *corpus* and applied explicitly in the answer to the next objection.

Cajetan's Commentary

In the title, 'explanation-wise' properly attaches to 'good' and 'true/real', not to 'priority', although the two construals come down to the same thing if 'explanatory priority' is taken as order-in-the-real* (as can be gathered from the answer *ad* (1)), not as order-in-which-we-learn.¹ The force of the title, then, is this: does a thing have what explains its being good ahead of having what explains its being true/real?¹

ii. In the body of the article, two jobs are done: (1) an implicit objection against the question itself is headed off, and (2) the question is answered.

As to job (1), the point is made that, although both terms are equivalent to 'a being' extensionally, they are still different in the accounts explaining them. Aquinas said this because an order-of-priority presupposes that the items ordered are distinct. So, since the question here is about order-of-priority between 'good' and 'true/real', a distinction between them has to be in hand already. Well, the upshot of the previous article was that 'good' and 'true/real' both apply the same as 'a being' does — and hence apply the same as each other. So how can there now be a question about order of priority? This is the objection which, in just a few words, is being headed off at the outset of the article. Aquinas says the sameness is in the extension of these terms, not in their form-wise account.² In respect to this latter, they are distinct.²

† *ratio formalis*

¹ In Latin, the title asked whether *bonum* was prior to *verum* in a specific way, namely, *secundum rationem*. Cajetan is pointing out that the title can be

• attaching '*secundum rationem*' to '*bonum*' and to '*verum*', yielding the question he prefers — (Q1) does the *ratio of bonum* (what explains a thing's being good) attach to the thing ahead of the *ratio of verum* (what explains its being true/real)?

• or attaching '*secundum rationem*' to '*prior*', to make the phrase '*prior in the order of explanation*' and so yield the query: does 'good' have explanatory priority over 'true/real'? This second construal in turn, he says, can be taken two ways, depending on whether

(1) it means priority in the objective order of things, in which case the question yielded is this: (Q2) does talk of good enter into the philosophical explanation of a thing's being true/real?

(2) or it means priority in our learning curve, so as to yield: (Q3) do we need to know how to use 'good' in order to learn how to use 'true' or 'real'?

As a realist, Cajetan expected philosophical and scientific explanations to capture the real makeup of things, and so he said that (Q1) and (Q2) posed the same issue.

² The *ratio formalis* of a term 'φ' was the scientific or philosophical explanation saying what it took for a thing *x* to be

iii. As to job (2), the question is answered with a single conclusion: in overall perspective, what it takes to be true/real is prior to what it takes to be good. This is supported by two arguments.

The first goes thus. [*Antecedent:*] being-true/real follows upon sheer being [*esse*] straightforwardly and immediately, while being-good follows its being thanks to its getting completed to some extent. *i.e.* having to some extent a makeup defining completeness; [*1st inference:*] so [what it takes to be] true/real is closer to [what it takes to just be] a being than [what it takes to be] good is; [*2nd inference:*] so [what it takes to be] true/real is prior. — The second part of the antecedent is supported on the ground that this is how a being is pursuit-worthy, *i.e.* a being only has what it takes to be yearned for insofar as it takes on the makeup of its completeness. This is clearly right (a) because it is not under just any consideration that "a being" joins up with what it takes to be good, as one sees in the case of the [abstracted] entities of mathematics;³ and (b) because everything that yearns is pursuing a completeness. — The second inference is also supported, by the fact that [what it takes to be] a being is admittedly prior to [what it takes to be] good — indeed, [what it takes to be] a being is flatly first.⁴

The second argument goes as follows. [*Antecedent:*] 'true/real' pertains to cognition, while 'good' pertains to appetition; [*inference:*] so 'true/real' is prior to 'good'. The inference is supported on the ground that cognition naturally precedes appetition.⁵

φ in the basic sense of 'x is φ', as opposed to weaker or derivative senses. The basic sense of 'x is φ' was called the *form-wise sense*, because it was the claim that *x* had the trait of being-φ as a form or form-like aspect of itself. (A frequent derivative sense of 'x is φ' was the power-wise sense, in which one was merely claiming that *x* had the power to make something else have that trait.) The modern reader should be careful to distinguish these topics from what is meant nowadays by the talk of a word's "sense." In current talk, the sense of 'iron' is what all English speakers know, while the *ratio formalis* of 'iron' is what physicists know about things made of iron.

³ On the point that mathematical entities (points, lines, numbers, etc.) are not evaluated as good, see q 5, a 3 *ad 4*, with Cajetan's lengthy commentary thereon.

⁴ This was settled in q 5, a 2.

⁵ Natural precedence was priority in causal order. One's awareness (cognition) of *x* was a contributing factor to one's willing *x*, and willing was the distinctively rational form of appetition, hence the awareness counted as a cause of this appetition, and so it counted as "naturally prior" to it.

Is God Truth or Realness Itself?

2/1 ST q.3, a.7; *In I Sent.* d.19, q.5, a.1; *De Veritate* q.1, a.7; 1 CG cc.59-62; 3 CG c.51

It does not seem that God is truth or realness itself.

(1) After all, truth arises in [*consistit in*] the intellect's affirming and denying. But there is no affirming and denying in God. So there is no truth in Him.

(2) Besides, according to Augustine's *De vera religione*, trueness/realness is "likeness to source." God has no source [and hence no likeness to a source]. In Him, therefore, there is no trueness/realness.¹

(3) Also, any attribute ascribed to God is called the First Cause of every [other] case of that attribute; for instance, God's existing is the cause of every case of existing; His goodness is the cause of every good, etc. So, if there is truth in God, every case of truth will be from Him. Well, it is a truth that someone is sinning. So this will be from God — which is patently false.

ON THE OTHER HAND, there is what the Lord says in John 14: 6, "I am the way, the truth, and the life."

ANSWER: as has emerged above, truth is found in an understanding on the condition that it apprehend a thing as it is, and trueness/realness is found in a thing on the condition that it have a being [*esse*] which can conform to understanding [*conformabile intellectui*]. These conditions are maximally satisfied in God. For His being is not only conformed to His understanding but is even His very act of understanding; and His act of understanding is the standard* and cause of everything else's being and of everything else's understanding. And He = His being and act of understanding. It follows, then, that truth and realness are not just in Him but that He is the highest and first Truth/Realness.

TO MEET THE OBJECTIONS — *ad* (1): even though no affirming and denying occur in the divine understanding, by His simple intelligence He still exercises judg-

¹ The reader should bear in mind that, in this article, the inquiry returns to theological territory. The patristic accounts of trueness/realness, neglected since article 1, come to the fore again, posing conundra like this second objection,

ment about all things and knows all propositions. And so there is truth in His understanding.

ad (2): [Augustine's definition applies as follows:] the truth of our understanding comes from its being conformed to its source, *i.e.*, the things from which it receives information;* and the trueness/realness of things comes from their being conformed to their source, *i.e.*, the divine understanding. But this definition does not apply, properly speaking, to divine Truth/Realness (except perhaps to the extent that Truth is appropriated to the Son, who has a Source).² Rather, if we are talking about Truth/Realness as a matter of God's essence, the only way to understand it is to resolve an affirmative claim into a negative one, as we do when we say, "The Father is from Himself, because He is *not* from another." In the same vein, one can say, "Divine Trueness is likeness to source, in that His being is *not unlike* His understanding."

ad (3): non-beings and privations do not have trueness/realness of themselves but only from an intellect's apprehension.³ But every case of an intellect's apprehending is from God. So any truth that there is in my saying, "It is true that this fellow is fornicating," is entirely from God. If you infer, "So, then, the event of his fornicating is from God," you commit a fallacy of accident.⁴

which St. Thomas will have to handle without flatly denying the patristic authority in question.

² The "appropriation" of a divine trait to one of the divine Persons is studied below at 1 ST q.39, aa7-8.

³ Sinning was a "privation" because what made an act sinful was its *lack* of conformity to divine or human reason.

⁴ That I have a true understanding of the event is quite accidental to the event itself, as liking lyre-playing is accidental to Socrates. So, saying that because my true understanding comes from God, the event comes from God, is as fallacious as saying that, because a liking for the lyre comes from the Muses, Socrates comes from the Muses.

Cajetan's Commentary

The title is clear. — In the body of the article, a single conclusion answers the question: the situation in God is not just that there is truth in Him but that He is the first and highest Truth. — This conclusion contains four parts: (1) there is trueness/realness in God as in a thing; (2) there is truth in Him object-wise; (3) God is

truth/realness; (4) He is the first and highest. All four are supported in the text.

As for part (1): [*Antecedent:*] God's being is not only in conformity with His understanding but is the latter's very act; [*inference:*] so His being maximally meets the condition for thing-trueness [realness]. — The inference

* *accipit cognitionem*

q.14, a.14

c.36, PL 34, 152

* *mensura*

is supported on the ground that trueness/realness is in a thing on the condition that it have a being that can be conformed to understanding.¹

As to part (2): [*antecedent:*] God's act of understanding is the standard for everything else's being and understanding; [*inference:*] so it knows the truth. — The inference is supported on the ground that truth is found in an understanding on the condition that it apprehend a thing as it is. Needless to say, an act of understanding setting the standard for every case of being has to apprehend things' being as they *are*. Likewise, an act of understanding setting the standard for every case of understanding, even those that affirm and deny, has to apprehend what is apprehended by any of them.²

As to part (3): [*antecedent:*] God = His being and act of understanding; [*inference:*] ergo He is truth/realness itself. — The inference is clearly right. For, from the fact that He = His being, it follows that He is

¹ The idea here is that identity is maximal conformity. Where *E* is the divine being, and *U_E* is God's understanding of *E*, the condition on which *E* is true/real is that *E* has what it takes to verify *U_E*, and the condition on which *E* has this is just that *E* can or does conform (share a form) with *U_E*. In God, these conditions are met by the fact that *E* = *U_E*.

² Cajetan has taken the second part of the conclusion to mean that every truth about anything is in God as a known object. Well, since every truth (or at least, every first-order truth) about a creature, *c*, is in God's *idea* of *c*, and since the set of divine *ideae* is in the divine essence as a known object containing all first and higher-order truths, and that essence is God's being, God's self-understanding *U_E* embraces every truth just in conforming to the divine being, *E*. It is puzzling, therefore, why Cajetan followed Aquinas in making the support for this second part more indirect, going through the premise that the divine *U_E* sets the standard for every other case of being and every other act *U_i* of understanding a being *x* as it is.

thing-trueness itself.³ And from the fact that He = His act of understanding, it follows that He is truth-in-the-understanding.⁴

As for part (4), no particular support is offered, but it springs from the seed planted in the preceding remarks. For, from the fact that His being/act-of-understanding has what it takes to be the first standard and cause of every case of being and understanding, it obviously follows that the trueness/realness in His being/act-of-understanding is the first and highest.

³ If thing-*veritas* is having what it takes to verify, and having what it takes to verify is not distinct from being but is just being itself considered in a certain way, it is easy to see that God, by being His *esse*, is thing-*veritas* (Realness) itself.

⁴ This part of the inference is harder to follow. How is God truth-in-the-understanding (thought-*veritas*)? The grounds given:

- (a) God's self-understanding, *U_L*, is true, and
- (b) God = *U_L*,

are clearly strong enough to yield:

- (c) God = True Understanding Itself in its primordial case.

But how does it follow that God = Truth Itself? Isn't *ipsa veritas* in the proper sense a conformity between understanding and the thing-understood? The Act of Understanding, *U_E*, with which God is identical, is an understanding of His essence, *E*. So isn't the very truth of God's understanding the *ipsa conformitas* or *ipsa identitas* of *U_E* with *E*? And isn't conformity/identity itself a thought-produced relation? So how can God = Truth Itself, unless we have the further point,

- (d) God = *ipsa conformitas* and so = this relation,

which does not follow from the premises given?

The answer is that truth in signified act = truth in exercised act. The truth-predicate in '*U_i* is true' asserts the thought-produced conformity-relation, but this is truth in signified act. Truth in exercised act is nothing but *U_i*'s capturing *E*, which is what *U_E* does just in being what it is. So

- (c') God = Truth in exercised act
- does follow from the given premises (a) and (b).

Is there a single truth/realness, thanks to which all things are true/real?

In I Sent. d.19, q.5, a.2; 3 *CG c.47, De Veritate* q.1, a.4; q.21, a.4 ad 5; q.27, a.1 ad 7; *Quodlibet X*, q.4, a.1

It seems that there is just one truth or realness, thanks to which all things are true or real.

PL 42, 1057

(1) According to Augustine [*De Trinitate XI*, c. 1], nothing but God is greater than the human mind. But truth is greater than the human mind (otherwise, the mind would sit in judgment on truth; but as it is, the mind judges all things according to truth, and not according to itself). Therefore, God alone is the truth. Therefore, there is no other trueness but God.¹

c.14,
PL 158, 486

(2) Anselm says in his *De Veritate* [c. 14] that truth stands to true things as time stands to temporal ones. But there is only one time for all temporal things. So, there is just one truth by which all things are true.

Fig. Ps. 11.2

ON THE OTHER HAND, Psalm 12:2 says, "Truths are decayed from among the children of men."

ANSWER: in one sense, there is a single truth/realness; and in another sense, there is not. To see why, one needs to know the following. When a term is predicated of many things univocally, it is satisfied in each according to the account uniquely explaining its application* (as 'animal' is satisfied in any species of animal). But when a term is applied to many things analogously, it is satisfied according to its proper explanation in only one of them, after which the others are so named. Thus 'healthy' is applied to an animal, urine, and medicine, not because healthiness is anywhere but in the animal, but because the other things are so named after the health of the animal (medicine as an effective cause of it, urine as a reliable indicator of it). And even though healthiness itself is not in the medicine or the urine, there is still something in each by which the one produces it, the other indicates it.²

* *propria ratio*

Now, the point has already been made that 'true/real' applies to an understanding first off³ and to things derivatively,⁴ because they are related to the divine understanding. So, then:

† *per prius*
‡ *per posterius*

• if we are talking about trueness in an understanding (which satisfies the proper account of 'truth'), then there are many cases of truth in the many created intellects; there are even many in the same created intellect, thanks to the many points known. This is why the Gloss on Psalm 11 ("truths are decayed from among the children of men") says that many truths result from

¹ This objection poses the core problem that Aquinas had to solve in q.16. Augustine had invested truth with divine attributes because, for him, everything's being, trueness, and goodness was its participation in a single Platonic Form, and God was that Form. Aquinas had to replace this philosophical account of trueness with Aristotle's, without disturbing the purely theological side of Augustine's legacy. That task was nowhere harder than here.

² For the theories of univocity and analogy, see q.13, aa-5-6, with their crucial commentaries.

the one divine truth, as many images result in a mirror from a man's one face.

• But if we are talking about trueness in things, then they are all true/genuine by the one first Trueness, which each thing is made to resemble by its status as a being [*entitas*]. Thus, while there are many essences and forms of things, there is just one Trueness of the divine understanding, after which all things are called true/real/genuine.³

TO MEET THE OBJECTIONS — *ad* (1): the soul does not judge all things according to just any truth, but according to the First Truth as that is reflected in the soul, as in a mirror, by the first principles of understanding [*prima intelligibilia*].⁴ So, what follows [from Augustine's argument] is that First Truth is greater than the soul. Still, even the created truth which is in our understanding is "greater than the soul" in one respect (not unqualifiedly, but in one respect), namely, insofar as it is a perfecting of the soul. In this way, a science can be called "greater than the soul."⁵ It remains true, however, that among subsistent things, nothing but God is greater than the human soul.⁶

ad (2): Anselm's remark has some truth to it, thanks to the fact that things are called true [to-form] by comparison to the divine understanding.

³ Aquinas' two stories about trueness/realness, the philosophical first story, and the theological second story, were outlined in footnote 2 to the commentary on a. 1 (p. 368). Here the second story returns in full force, in order to provide an acceptable substitute for the "form of Truth," which Augustine and other Christian Platonists had identified with God. The substitute goes as follows. God's understanding of all the ways in which His essence is imitable is true. This true understanding — call it U_E — includes every understanding of specifications, U_S , bearing a relation R^* to a creature, c . By analogy, the adjective 'true' travels down R^* from U_E to the created relatum, c , where it means true-to-specs or true-to-form. Thus all creatures are called true/real thanks to a single Trueness, but it is by *pros hen* analogy, not by participation in a Platonic form.

⁴ The *prima intelligibilia* were the first principles used in understanding all further objects of understanding. They included the basics of logic and language competence, which people grasp, Aquinas believed, simply because they have human cognitive equipment (1 *ST* q.79, a.5 ad 3). This equipment was like a mirror in which the *prima intelligibilia* were a created reflection of the primordial True Understanding.

⁵ The maxim that whatever perfects x is somehow greater than x (see Cajetan's commentary on 2/1 *ST* q.3, a.6) is being used here to give an acceptable sense to Augustine's premise that truth is greater than the human mind or soul.

⁶ This last overlooks the angels in order to salvage Augustine's other premise (nothing but God is greater, etc.). A subsistent thing was a value of a first-order individual variable. God was such a thing, but ordinary truth was not; so Augustine's premises no longer met to yield a conclusion.

 Cajetan's Commentary

The title is clear. — In the body of the article, one conclusion answers the question: In one sense there is one "trueness" whereby all things are true/real, and in another sense there is not.

Analysis of the article

Both parts of the conclusion are supported together, thus. [*Antecedent:*] Trueness is primarily in an understanding and derivatively in things in their relation to God's understanding. [*Inference: 1st part:*] so in the sense in which trueness resides in understanding, under the account properly explaining it, it has multiple cases both in different created intellects and in each created intellect thanks to the different points known; [*2nd part:*] but the "trueness" with which all things are called true/genuine has just one case, and it is primary.

The antecedent is clear from points already made. The inference, in both its parts, is supported by the following difference between a univocal and an analogous [term]: the former is satisfied under its proper account in each univocate, while the latter posits its proper account only in the first analogate, positing in the other analogates a well-based relation to the first. Examples are furnished in the text. — As to what is implicit in the second part of the point inferred, *i.e.*, that all things [are called true/genuine because they] bear relation to the divine Understanding's trueness, it is supported on the ground that each thing is made to resemble that Understanding by its being-status. Meanwhile, the first part of the point inferred is confirmed by the authority of the Gloss, as you can see in the text.

A doubt about the first part

ii. *Re* the first part inferred (*i.e.* that trueness as residing in understanding has multiple cases), doubt arises. [*Assumption:*] Either that part is supported in the text by nothing but the authority of the Gloss, or else [the support is that] 'trueness' is satisfied univocally in all understandings — at least, in all created ones. [*Counter-evidence:*] Both alternatives are awkward. [*Inference:*] So [this part is ill supported].

The assumption is rightly made. In the text, no support is given unless it is coming from the difference between terms univocally and analogously used. One infers multiple cases not from a term analogously used but from one used univocally, as one sees in the text. So, either there is no support at all [except the Gloss], or else it comes from the situation with univocal use (that the number of cases rises with the number of univocates); thus, the assumption is being made that trueness is found univocally in all created understandings.

That both alternatives are awkward becomes clear as follows. On the first alternative [the text is doing nothing to prepare for the conclusion: for] right after it distinguishes univocal from analogous uses and applies this to the matter at hand, the text immediately uses

inferential language to draw a conclusion, saying, "So, then, if we are talking," *etc.* The second alternative is awkward, too, because, in our intellect, a truth is a case of affirming or denying; but in the angelic or divine intellect, a truth is a simple understanding, pre-possessing in a higher manner both what our simple understanding affords us and what our affirming/denying affords us.

Another doubt about this part

iii. *Re* this same part, another difficulty arises over what the text seems to imply. If a term analogously used is satisfied under its proper definition in just one of the analogates, and we have it from q.13 [a.5] that all terms applied to God as well as to other things are analogously used, so that the trueness in God's understanding is only analogous to the trueness found in other understandings, then it follows that there are not many cases of truth in the many understandings; rather, all understandings are "true" by virtue of one, sole Trueness, namely, that of God's understanding. And conversely: if the count of cases of truth rises with the count of true understandings, then 'true' is not said first-off of one of them and derivatively of the others; for a term used first-off and then derivatively is only satisfied form-wise in the one case, as the text says.

A doubt about the second part

v. Doubt arises, too, about the second part of the point inferred (*i.e.* that thing-trueness has just one case).

When it talks about the trueness of *things* and says "they are all true/genuine by the divine Trueness," this is being taken either as a case of extrinsic denomination or else as a case of intrinsic denomination. It obviously is not intrinsic. So it is extrinsic denomination. Well, in that case:

- either things are not *form-wise* true/genuine (which is awkward, because each thing has within itself its own thing-trueness, thanks to which it is called true/genuine; cf. sensation as it bears upon the distinctive sense-qualities);¹
- or else things are true/genuine in *both ways* [both extrinsically and form-wise], so that the situation is like the one found in the inquiry into God's goodness [q.6, a.4], where it was determined that everything is "good" by the divine Goodness as exemplary, final, and efficient Cause, and yet each thing is at the same time "good" form-wise with its own goodness.

But in that case, things are not true/genuine *solely* by the divine Trueness.

¹ Extrinsic denomination is "naming" a thing after a factor found outside of it, in something else. Well, calling a rock *visible* is "naming" it after a factor outside of it, namely, the eyesight in some animal. And yet the rock verifies 'visible' form-wise with something in itself whereby it reflects light. Ditto for 'audible', 'fragrant', and other sensation-based descriptions of things.

Answering the first doubt

v. I reply to the first doubt by denying the alternative it poses. There is a third way to understand the text. To see it, you need to know that two elements are included in univocal predication of a term *t*, namely:

- (a) that *t* is predicated form-wise of the univocates [call them, *x* and *y*],² and
- (b) that *t* is predicated of *x* and *y* under exactly the same formal defining makeup (as you see when 'animal' is predicated of a cow and a lion).

The fact that *t* is so used that the count of cases-of-*t*-ness rises with the count of subjects of which *t* is predicated does not come from element (b), since, if it did, it would attach to element (b) alone, which is clearly false; rather, it comes from element (a), which univocal terms have in common with some non-univocal terms. In the business at hand, we are talking about a univocal term just insofar as the count of cases rises with the count of subjects. So, the claim by which the first part of the point inferred holds good is not this:

the count of univocally named cases rises with the count of univocates,

but rather this broader one implied by it:

the count of form-wise predicated cases rises with the count of subjects.

I concede that the text means to bring in the point that 'true' is predicated form-wise of understandings

as a minor premise under this proposition. And thus the inference is drawn that

the count of cases of trueness rises with the count of understandings (indeed, with the count of things understood, whether in the same intellect or in different ones).

But the reason the text said 'univocally used' rather than 'form-wise predicated' was to give its teaching from better known terms.

Answering the second doubt

nv. The rule given in the text about a term analogously used does not apply to every kind of analogous use — indeed, it does not apply to any case of analogy strictly so-called, as you see from *Ethics I*, but rather applies to terms used "in relation to one," "in one," or "from one," which we loosely call analogous. When 'true' is applied to a thing and an understanding, comparing the one to the other, it is being used "from one," because the trueness making the thing true/genuine is found in the intellect alone. But when 'true' is applied among intellects, to compare one understanding to an-

c.6.
1096b 20-30

² One predicates the term *t* of a thing *x* form-wise when one means that *x* has in itself (like a form) the very trait picked out by *t*, and not just one related to it. See footnote 2 in the commentary on a.4 of q.16.

other, then it is being used analogously [in the more proper sense], because it is verified *proportionally but form-wise* in any intellect knowing a truth. The situation where a term is verified according to a proper definition in just one subject is that of terms used "in relation to one" or "from one"; it is not the situation of terms used proportionally. Well, when 'true' is applied to God's intellect and to other intellects, it is a proportional term. And so it does not follow that 'true' is verified [under a proper definition] only in God. For as I said already in answering the first doubt, with every term predicated form-wise of many, the count of cases rises with the count of subjects, whether the term so predicated be univocally used, like 'an animal', or proportionally used, like 'a being', etc. You will find such difference between terms treated in full in my *De Analogia Nominum*.³

Answering the last doubt

vil. As for the doubt about the second part of the point inferred, the answer to it comes from the text itself, at the point where it says, "while there are many essences and forms of things, there is just one Trueness," etc. This statement was appended after the conclusion had been supported, so as to highlight the difference between goodness and trueness/genuineness in this respect. All things are called "good" in two manners, intrinsically and extrinsically, as stated in q.6; but they are all called true/real/genuine by extrinsic denomination alone, so that there is no trueness in things form-wise, but imitatively or fulfillment-wise *vis-à-vis* God's understanding and cause-wise *vis-à-vis* our theoretical understanding.⁴ If no understanding ever took place, no thing could be called

³ Cajetan's classification of analogies into the loose and the strict has been criticized as fustier than Aquinas' and as giving the stricter sort too much of a metaphysical (as opposed to a logical) interpretation. But how the different sorts of analogy are classified is a minor issue. What matters is the recognition that what is "analogous" in some way is not a word but *uses* of a word, and that some such uses are crucially more informative than others. Thus, use of (tokens of) the word 'true' to say both

'This is a true bourdeaux' and 'My understanding is true' is analogous use of one kind (the *prosh hen* kind), while use of (tokens of) the same word to say both 'My understanding is true' and 'God's is true' is analogous use of another kind (here called *proportionale*), which is crucially more informative because, in this kind of analogy, we are not saying that God just verifies understandings, or just causes them, but actually does His own understanding. In a word, He satisfies the predicate *formaliter*, as I do, even though I satisfy it under a known account of what-it-is to understand, and He, under a higher, unknown account.

⁴ Created things imitate or fulfill divine plans and thus are called true/real after those plans; they are true-to-the-plans. The same things act causally upon the human cognitive apparatus, so that when the latter yields true judgments about them, the things are called true/real after such judgments; they cause true judgments and are able to verify them.

true/real, and no sense could be said to “get it right,” except equivocally, as it says in *De Veritate* q. 1, a. 4 — just as, if there were no such thing as animal health, no medicine could be called healthy, nor any diet. In each case the reason is the same: the truth of an understanding turns up in the explanation of “trueness” in things: animal health turns up in the explanation of “healthiness” in a medicine and a diet; *etc.* Take away the scientific definition, and the term only remains “the

same” equivocally.⁵

⁵ It is instructive here to compare Cajetan to a metaphysical idealist like Royce. Both could say, “If no understanding existed, no *thing* could be called true/real,” but they would mean very different things by saying it. Royce would mean that, if no understanding existed, no *things* would exist. Cajetan means that things would exist, but their existing would not carry the consequence that they are “able to verify,” because there would be nothing they could verify.

article 7

Is created truth eternal?

1 *ST* q.10, a.3 ad 3; *In I Sent.* d.19, q.5, a.3; *De Veritate* q.1, a.5;
2 *C.G.* c.35; 3 *C.G.* cc 82, 84; *De Potentia Dei* q.3, a.17 ad 27

It looks as though created truth would be eternal.

(1) After all, Augustine says in his *On Free Choice* [II, c.3] that nothing is more eternal than the mathematical definition of a circle, or the point that 2 + 3 is 5. But the truth of these points is created truth. Therefore, created truth is eternal.

(2) Moreover, anything that always is, is eternal. Universals are always and everywhere. They are therefore eternal, and truth is eternal, too, because it is maximally universal.

(3) Furthermore, it has always been true that what is now true was going to be true.¹ Well, the truth of a proposition about the present is created truth and, by the same token, so is the truth of one about the future. So at least some created truth is eternal.

(4) Besides, whatever lacks both a beginning and an end is eternal. The being-true of propositions lacks both. For if their being-true began at some point, before which it didn't occur, then being-true does not occur was previously true, and so it was true with some case of being-true, and thus being-true occurred before it supposedly began. By a similar argument, if being-true is said to come to an end, it turns out to occur after it supposedly ceased: for it will be true that being-true no longer occurs. Therefore, being-true is eternal.

ON THE OTHER HAND, there is the fact that God alone is eternal, as established above.

ANSWER: the being-true of propositions is nothing but the being-true of an understanding. For a proposition arises in understanding and in verbal expression. It has truth directly* insofar as it is in an understanding; but insofar as the proposition is in a verbal expression, it is called "true" because it indicates a trueness of understanding, and not because of any trueness existing in the utterance itself as in a subject. In just this way, urine is called "healthy," not because of any healthiness in it, but because it indicates an animal's healthiness. In this way, too, I said above that things are called "true" after an understanding's trueness. As a result, if no case of understanding were eternal, no case of being-true would be eternal. And since only the divine Understanding is eternal, it is in It alone that being-true gets to have eternalness.²

Does it follow from this that something else is eternal besides God? No, because the divine Understanding's being-true = God Himself, as was shown.

¹ In other words, if 'p' is a proposition true at present, 'p' will be true' has always been true. This is being put forward as a principle of tense logic; Aquinas will reject it.

² Is truth a trait that sentences or propositions have? No,

TO MEET THE OBJECTIONS — ad (1): the circle's definition and 2 + 3's being five have their eternalness in the divine mind.

ad (2): something's being "always and everywhere" can be construed two ways:

- (a) as the thing's having the inner wherewithal to extend itself to every time and place; this is how God succeeds at being "always and everywhere";
- (b) as the thing's *not* having anything to nail it down to a time or place; this is how prime matter is called "one thing" (not by having one form, as a man is one entity by having one form, but) by removal of all forms (which, by being diverse, would introduce distinction).

Well, the way a universal is said to be "always and everywhere" is way (b), due to the fact that universals abstract from a here and a now. But way (b) carries no consequence about their being eternal except in an understanding, if there is an eternal understanding.

ad (3): if it was *previously* true that what is now true was going to be true, the reason was that the cause of the present situation determined its occurrence. Absent that cause, 'it will be true' would not have been true. But only a first cause is eternal. So the claim, it has *always* been true that what is now true was going to be true, holds only for what an eternal cause determined was going to be the case. And God alone is such a cause.

ad (4): since our understanding is not eternal, the being-true of the propositions we form is not eternal either, but began to occur at a certain point. Before such cases of being-true occurred,

such cases of being-true do not occur was not a true thing to say (except by God's understanding, the only one in which being-true occurs eternally). As of now, however,

such cases of being-true did not occur is a true thing [for us] to say; the trueness with which it is true is just that which is now in our understanding — not some trueness given *ex parte rei*. For

cases of being-true did not occur is a truth about non-being, and non-being does not yield truth from itself but solely from an act of understanding thinking it up.* So,

cases of being-true did not occur is only a true thing to say to the extent that we think up "non-occurrence" as antedating occurrence.

* *ex intellectu apprehendente ipsum*

says Aquinas. He eliminates "their" truth by reducing it to the success of understanding (truth in exercised act). Acts of understanding *produce propositions* (as they produce sentences) by putting them together. So, before an act of understanding puts one together, propositions do not "exist." They are not eternally "there" as bearers of truth-values, as the objections imagined them to be (and as certain philosophers still do).

 Cajetan's Commentary

The title is clear.¹ — In the body of the article, there is one conclusion, answering the question in the negative: no created trueness is eternal.

The support goes as follows. [*Antecedent.*] The truth of propositions and the trueness/genuineness of things is nothing beyond the trueness of an understanding; [*1st inference:*] so if no understanding were eternal, no trueness would be eternal;² [*2nd inference:*] so trueness has eternal occurrence only in the divine Understanding; [*3rd inference:*] so no created trueness is eternal.

The first part of the antecedent [the truth of propositions is nothing beyond the trueness of an understanding] is supported thus. A proposition in verbal expression is only "true" sign-wise, as urine is only "healthy" sign-wise, whereas a proposition-in-the-mind is true directly or form-wise; ergo [propositional truth is nothing beyond the trueness of an understanding]. The second part of the antecedent [the trueness/genuineness of things is nothing beyond the trueness of an understanding] is taken as established from points made previously.

q.16, aa 1, 6

The first inference is left as obvious, given that there is no other talk of trueness beyond these three cases: in a thing, in a sign, and in an understanding. The second inference is supported on the ground that only the divine Understanding is eternal. The third

¹ The title is clear, given the view that 'created truth' means a successful, created act of understanding (a created case of truth in exercised act). It is less clear what the title would have meant to the authors of the objections. Was "created truth," for them, the kind had by any proposition that was not about God?

² The Leonine text adds '*creata*': no created trueness would be eternal. This obviously mistaken addition is missing from older editions.

inference is then supported on the ground that the trueness in the divine Understanding = God Himself (as was said in article 5),³ while a created trueness ≠ God.

Two points of importance

ii. Notice two points here. The first is that the main conclusion is not stated formally in the text but is given virtually in the broader proposition that nothing besides God is eternal, because God = His trueness.⁴

The second point is that, in this passage [at the end of the *corpus*] you have, quite plainly, the statement that no object is to be posited as a secondary object of God's understanding, such that the said object ≠ God. For if the propositions known in the divine Understanding (or, equivalently, their truth) = God, then, all the more, a known rock (or anything else indicated as a non-propositional object) = God. Make a careful note of this, so as to confirm the account of Divine Understanding that I gave above.⁵

In the commentary on q.14, a.5, §§ 21-211

³ See footnote 4 to the commentary on q.16, a.5.

⁴ In q.10 above, Aquinas settled the point that no substantial *thing* is eternal besides God; but that left the question of whether there are eternal non-substances, like "eternal truths." Cajetan's point is that, by making the only eternal case of truth in exercised act = the divine Understanding itself = God, Aquinas has left nothing that could be eternal besides God.

⁵ One regrets that Cajetan did not choose to comment on the answer *ad* (2), where universals are discussed. The important point that emerged there is that 'eternal' is not a synonym of 'time-insensitive'. Universal notions are those gotten by abstracting from any particular time or place, with the result that such notions are time-insensitive. In the same way, innumerable propositions are time-insensitive, like those of arithmetic.

Is truth immutable?

In I Sent. d 19, q 5, a.3; *De Veritate* q.1, a.6

Truth appears to be immutable.

c.12, Pl. 32, 1259 (1) Augustine says in book II of *On Free Choice* that truth is not down on the level of our mind, because, then, it would be changeable like our mind.

(2) Besides, what remains after every change is immutable. Thus prime matter is not generated but immutable, because it remains after every process of generation and corruption. Well, truth remains after every change because, after every one, it is *true* to say that a thing is or is not.

Pl. 158, 475 & 478 (3) Also, if the truth of a proposition ever changes, it changes most when the thing it is about changes. But in fact truth does not change at all on that basis. For according to Anselm [*Dialogus de veritate*, cc. 7, 10], truth is a certain "rightness" that a thing has by fulfilling what is settled about it in the divine mind. Well, the proposition [expressed by] 'Socrates sedet' gets from the divine mind the trait of signifying that Socrates sits, and it keeps this meaning even when he is not sitting. Ergo, the trueness of a proposition does not change on any basis.¹

(4) Furthermore, where the cause stays the same, so does the effect. But one and the same *thing* is the cause of truth for these three propositions: 'Socrates is sitting', 'Socrates will sit', 'Socrates sat'. So the truth of all three is one and the same effect. Further, it has to be the case that one or another of them is true. So the truth of these propositions remains immutably. The same goes for any other proposition.²

ON THE OTHER HAND, there is what Psalm 12:2 says, "Truths are decayed from among the children of men." *Fig. Ps 11.2*

ANSWER: as I said above, trueness properly speaking is only in an understanding, and *things* are only called true/real/genuine because of trueness in an understanding. Thus the question of truth's mutability has to be taken as a question about understanding. The truth of an understanding lies in its having a conformity to the thing understood. This conformity (like any other resemblance relation) can be altered two ways, *i.e.* by a change on either side. Thus trueness can be altered

- (1) in one way on the understanding's side, because one adopts a different opinion about *x*, while *x* itself remains the same;
- (2) in the other way, if *x* itself changes while one's opinion of it stays the same.

¹ Anselm tried to secure stability of truth-value by securing stability of meaning. Divine understanding was to fix the meaning of a Latin sentence-type (or that of a statement made with it plus a fixed referent for 'Socrates', etc).

² Abelard tried to secure stability of truth-value by making a single tenseless fact verify all three tensed sentences, see his *Introductio ad Theologiam* III, 5; *PL* 178, 1102.

Either way, a change is made from true [understanding] to false.

So if there is a case of understanding in which change of opinion cannot occur, or whose grasp nothing can escape, then the trueness of that understanding is immutable. Such is the divine Case of understanding, as came out above. Thus the truth of God's understanding is immutable. The truth of our understanding, by contrast, is mutable — not in the sense that its truth is a subject undergoing change, but in the sense that our understanding is [a subject] undergoing change from truth to falsity. This is the sense in which forms can be called mutable.³ The truth of God's understanding, however, is that by which natural things are called true/real/genuine, and this is utterly immutable.⁴ a.7

TO MEET THE OBJECTIONS — *ad* (1): Augustine is talking about the divine trueness.

ad (2): 'true/real' and 'a being' have the same extension.* So [the former changes as the latter does.] The extension of 'a being' does not come-to-be or corrupt as a whole but in bits, as this or that being corrupts or comes to be (as it says in *Physics I*); so the extension of 'true/real' does not change in such a way that nothing true/real remains, but in such a way that a thing formerly true/real does not remain so.⁵

ad (3): a proposition does not have trueness merely in the way other things are said to have it, *i.e.* by fulfilling what has been settled about them by God's understanding; rather, a proposition is said to have trueness in a special way, by serving as the sign of an understanding's truth. This latter lies in the conformity of thing-and-understanding. Take that

³ Ordinary forms like whiteness were not called mutable in the usual sense. The usual sense was called the subject-wise sense. The white *thing* changed subject-wise to, say, black; at the end of the change, the whiteness wasn't there. A form could thus disappear, and a new one appear, at the terminus of a change. So, forms themselves were called mutable terminus-wise. Here the trueness of an understanding is being treated as like a form, so as to be mutable terminus-wise.

⁴ The reference is to natural things as opposed to artificial things. Human artifacts are called genuine/true-to-form by corresponding to the understanding had by their human makers, while natural things are called genuine/true-to-form by corresponding to God's understanding, according to article 1 of the present Inquiry.

⁵ The objection committed a fallacy of composition. Its major premise was: if something is true/real before every physical change, and something is true/real after it, then "the true/real" is *immune* to physical change — ignoring the fact that what is true/real before ≠ what is true/real after. Aquinas' way of pointing this out uses '*per se*' vs. '*per accidens*' not to mean intrinsic vs. accidental but 'thanks to itself as a whole' vs. 'thanks to a part of itself'.

* *sunt convertibilia*

c.8, 191b 17

conformity away, and the truth of the opinion is changed, and thereupon the truth of the proposition is changed. Thus the proposition, 'Socrates sedet', is true when he is sitting

* *veritas rei*

† *veritas significationis*

- both with thing-trueness,* by being a certain meaningful verbal expression
- and with semantic-trueness,† by serving as the sign of a true opinion.

When Socrates gets up, the proposition's thing-trueness remains, but the semantic-trueness is lost.

ad (4): the cause of the truth of 'Socrates is sitting' is [the event of] Socrates's sitting, and this event does not have the same status* *while* he sits, *after* he sat, and *before* he sits. As a result, the trueness caused by this event also has different statuses [before, during, and after]; it is indicated in these different statuses by present-tense, past-tense, and future-tense propositions. So even though one or the other of the three [tensed] propositions is true, it does not follow that one and the same truth remains invariant.

* *non eodem modo se habet*

Cajetan's Commentary

The title is clear. — In the article's body, there is a conclusion to answer the question and a corollary. The conclusion is: the truth of God's understanding is immutable, but ours is mutable. Three remarks are made on this. (1) A reason is given why a question about truth in general is answered with talk about the truth of understanding. This is so, it says at the beginning of the article, because truth attaches form-wise only to an understanding; so its mutability and immutability attach there; after all, the traits of an item presuppose its being [*i.e.*, the item's traits are where *it* is, form-wise]. (2) The conclusion is supported. (3) The term 'mutable' is clarified in the conclusion, since it can be used two ways, subject-wise and terminus-wise. Here the use is the latter, and the reason is that forms are called mutable terminus-wise, not subject-wise.

The conclusion, then, is supported thus. [*Antecedent:*] The being-true of an understanding is the

understanding's conforming to the thing; so [*1st inference:*] if there is an understanding in which there is no change of opinion and from whose grasp nothing escapes, its being-true is immutable; so [*2nd inference:*] the being-true of God's understanding is immutable, while [*3rd inference:*] that of a human being's understanding is mutable.

The antecedent is well known. The first inference is supported on the ground that [a conforming is a resembling and] any resemblance can be altered on either side. The second inference rests on the ground that, on the side of the understanding, this altering is a matter of change-of-grasp, while, on the thing's side, it is a matter of unnoticed change in the thing. The third inference is left as obvious.

Then there is a corollary: the "trueness" by which *things* are called true/genuine is entirely immutable.

— The supporting ground is that this "trueness" is that of the divine understanding.

Inquiry Seventeen: Into being false, unreal, faulty, or deceptive

The discussion turns next to falsity, unreality, and faultiness.¹ Four questions are raised:

- (1) is the trait of being false/faulty/unreal in things? (2) is it in a sensation?
(3) is it in an understanding? (4) how are 'true' and 'false' opposed?

¹ The Latin adjective *'falsus'* had a breadth of use parallel to its contrary, *'verus'*. Since the latter meant not only true but also real, genuine, true-to-form-or-specifications, and even (in some contexts) honest, so also *'falsus'* meant not only false and wrong and mistaken but also not real (*i.e.* supposititious or falsely-so-called), untrue-to-form (*i.e.* faulty) and even (in some contexts) dishonest. Alas for the translator, the English word 'false' retains only remnants of such breadth, limited to special idioms. Dentures are called false teeth; zircons are false diamonds; a charlatan assumes a false front; one laments a false friend; one repudiates a false god, *etc.* But in most English contexts, other words have been adapted to take the place of 'false' (words like 'fake', 'misleading', 'counterfeit', and those mentioned above); to these the translator must resort often in what follows, if the thought of Aquinas is not to be travestied.

article 1

Is being false/unreal a trait of things?

In I Sent. d.19, q.5, a.1; De Veritate q.1, a.10; In V Metaphys., lectio 22, In VI Metaphys., lectio 4

It looks as though the trait of being false/unreal is not in things.¹

c.8;
PL 32, 890 (1) Augustine says in the *Soliloquies II*, "If the true is that which is, then, no matter who objects, one must hold that the false isn't."²

c.36;
PL 34, 152 (2) Besides, 'false' is applied to what deceives one. *Things* do not deceive one. After all, "they display nothing but their appearance [*speciem*]," as Augustine says in *De vera religione*. Therefore, the trait of being false/deceptive is not found in things.

q.16, a.1 (3) Moreover, it was said above that 'true/real' is applied to things relative to God's understanding. But each and every *thing*, in every way it is, resembles God [*i.e.* matches His understanding]. Therefore, each and every *thing* is true/real, with no falseness. Therefore no *thing* is false/unreal.

c.34
PL 34, 150 ON THE OTHER HAND, there is a remark in *De vera religione*: "each body is a true body and a false unity," Augustine says, because it simulates a unity and is not a unity. Well, everything simulates the divine goodness and yet falls short of it. Ergo there is falsehood/deceptiveness in everything.

ANSWER: since 'true' and 'false' are opposite terms, and we attach such terms to the same kind of subject, we have to start looking for falsity where we first find

trueness, namely, in an understanding. Neither trueness nor falsity is found in *things* except as they are related to an understanding. Next, an item is described — *unqualifiedly* in terms of what belongs to the item intrinsically, but only — *in a qualified sense* in terms of what belongs to the item incidentally.

So an item can be called unqualifiedly a false/not-real one only in relation to an understanding on which it depends, to which it is thus related intrinsically, while, in relation to another understanding, to which the item is related accidentally, it can only be called false/not-real in a qualified sense. Natural things depend on God's understanding, as artificial ones do on man's.

As an unqualified description, 'false/faulty' is applied to artificial things in themselves, to the extent that they fall short of the form set by craftsmanship.* A human artisan is said to make "a faulty job of it" [*opus falsum*] when he falls short of skilled work. By the same token, in things depending on God, falsity/faultiness cannot be found *vis-à-vis* God's understanding, because whatever turns up in things comes out of the plans[†] set by God's understanding — with no exceptions but possibly voluntary agents, who have it in their power to withdraw themselves from a plan set by divine understanding; and therein lies the evil of moral fault [*malum culpae*]. Thanks to this, the Bible calls sins "falsehoods" and "lies," as in Psalm 4:2, "Why do ye love vanity and seek after the lie?" But virtuous conduct is called the "truth of life," because it is subject to the plan set by divine understanding, as in John 3:21, "he that doeth the truth cometh unto the light."

* ars

† ordines

†g. v.1

¹ The issue is whether adjectives like 'false', 'not real', and 'deceptive' have application to extra-propositional things.

² Augustine's argument works best when 'verus' is given the meaning of 'real', so that 'falsus' becomes 'unreal': if what is is the real, then the unreal does not exist.

But as a description that is not unqualified but meant only in a qualified sense, 'false/deceptive' can be applied to natural things *vis-à-vis* our understanding, to which they are only related coincidentally. This happens on two bases.

- (1) The first is by being mentioned. What is mentioned or represented in a false statement (or false understanding) is called "false" among things.³ In this way, anything can be called false/not-really-so with respect to a trait it does not have. An example is when we call a diameter a false commensurable (as Aristotle did in *Metaphysics V*); another case is Augustine's calling a tragic actor a "false Hector" in *Soliloquies II* [c. 10]. (The opposite usage is that anything can be called true/really-so with respect to a trait it does have.)
- (2) The other is by being a cause. We call false/deceptive a thing apt to give rise to a false opinion about itself. It is natural to us* to judge things by their overt appearances, as our cognition has its start in sensation. Sensation deals intrinsically[†] with overt accidents. Things that bear in their overt appearances a likeness to other things are called "false" examples of those other things. Gall is "false honey," and tin is "false silver." It is in this sense that Augustine says in *Soliloquies II* [c. 6] that "the things we call false are those we apprehend as like the true." And Aristotle says in *Metaphysics V* [c. 29] that "we call false whatever is apt to look different from how it really is, or from what it really is." In this sense also, a human being is called false/deceptive because he is much

³ Cf. "The applicant gave a false address."

given to dishonest opinions or statements (not because he can make them [unwittingly], because then even wise and scientific persons would be called deceptive, as we are told in *Metaphysics V*).

c. 29;
1025a.2

TO MEET THE OBJECTIONS — *ad* (1): when a thing is looked at in relation to an understanding, it is called true/really-so thanks to what it is and false/not-really-so thanks to what it is not. Thus a real actor is a false Hector, as it says in *Soliloquies II*. In the things that exist, then, what it takes to be false/not-real is present in the same way as a "not-being" is present.⁴

ad (2): things do not deceive us "of themselves" [*per se*], but they do so coincidentally. They provide an occasion for our getting-them-wrong [*occurio falsitatis*] by bearing a resemblance to other things without having the actual being [*existentiam*] of those things.

ad (3): things are not called false/fauly/deceptive in comparison to God's understanding (which would be their being such *unqualifiedly*) but in comparison to our understanding, which is their being such *in a qualified sense* only.

ad (4) [against the point ON THE OTHER HAND]: simulation or representation can fall short without inducing what it takes to be false/deceptive. It introduces the latter only to the extent that the simulation provides occasion for false opinion. We do not say there is a "deceptive thing" wherever there is a resemblance. We only talk that way where there is a certain kind of resemblance, the kind that is apt to cause (not in every case but commonly enough) a false opinion to arise.

⁴ A not-being is a mind-dependent entity for Aquinas; so a thing is falsely ϕ only in relation to a mind thinking of ϕ .

Cajetan's Commentary

Analysis of the article

The title is clear. — In the body of the article, he does three jobs. (1) He explicates the unqualified *vs.* the qualified sense of saying that a *thing* is false/not-real. (2) He lays down two conclusions answering the question, the first being that no unqualified falsity/unreality is found in items whose being depends on God, with the possible exception of voluntary agents. (3) The second conclusion is that a qualified falsity/unreality is found in things on two bases.

it. As for job (1), Aquinas proposes to say that unqualified thing-falseness lies in the thing's diverging from the understanding on which it depends, while qualified thing-falseness lies in its divergence from an understanding of which it exists independently. The two ideas are supported together, as follows.

[*Antecedent:*] 'True/genuine' and 'false/unreal' are contraries; so [*1st inference:*] where the former is

found first-off is where the latter is found first-off. Hence [*2nd inference:*] the trait of being false is found in an understanding, not in things themselves except as related to an understanding. So [*3rd inference:*] an unqualified falsity of things would lie in their diverging from an understanding to which they relate "intrinsically": hence [*4th inference:*] in diverging from an understanding they depend on. So [*5th inference:*] a thing's qualified falsity would lie in its diverging from an understanding to which it relates coincidentally; hence [*6th inference:*] in diverging from one it does not depend on.¹

¹ The intrinsic situation amounts to this: if there is an act (or class of acts) of understanding, *U*, independently of which there are no things of the kind *K*, then a *K*-thing relates intrinsically [*per se*] to *U*. The coincidental situation is: if there is another act (or class of acts) of understanding, *U*, such that there are *K*-things whether or not any act of *U* occurs, then a *K*-thing relates *per accidens* to any act of *U*, that does occur.

The first inference is supported on the ground that contrary terms are applied to the same kind of subject. The second is also supported, on the ground that truthness is in an understanding, not in things themselves, except as related to an understanding. The third rests on the ground that anything's unqualified description comes from what belongs to it intrinsically. The fourth rests on the ground that a thing relates intrinsically to an understanding on which it depends [for its existence]. The fifth and sixth inferences are then supported by points opposite to those supporting the third and fourth, *i.e.* that things get qualified descriptions from [their relation to] an understanding to which they relate incidentally, and that they relate incidentally to one on which they do not depend [for their existence].

iii. As to job (2), in answer to the article's title-question, the first conclusion, namely, that unqualified falsity/faultiness is not found in things depending on God (unless perhaps in voluntary agents), is supported thus. [*Antecedent:*] Natural things depend on God's understanding as artificial ones do on human understanding; so [*1st inference:*] an unqualified falsity/faultiness of natural things would lie in their diverging from God's understanding; so [*2nd inference:*] there is no unqualified falsity/faultiness in things depending on God, unless perhaps in voluntary agents.

The antecedent is taken for granted. The [first] inference is supported on the ground that artificial things are called unqualifiedly false/faulty when they fall sort of a form set by skill. This becomes clear from usage. We say someone produced "faulty grammar" when he fell short of the grammatical art. ("Fell short" is not taken just negatively here, but oppositionally, which is the same as diverging. Just negatively falling short makes a product incomplete/imperfect, but oppositionally falling short makes it faulty [*falsum*]. So hereafter, to make the sense clearer, I speak of divergence). The second inference is supported thus. All the traits that turn up in things (except in those that can withdraw themselves from the divine understanding's plan) flow from what divine understanding has planned; ergo, in things depending on God [there is no divergence from His understanding, hence no falseness or faultiness] *etc.* The exception is confirmed directly by Biblical authority; use of the opposite term (*i.e.*, 'truth of life' for virtuous conduct) is confirmed by it, too.

Three clarifications

iv. Pay attention to three points here. (1) The text says "natural things" depend on God's understanding, as artificial ones depend on ours; and yet the inference drawn is not just

so in natural things [falseness would be ...]

but a broader one:

so in things dependent on God [it would ...]

Aquinas does this because judging about "all things" and "natural things" is the same. For insofar as they depend on God, *all things* have what suits them laid

down for them in what they *must* (apart from voluntary agents) conform to.

(2) Everything other than God can stand to God's understanding in two ways:

- (a) as things known stand to the knower, or
- (b) as things normed stand to their norm (or as things regulated stand to the rule for them).

If things are compared to God's understanding in way (a), there is no difference between volitional agents and all the other creatures when it comes to "withdrawing" from the relation tying them to God's understanding. For all things are equally "naked and opened unto His sight." Rather, the difference in question emerges if things are compared to God's understanding in way (b). For in things not acting by volition, nothing turns up that does not flow from some plan [*ordo*] regulated by divine understanding (though the plan may not suit a particular individual very well, as one sees with the deformed). But in things acting by volition, moral deformity turns up without flowing from any plan set by God (for He has established no plan of things out of which moral fault would arise; nor is there any norm in God to which moral fault would conform); rather, moral deformity comes from a free will's potential to choose sin, and such a choice, as such a choice, is not from God. Neither intrinsically nor even incidentally is such a choice from God, as is seen from other texts.²

(3) Aquinas says, "with no exception but possibly the case of voluntary agents," not because he has any doubt about it, but because it is *not necessary* that such faultiness be found in voluntary agents (or perhaps because his conclusions about voluntary agents have not been presented yet).

Analysis resumed

v. The second conclusion, namely, that qualified falsity/not-reality is in things on two bases,

is made clear as follows. [*Antecedent:*] Natural things, viewed in their relation to our understanding, are both objects-mentioned and causes. At times they are men-

² Many points deserve attention here, but let this one suffice: Cajetan has highlighted the difference between the relation $x \mathcal{R} U_x$ (whereby a thing x verifies a descriptive understanding of it, U_x) and the relation $x \mathcal{R} U_s$ (whereby x conforms to specifications set in a normative grasp of how x is-to-be-made). I pointed out this difference above in discussing Aquinas' account of thing-*veritas*. Exactly parallel relations now have to be acknowledged in the account of thing-*falsitas*. For a thing can also elude understanding in both ways; it can falsify a description of it and can diverge from the specifications for how it is-to-be. *Vis-à-vis* human acts of understanding, many things not only can but do falsify them, and many human products do diverge from the humanly set norms. But *vis-à-vis* the divine understanding (which is a unique Act, rich enough in content to be both descriptive and normative at once), nothing can falsify it in any way, but something can diverge from it in a certain respect. A created agent endowed with free choice can diverge morally.

tioned in terms of what is not in them,³ and some of them are apt to give rise to a false opinion about them-

³ The phrase 'in them' in 'sometimes things are mentioned in terms of what is not in them' [*significantur quandoque secundum id quod non inest*], carries no metaphysical freight. It just means that things are sometimes spoken of in terms which they falsify.

selves; so [*inference*:] in both ways a qualified falseness can be said to be in them. — The antecedent is obvious case-by-case* in all its parts. The inference is supported by the definition [*ratio*] of 'false'. Both parts of the conclusion are also supported by authorities (Augustine and Aristotle), as one sees in the text. All the points are clear.

* *inductivè*

Is the trait of being false/deceptive in the senses?

1 ST q 85, a.6, *De Veritate* q.1, a.2; *In De Anima III, lectio 6, In IV Metaphys., lectio 12*

It seems that there is no falseness in our senses.

c. 33;
PL 34, 149 (1) After all, in *De vera religione*, Augustine says, "If the body's senses all notify us as they are affected, I don't know what more to ask of them." So it seems we are not deceived by our senses, and so falseness/deceptiveness is not in a sense-power.

c. 5,
1010b.2 (2) Also, "falseness is not the proper object of any sense but is attained by the imagination," says Aristotle in *Metaphysics IV*.

(3) Besides, there is no true and false in non-propositional expressions, but only in propositions. [Propositions affirm or deny something.] But affirming and denying are not the business of the senses. So, in a sense-power there is no falsity.

c. 6;
PL 32, 890 ON THE OTHER HAND, there is what Augustine says in *Soliloquies II*: "Evidently, we are deceived in all our senses by alluring resemblances."

q. 16, a. 2 I ANSWER: the only way to look for falseness/deception in the senses is the way one looks for truthness there. How truthness is in sensation in not that a sense-power cognizes truth, but only that it has a genuine apprehension of the sense-qualities (as I said above). This latter occurs because a sense apprehends things as they are. So, falseness occurs in a sense when it apprehends or "judges" things other than they are.

However, the way a sense is set to cognize things is the way their likeness is in the sense, and there are three ways in which an item's likeness is in a sense:

- * *primo et per se* (1) firstly and of itself,* as the likeness of a color is in vision (and as likenesses of other sense-qualities are in the senses properly handling them);
- † *per se sed non primo* (2) of itself but not firstly,† as the likeness of a shape or size is in vision (and as likenesses of other "common" sense objects are in one's senses);

- ‡ *nec primo nec per se sed per accidens* (3) neither firstly nor of itself, but accident-wise,‡ as the likeness of a man is not in vision because he is a man, but because this color-patch happens to be a man.¹

¹ A man counted only "accident-wise" as a sense-object because he was not seen or felt *qua* man but *qua* colored, or *qua* smooth. In other words, being-a-man was not itself a sense-quality (*sensibile*). The genuine sense-qualities were divided into the "common" and the "proper." Size and shape were common *sensibilia* because two sense-powers (sight and touch) could contribute. The trait of being-thus-shaped was a sense-quality but was not one directly (*primo*), because sight could only discern a shape *via* contrast of colors, touch *via* contrast of feels. Color and smoothness, finally, were "proper" *sensibilia*, because just one sense handled each distinctively and registered each "firstly" or directly. Aquinas called these *sensibilia* "likenesses" but used the word so broadly that he would not have been embarrassed by the fact that these *sensibilia* are causal consequences, not replicas.

Regarding the sense-qualities that a sense processes distinctively,* the sense does not have false cognition, unless it should occur abnormally and irregularly† (as when the sense organ is damaged or indisposed, so that the sense does not receive the sense-form correctly). In much the same way, other passive potencies are led to receive the impression of what acts upon them in a deficient way, thanks to their own indisposition; thus sweet things seem bitter to sick people because of corruption on the tongue.²

Regarding the "common" sense objects, however, and things sensed accident-wise, there can be a false judgment even in [the case of] a sense that is well disposed, because a sense does not process those objects directly but only as incidentals or consequences of its processing other items.³

TO MEET THE OBJECTIONS — *ad* (1): a sense's "being affected" is identically its act of sensing. So, from the fact that our senses notify us "as they are affected," it follows that we are not wrong in the judging by which we judge *that we are sensing something*. But thanks to the fact that a sense is sometimes affected differently from how the thing is, it follows that it sometimes notifies us of the thing differently from how it is. Hence, we are deceived by a sense about the thing, but not about the very act of sensing.⁴

ad (2): false/deceptive is not called a proper sense-object, because a sense is not deceived about its proper object. Thus another translation reads more clearly, thus: "sensation of a proper sense-object is not false." Rather, the trait of being false/not-real is attributed to a product of imagination,[‡] because imagination presents the likeness of a thing even when the thing is not there. So when a person adverts to the likeness as if it were

* *propria sensibilia*
† *per accidens et in paucioribus*

‡ *phantasia*

² Because the eye never (or hardly ever) registers the hue of a color-patch wrongly, the ear never mishears a pitch, etc., some philosophers have tried to take the proper *sensibilia* as the parade-case examples of what-there-is, i.e. they have tried to hold ontology hostage to empiricist epistemology. Cf Russell's Logical Atomism.

³ Sensation can be unsuccessful without abnormality, and Aquinas thought the basic problem was misidentification (I took that brown spot for a haystack; so I "didn't see" your hut). Whether this happens by conscious judgment or pre-consciously (as when one is tricked by a "Gestalt!"), Aquinas seems to reckon the mistake to a "judging" in the sense-power itself (which is then transmitted to the intellect). A common term for this "sensory judging" was *aestmatio*.

⁴ Aquinas was drawing the same distinction as Alvin Plantinga has done in *Warrant and Proper Function*. A judgment to the effect that one is seeing (such as "I am appeared to redly") is incorrigible, if one's optic nerves are working right, whereas a judgment about the thing (such as "I am seeing a tomato") can be wrong, as when one is standing by a bowl of wax fruit.

c 29;
1024b 22-25

the thing itself, falseness arises from such apprehension. This is why Aristotle also says in *Metaphysics V* that shadows, pictures, and dreams are called “false” on the ground that they present images of things not

there to support the images.

ad (3): this argument succeeds in showing that falseness is not in a sense as in a faculty *cognizing* true and false.

Cajetan’s Commentary

The title is made clear by how the article starts.

In the body of the article, he does two jobs: (1) he clarifies the force of the title-question; (2) he answers it, starting at “However, the way a sense is set ...”

ii. As to job (1), he says the force of the question is to ask whether a sense is ever “false,” *i.e.* in possession of a false apprehension, *i.e.* apprehending a thing other than as it is — not whether a sense is “false” in the sense of cognizing falsity or saying what is false. He supports this from [how we talk of] the “trueness” of a sense, *viz.*, that being-true is in it the same way [as being-false is] and that its being-true is a matter of apprehending a thing as it is. Thus it becomes clear what to make of “falseness” in sensation: it is a matter of apprehending a thing otherwise than as it is.

iii. As to job (2), the conclusion answering the question is this: *vis-à-vis* its distinctive object, a sensation is only wrong on an abnormal basis; but *vis-à-vis* a common or accident-wise sense-object, a sensation can be false. — The support goes thus. [*Antecedent:*] A sense power cognizes things as it is assimilated to them; [*1st inference:*] so it cognizes some items first-off and of themselves, some of themselves but not first-off, and some just accident-wise; [*2nd inference:*] so a sense power is deceived only abnormally about the sense-qualities it processes distinctively but can be deceived [while working normally] about other items.

The antecedent is obvious. The first inference is supported on the ground that assimilation is found three ways in a sense-power: firstly-and-of-itself, *etc.* The second inference is not supported in the text, except by the fact that a sense-power relates directly to its firstly-and-of-itself object but relates only by way of consequence or accident-wise to other objects. But in the next article after this one a supporting argument

is given. As for the exception clause, “unless it should occur abnormally ...,” Aquinas clarifies what sort of abnormality he means (indisposition of the sense organ) and supports his claim on the ground that this is common to all passive potencies, *i.e.*, that their indisposition impedes their receiving a form. The exception clause is also confirmed by experience with our sense of taste.

Understanding the answer *ad* (1)

iv. In the answer *ad* (1), think of the different ways of considering sensation discussed in *De Veritate* q.1. a.2. First, sensation is considered two ways: (1) as it cognizes a thing *x*, and (2) as it transmits to a higher faculty. Then the latter is considered two ways: (2a) as a reality in its own right, and (2b) as indicative of *x*. In this article, sensation has been treated in way (1), and what has been said is that sensation is “true” *vis-à-vis* the sense-quality it distinctively handles, *etc.* But when we look at sensation in way (2a), as a reality transmitting itself in act to a higher faculty, then a sensation is always true/genuine unqualifiedly (just like any other reality, according to the result of the previous article). And this is how Augustine was looking at it in the passage cited [from *De Veritate*]. But when we look at sensation in way (2b), as an announcer of *x*, it is sometimes false/deceptive cause-wise, because it is apt to make a false estimation about *x*. So sensation always makes a true estimate of its own disposition but does not always make a true estimate of how the *x* sensed is disposed. This is what the text is driving at by distinguishing the two judgments derived from sensation, the one about the sense itself in act vs. the one about the thing sensed. We are not fooled by our senses about the former, but about the latter.¹

¹ So a safe analysis of ‘I see Joe’ does not begin with ‘ $\exists x(1 \text{ see } x \ \& \ x = \text{Joe})$ ’, but with ‘ $\exists x(1 \text{ see } x \ \& \ 1 \text{ take } x \text{ for } \text{Joe})$ ’.

Is falseness in an understanding?

1 ST q 58, a.5; q 85, a.6; In I Sent. d 19, q 5, a.1 ad 7; 1 CG c.59; 3 CG c.108; De Veritate q.1, a.12; In I Periherm., lectio 3; In III De Anima, lectio 11, In VI Metaphys., lectio 4; In IX Metaphys., lectio 11

It seems that falsity is not in an understanding.

q 32, Pl. 40, 22 (1) Augustine says in his *Book of 83 Questions*, "Whoever gets a thing wrong, at the point he went wrong, did not understand." But 'false' is said of a cognition because one went wrong in it. Ergo, falsity is not in an understanding.

c.10, 433a 26 (2) Besides, Aristotle says in *De Anima III* that "understanding" is always right. So there is no falsity in understanding.

c.6, 430a 27 ON THE OTHER HAND, there is what it says elsewhere in *De Anima III*: "Where there is a putting together of understandings, there is the true and the false. But a putting-together of understandings takes place in understanding; so true and false arise in an understanding.

I ANSWER: as a thing has its act-of-being through a form distinctive to it, so an ability to cognize has its act-of-cognizing through [a form distinctive to it, *i.e.*] a likeness of the thing cognized. But just as a natural thing does not fail to have the being belonging to it because of its form and yet can fail to have certain incidental or consequent traits (as a human being can fail to have two feet but cannot fail to have what it is to be human), so also an ability to cognize does not fail to take cognizance of the item with whose likeness it is informed but can fail to capture anything consequent upon, or incidental to, that likeness. In the same way, I said above that sight is not deceived about the sense-quality it distinctively handles but can go wrong about a common sense-quality consequent thereto or about things that are only incidentally sense objects.

q.16, a.2 Now, just as a sense-power is informed directly by a likeness of the sense-qualities it handles distinctively, so also the intellect is informed by a likeness of a "whatness" [*quidditas*] of the thing. So the intellect is not deceived about a what-something-is (as a sense does not go wrong about a sense-quality it handles distinctively), but it can be deceived in affirming and denying — when it attributes, to the thing of which it understands a whatness, some trait that does not arise from that whatness or some trait that is opposed to it. In other words, the intellect stands to such matters as a sense stands to "judging" common sense-qualities or incidental sense-objects — but with this difference (noted above in connexion with trueness): falsity can be in an understanding not only because the intellect's cognizing is faulty but also because the intellect knows falsity (as it knows truth), whereas falsity is not present as a known in a sense-power, as I said above [in a.2].¹

¹ The modern reader needs to ponder two points here. First, Aquinas's account of intellection was so much like his

Now, because intellectual falsity attaches directly only to a claim put together by the intellect, if any of the intellect's claim-making gets involved in the operation by which it cognizes a what-it-is, there can be falsity in that operation also, incidentally. There are two ways this can happen:

- (1) because the intellect applies its definition of one thing to another thing (as would happen if it applied its definition of a circle to a man);
- (2) because the intellect combines in one account parts that cannot be joined, in which case the account is not just false of this or that, but false in itself. (Thus if it formed the account 'four-footed rational animal', the intellect so defining would be false/faulty, because it would be going wrong in putting together the claim 'some rational animal is four-footed'). For this reason, in cognizing simple whatnesses, an intellect cannot go wrong; it either gets it right or else understands nothing at all.²

account of sensation that, despite deeming the intellect a spiritual faculty, he treated its operation of simple apprehension in a "naturalized" manner. Just as a thing cooperated physically with a sense's mechanism, if this was working, to cause an imprint of itself in sense-quality, so the same thing caused in the intellect (in cooperation with its mechanism, if working all right) an imprint of itself in "whatness." (For Kant, of course, the causing went the other way: a thing-in-itself had no "whatness" to impress, but the mind had a "concept" to impose.) Well, the main problem for a theory like Aquinas' is that of *misunderstanding*. Why don't understood things just "develop" on the mind like photographs on film? Aquinas tackled this along the same lines as he tackled *misperception*.

The other point to ponder is what a "whatness" is. Aquinas did not identify every "whatness" of a thing *x* with an "essence of *x*." He did not think that, upon noticing *x*, an intellect in normal working condition just automatically grasped the structure that would optimally classify *x* for scientific purposes and yield the most fruitful "theory of *x*." That essential structure was just *one* whatness of *x*, the hardest to get at, and the last to be reached in concept acquisition. Intellectual cognition started, rather, with a quite superficial whatness, expressed in a "concept of *x*" suited to do nothing deeper than secure reliable reference to *x*. After all, any judgment of mine about *x* presupposes enough understanding-of-*x* to support my referring to *x*, and that much understanding is already a whatness, namely, what-it-is-I-am-talking-about.

³ Think of 'definition' here as what guides one in referring to something; beneath the poor examples, one can then see a valuable point. Sometimes successful reference does not draw upon prior judgment; sometimes it does, and whenever it does, it can go wrong (think of definite descriptions). To see that some successes must be "simple," *i.e.* prior to any judgment, think of one's very first judgment; to make it, one must have *understood* some topic well enough to have referred to it.

TO MEET THE OBJECTIONS — *ad* (1): as a whatness of a thing is understanding's distinctive object, we are said to "really" understand something when we reduce it to what-it-is [definitively] and judge about it accordingly; this is what goes on in conclusive proofs,* and there is no falsity in them. This is how to understand Augustine's dictum that "whoever gets a thing wrong, at the point he went wrong, did not understand." He should not be taken to say that one's understanding does not go wrong in any of its operations.³

* demonstrations

³ Aquinas would have been helped here by the difference between a process verb (like 'run') and an achievement verb (like 'win'). Augustine was using '*intelligere*' as an achievement verb, as we still often use 'understand'; and as so used, it means 'get it right.' But for Aquinas '*intelligere*' was a process verb (with a meaning like 'conceptualize a thing thus or so'); to allow room for Augustine's dictum, then, he had to take it as talking about not just any exercise of understanding

ad (2): understanding is always right insofar as it is an understanding of first principles: it is not deceived about these, for the same reason as it is not deceived about a what-it-is. For the self-verifying* first principles are those that are acknowledged as soon as their terms are understood, thanks to the fact that the term they predicate is in the definition of their subject.⁴

* per se nota

but the optimal kind, as happen in the successes of science.

⁴ "First principles" can be those basic to language competence, such as 'A bachelor is an unmarried man', where the predicate is the *sense* with which ordinary speakers use the subject, or they can be the "principles" of a formal science, where the predicate is in the scientific account of the subject. Aquinas called all such principles *per se* and often wrote as though he thought them all necessary truths; but in this article he distinguished (Quine fans take note): if the sense of *S* derives from false prior judgments, '*S* is *P*' is worthless despite *P*'s being in the sense or *ratio* of *S*.

Cajetan's Commentary

The title is clear. — In the body of the article, three issues are settled: (1) in which [sort of] understanding there is or is not falsity; (2) how falsity is found in the sort where it is native (at the words "— but with this difference..."); (3) how and when falsity spills over from that sort to the sort where it is not native (at the beginning, "Now, because intellectual falsity ...").

The first issue

ii. On the first issue, the conclusion is this: falsity does not lie in understanding a what-it-is but in putting together an affirmation or denial. This conclusion is supported by an argument and is also illuminated (both in itself and in its supporting argument) by the proportional resemblance between the intellect and a sense power.

The argument goes as follows. [*Antecedent:*] A natural thing does not fail to have the being- ϕ that belongs to it because of its own form but can fail to have traits accidental thereto or consequent thereon; so [*1st inference:*] an ability to cognize does not fail to take cognizance of the item with whose likeness it is informed but may fail to cognize traits accidental or consequent; so [*2nd inference: 1st part:*] an intellect is not deceived about a what-it-is but [*2nd part:*] may go wrong in putting together an affirmation or denial. —

* inductive in homine

The antecedent is supported by the example of a man.* The first inference is supported thus. As a thing stands to being- ϕ through its form, so a cognitive ability stands to cognizing-this-item through a likeness of the item cognized; ergo, if a thing cannot fail to be- ϕ , [a cognitive ability cannot fail to cognize-this-item], *etc.* The second inference is supported as to its first part on the ground that an intellect is informed with the

likeness of a whatness; its second part rests on the ground that what may happen in putting together a judgment is that something is attributed to a whatness that either doesn't follow from it or is opposed to it.¹

The proportional resemblance is this: as eyesight stands to the sense-quality it distinctively handles, so the intellect stands to a what-it-is; and as the former is informed directly by a likeness of its proper sense-quality, so the latter is informed by the likeness of a whatness. So there is falsity/faultiness in neither *as so informed*. And as sight stands to common sense-qualities and things only incidentally sensible, so intellect stands to judging about traits consequent upon or incidental to a whatness (which judging takes the form of affirming or denying). Thus falsity/faultiness can arise in both.

Clarifications on the first issue

iii. Concerning the antecedent in the above argument, notice that it can be well or badly interpreted —

- badly, if it is taken to mean that a natural thing's having its form cannot fail (for this is only true in things immune to corruption)
- well, if taken to mean that a natural thing's having its form cannot fail while the natural thing itself remains (and this is what the text intends).

¹ Cajetan's talk of what can happen in making a judgment replicates Aquinas' talk and is equally misleading, unless one realizes that 'whatness' here does not mean a *conceptual content* (as if judgments were typically about what is entailed by or compatible with such a content) but means a *thing under a description*. A typical judgment refers to some *thing*, *x*, under a description, *S*, used as the judgment's subject; the predicate, *P*, may or may not match the *thing* *x* referred to, and being-*P* may or may not follow from (or go with) *x*'s being *S*.

Hence Aquinas does not say that no natural thing can fail: he says rather that it can't fail "to have the act-of-being belonging to it because of its form." It's as if he said: nothing having a form ϕ -ness *so long as it has it* can fail to have the being- ϕ that accrues to it according to that form. This proposition is self-verifying,* because being- ϕ belongs in the scientific account of "a form ϕ -ness," as one sees in *Metaphysics VII* [c.4].²

* *per se nota*

iv. Concerning the support for the first inference, namely, the proportional statement to the effect that as a ϕ -thing has its act of being- ϕ through its own form, so a cognitive ability has its act of cognizing [this thing] through a likeness of the thing cognized, notice that

† *in genere cognoscibilit*

‡ *in genere intelligibilit*

- the act of cognizing is the very being that the cognitional likeness [*species cognoscibilis*] yields when it is really in act in its cognitional kind¹ (as we have said before [in § xvi of the comment on q.12, a.2]), and that
- the act of understanding is the very being that the intellectual likeness [*species intelligibilis*] yields when it is in act in its intensional kind,² not when it is in the intermediate mode of an existent.³

Thus the following point is common to every cognitive ability, be it of the sensory order or the intellectual order, namely, that the act of cognizing-this is the being yielded by the likeness [*species*] through which the ability cognizes, taking that likeness (whatever it may be) in act in its cognitional kind (whatever its being-in-act may be in its kind as a being⁴).⁴ This is a very important point to keep in mind, if one is to understand the sensory part of man and his intellect.

§ *in genere entium*

The second issue

v. As for the second issue, the conclusion is this: in the sort of understanding that is "judging," falsity appears in two ways: form-wise and object-wise. — This is both supported and clarified. It is supported on the ground that truth appears in the same sort of understanding in the same two ways. It is clarified by the contrast with the senses, as you can see.⁵

² The citation is not clear; cf. 1029b 14 or 1030a 25. The point, apparently, is that the correct definition of any "form," say ϕ -ness, would say: 'what a ϕ -thing is'. So the proposition, 'Anything having the form ϕ -ness is ϕ ' will be seen to have its predicate in the *ratio* of its subject.

³ *i.e.*, not when the likeness is just habitually present in the mind.

⁴ In other words, the physics of the likeness, which determines what kind of a being it is, is irrelevant to the role it plays in cognition, where all that matters is its *function* as a likeness-of-this. See the commentary on q.14, a.1, note 4.

⁵ Falsity crops up form-wise in the making of a false judgment, *p*; it crops up object-wise in making the judgment that '*p*' is false. The senses can misperceive but cannot perceive their misperceiving (much less judge that they misperceive).

The third issue

vi. On the third issue, a conclusion is put down with a corollary it carries. The conclusion is that falsity is incidentally present in grasping a what-it-is. — This is supported and also clarified. The support goes this way. [*Antecedent:*] Falsity is only present of itself [*per se*] in a putting together of understandings; so [*1st inference.*] it gets into grasping a what-it-is only to the extent that a putting together gets involved; so [*2nd inference:*] falsity turns up incidentally in such a grasp. — All the inferences are obvious. The first one, after all, is based on the general point that [for any term *T*], other things are called *T* from the firstly *T*-thing because the others participate in it, as one sees in *Posterior Analytics I*.⁶ The second inference rests on the fact that [a what-it-is need not arise out of multiple understandings, because] being put together [out of multiple understandings] is not a trait that defines "a what-something-is" (as is also obvious).

This conclusion is then clarified by sorting out the two ways in which putting-together can get mixed into an understanding bearing on what-something-is. The first way is a matter of putting an account together with a thing explained; the second is a matter of putting together parts of an account itself, as is plain in the text. The two ways differ in that going wrong in the second way makes the what-it-is *false in itself*, while going wrong in the first way just makes it *false of this*.

The corollary this carries is that an understanding cannot be wrong in cognizing simple whatnesses; either it is true, or else it is no understanding at all.

Doubts about the third issue

vii. Concerning this corollary and the first way falsity is supposed to get into this kind of understanding, doubt arises.

- For one thing, attaching an account to a thing it is supposed to explain lies outside understanding a what-it-is. The grasp of a line's what-it-is does not say,

(1) A line is a length whose ends are two points, but just

length whose ends are two points.

This, after all, is a definition, which is all that an intellect bears upon for its first operation [*i.e.* for "simple" *i.e.* non-propositional apprehension], while the whole

(1) A line is a length whose ends are two points is pronounced by the intellect [doing its second operation, *i.e.*] judging, just like

(2) A line is a curve, or

(3) A line is straight.

So why should the falsity of (1) compromise the intellect's first operation any more than the falsity of (2) does?

⁶ The exact passage meant is again elusive. Here the term in question is 'false', and the point is that other kinds of understanding are called false because they share somehow in the kind that is firstly called false.

• For another thing, this way of going wrong would turn up in connexion with simple whatnesses as well as composite ones. The simplest concept you please can be attached to something it does not fit as a whatness. So error is possible “incidentally” even in understanding simple whatnesses, contrary to what Aquinas seems to say in the corollary.

Resolving the doubts

viii. To clear these up, you need to know that how an item stands to *being* is how it stands to *being-known*, and so the difference between a definition’s nexus-with-the-thing-defined and its nexus-with-other-traits makes all the difference between having to know the former and not having to know the latter. After all, the nexus of an account with a thing defined is what gives the account the status of being a what-it-is; no account is a whatness except to the extent it is the whatness of *something*. So no act of cognizing a whatness occurs, unless what is cognized is the nexus of an account with a thing defined. For if an account were thought without thinking what it is an account of, no whatness would be thought, but just the sense of a word. A chap apprehending an account that way would be like one who forms the concept “mountain of gold” or any other figure formed out of compatible ideas. But a whatness’s nexus with other traits or conditions is quite different, because what it takes to be a whatness remains intact without them. A whatness, then, in order to *be*, essentially requires what it is a whatness of (though it may not require this or that individual), and this is why it requires the same in order to *be known*. Thus the nexus in question pertains to the intellect’s first operation, just as the joining of a definition’s parts does (though the latter may pertain more tightly).⁷

Next, the nexus of the account with the thing defined, if considered in itself,* arises from the fact that the thing defined is a composite thing (if it were not composed, it would not allow, on its part, an account to be abstracted from it, since nothing is abstracted as itself from nothing but itself[†]); ergo, if a whatness is

* *secundum se*

† *secundum se ab omni seipso*

⁷ Cajetan’s solution to this first *dubium* is of the highest interest, because it conflicts with Thomism as conventionally understood since the 16th century. The conventional view has been that a whatness is a concept, which, once abstracted, serves as the meaning of a word, which is the descriptive force captured by a dictionary in the word’s definition; in sum, a whatness is a *sense*. Well, this is precisely what Cajetan says a whatness is not. He says it is a *sense joined or applied to some thing, x, i.e., a thing under a description*. So intellect’s first operation is understanding *x* in such terms as *secure reference to x*; then the intellect can do its second operation, which is to affirm or deny a predicate of *x* via the terms in which the intellect is referring to *x*. The bottom line is that Cajetan’s Thomism tackled referring, made it intellect’s first job, and so had a plausible account of judgment. Conventional Thomism forgot reference at this crucial stage and so yielded the implausible, conceptualist account of judgment that one finds in Suarez and the Port Royal *Logic*.

found which is so simple as to be the whatness of an uncomposed thing, there can be no error about it on its part, as there is no composition to it. — The answer to the objections [*i.e.* the doubts] is thereby clear.⁸

Understanding the answer *ad* (1)

ix. In the answer *ad* (1), notice that the reason a whatness is called an intellect’s distinctive object is because intellect in general stands to a whatness as sight stands to a color, so that intellect cognizes a whatness “firstly and of itself” and is completed and moved “firstly and of itself” by a whatness alone. The reason is:

- (a) because the intellectual likeness* is firstly a whatness, as it says in the body of the article;
- (b) because implicit in “whatness-of-*x*” is cognizance of every fact[†] about what suits or disagrees with *x*, so that if one completely penetrated the what-they-are of things, one would fully understand therein all propositions about their accidents, as will emerge below in the treatise on the angels;⁹ and
- (c) because a what-it-is is cognizable of itself, while a fact is cognizable only on the basis of a what-it-is. A sign of this is the fact that we know premisses[‡] insofar as we know their terms, as it says in *Posterior Analytics I*, and we settle all doubts by resolving the issue into what-something-is.¹⁰

* *species intelligibiles*

† *complexio*

‡ *principia*

c 3;
72b 24

⁸ Cajetan’s answer to his second *dubium* confuses ‘simple’ as ‘pre-propositional’ with ‘simple’ as ‘metaphysically uncomposed’, and the result is a very radical solution, indeed. Aquinas said: anent simple whatnesses, understanding can’t go wrong (it can just fail to happen). The *dubium* objected: what about misapplication? Even the simplest concept-of-*x* can be misapplied to *y*. Cajetan answered: there can be a whatness so simple that understanding it cannot go wrong, even by misapplication, but the reason is because a whatness that simple would be of an uncomposed thing, and so no act of ours could abstract it. In other words, yes, there are infallible acts of simple apprehension, but they are all in angelic intellects, or in God’s. Aquinas’ point, I think, was more down to earth. In our most basic judgments, we succeed in referring to some *x* through a concept not derived with the help of prior judgments; such secured reference is a simple whatness, and misapplication of it (while possible) is a flat-out failure to refer to anything, hence a case where no understanding occurs at all.

⁹ Cf. the comments on 1 *ST* q. 58, a. 2. If the idea is that an angel simply apprehends the *essence* of *x* so well as to see in it every truth about *x* in all its accidents, then the idea is a non-starter (unless Leibniz is right that, covertly, every accident is in a thing’s definition). But suppose the idea is that, in one simple apprehension, the angel grasps every way of referring to *x*. Then every true judgment about *x* would be implicit in what the angel grasps, without Leibnizian moves.

¹⁰ It is a pity that Cajetan did not comment on Aquinas’ answer *ad* (2), because that answer, coupled with this article’s doctrine of how the mind’s first operation can go wrong, creates room in Thomism for revisions and revolutions in science. In human knowing, a truly irrevocable “first principle” has to have a subject whose *ratio* was grasped without dependence on prior judgments. Otherwise, the subject can have been misconceived, and the principle can be revised.

Are 'true' and 'false' contraries?

In 1 *Sent.* d.19, q.5, a.1 ad 8

It does not look as though 'true' and 'false' are contraries.

(1) After all, the true and the false are opposed as what is and what is not; for the true/real is "that which is," as Augustine says [in *Soliloquies II*]. But what is and what is not are not opposed as contraries [but as contradictories]. Therefore the true and the false are not contraries.

(2) Also, with a pair of contraries, one is not found in the other. But the false is found in the true because, as Augustine says in *Soliloquies II*, "The actor would not be a false Hector if he were not a true actor." So the true and the false are not contraries.

(3) Besides, there is no contrary to God; nothing is contrary to the divine substance, as Augustine notes in *City of God XII*. But falsehood is opposed to God; Scripture calls an idol "deceit" (as in Jeremiah 8:5, "They have held fast to deceit," which is glossed [by Jerome] as "an idol"). So [since the true God and a false god are opposed but not contraries] 'true' and 'false' are not contraries.

ON THE OTHER HAND, [in *Perihermeneias*] Aristotle takes "false opinion" to be contrary to "true opinion."

ANSWER: 'true' and 'false' are opposed the way contraries are, and not the way positive and negative predicates* are, as some writers have maintained. To see this, you need to realize the following.

* A negative predicate neither posits anything real nor determines a subject-class to which it may apply; so predicates like 'does not see' and 'does not sit' can be applied to any being or non-being.

* A privative predicate, while not positing anything real, does determine a subject-class to which it applies. It is "a negation in a subject." As Aristotle says in *Metaphysics IV*, 'blind' is only said of what is naturally such as to see.

* A contrary [as 'black' is to 'white'] both posits something real and determines a kind of subject; after

all, black is a shade of color.

Well, 'false' posits something. As Aristotle says in *Metaphysics IV*, the false arises from its being said or being supposed that "something which is not so is so, or that something which is so is not so." Thus, as 'true' posits a mental intake that matches the thing, 'false' posits a mental intake that does not match it. Obviously, then, 'true' and 'false' are contraries.

TO MEET THE OBJECTIONS — ad (1): "that which is" among things is thing-true [*i.e.* real], but "that which is" among points apprehended is a true understanding, and this is where the trait of being-true is found first. So the false, too, is [firstly] "that which is not" among points apprehended. Well, between apprehending [something] to be [thus-and-such] and apprehending [it] not to be [thus-and-such], there is contrariety. Thus [in *Perihermeneias*] Aristotle proves that 'The good is not good' is a contrary to 'The good is good'.

ad (2): the false trait is not rooted in the true trait that is contrary to it — as an evil is not rooted in the contrary good — but in a trueness/realness that underlies it as its subject. (This happens in both cases because 'true' and 'good' are general terms co-extensive with 'a being'.) So, just as every lack-of-being is rooted in a subject which is a being, so every evil is rooted in some good thing, and every false/fake trait is rooted in something true/real.

ad (3): predicates that are contrary or opposed privation-wise are such as to apply to the same subject. Thus, when God is taken in Himself, no contrary arises either to His goodness [because there can be no evil in Him] or to His truth, because there can be no falsity in His understanding. But when God is taken as apprehended by us, He has a contrary: a false opinion about Him runs contrary to a true one. Thus idols are called "deceits" opposed to the divine truth, because false belief about the idols runs contrary to the true belief about God's oneness.

In the title, 'contrary' is taken in the narrow sense in which 'contrary to' is distinguished from other senses of 'opposed to'.

Analysis of the article

In the body of the article, there is one conclusion, answering the question with yes: 'true' and 'false' are contraries. — The support goes thus. [*Antecedent:*]

'False' applies where it is said or supposed that what is so is not, or that what is not-so is so; [*1st inference:*] thus 'false' indicates a mental intake that does not match the thing; thus [*2nd inference:*] 'false' posits something and determines the sort of subject it has; ergo [*3rd inference:*] 'false' is not contradictory, nor privative, but contrary to 'true'

The antecedent is supported from *Metaphysics IV*,

c.7,
1011b 26

c.14,
23b 35

c.5;
PL 32, 889

c.10;
PL 32, 892

c.2;
PL 41, 350

PL 24, 765

c.14;
23b 35

* *affirmatio ad
negatio*

c.2;
1004a 15;
cf. 1022b 26

Cajetan's Commentary

text 27. The first inference is obvious and is confirmed by the meaning of 'true', namely, that it posits a mental intake that matches the thing. The second inference is self-evident, because a divergent *intake* is something. The last inference, however, is supported by the difference between contradictory, privative, and contrary opposites — namely, that one of the contradictories is a pure negation with no [determinate] subject, the privative term is a negation in a subject, and a contrary posits something in its subject.

ii. Notice here that the text assumes as already known and obvious the point that 'true' and 'false' are opposed; it only seeks and settles *how* they are opposed. So the third inference is not open to blame. — Also, confirming the first inference by the meaning of 'true' is highly efficacious, if you believe *Metaphysics IV* [c.7], where no disparity is posited as to what is positively indicated [by 'true' and 'false'], and yet both are defined. "The true," says Aristotle, "is [saying] that what is [such] is such and that what is not [such] is not, while the false is [saying] that what is [such] is not [so] and that what is not [such] is so." So, for the same reason that 'true' indicates a positive item (a proposition, one conforming to what-is and what-isn't), 'false' also indicates a proposition (one not conforming to either) and is not a mere negation of conformity, as was imagined by those authors whom Aristotle was criticizing in the text cited.

Explicating the first inference

iii. Going back now to the first inference (that 'false' posits a mental intake that does not match the thing), notice that it can be interpreted two ways:

- (1) Taken one way, it says that 'false' indicates form-wise a divergent mental intake, as 'black' means a color that tends to contract sight.¹
- (2) Taken the other way, it says that 'false' indicates form-wise a relation of divergence and indicates basis-wise *[fundamentaliter]* a mental intake, as 'dissimilar' means a relation but posits a quality [as the basis for the relation].²

The inference cannot be taken the first way, because then it would follow that one of the contraries, formally taken, would change into the other, which is unintelligible; one never sees white become black; rather the *thing* that is white changes to be black.

That this [unwanted] consequence would follow is clear from *Categories* [c.5], where it says that one and the same utterance gets to be true and false. For if one and the same sentence is now true, now false, and 'true' as well as 'false' form-wise indicate a sen-

tence, it has to be the case that one of the contraries formally receives the other. So, from the very fact that one and the same utterance is now true, now false, it is evident that 'true' and 'false' indicate something *about* an utterance, and not the very sentence itself. A sign that this decision [rejecting the first interpretation] is right is the fact that in the text, although we were supposed to take

'false' indicates something positive in a definite sort of subject as the minor premise, nothing more was added to this except that

'false' posits a mental intake that does not match the reality, so that one might gather therefrom that what 'false' indicates *about* the intake is the failure to match.

iv. We need to say also about this same topic that, as 'similar' and 'dissimilar' oppose each other as contraries, and can be contraries in two ways. *i.e.*

— *because of the basis*, as when a white thing similar to another white thing changes to black, which is dissimilar to white, or
 — *because of the terminus*, as would happen if the terminus [of the relation] changed into black, SO ALSO 'true' is opposed to 'false' as a contrary and can be a contrary in two ways:

- (1) on the part of the terminus, when the same utterance goes from being true to being false because of a change in the thing spoken of (one sees this plainly in contingent matters), and
- (2) on the part of the basis, when the bases themselves are contraries.

Now the basis for being-true as for being-false is the sentence or mental intake (as emerged above). But contrariety of sentences is found first-off between affirmative and negative ascriptions of the same predicate to the same subject (one of which has to be true, the other false), as was shown in *Perihermeneias*. Ergo, from first to last, an understanding is changed from true to false on the part of the basis when it goes from stating one side of a contradiction to stating the other side. By contrast, a change to being true or being false on the part of the terminus is either not really a case of contrariety (since the utterance goes from one to the other without a change in itself) or else, if accepted as the sort of real contrariety that occurs in relational matters, does not get the makings of contrariety from the change of the terminus (since change of the terminus goes both from one contrary to another and from affirmation to negation, or *vice-versa*); but a change from true to false on the part of the basis gets the makings of contrariety from the change between bases (as the intellect's shift from the affirmative opinion to the negative, or *vice-versa*, really is a shift between contraries); moreover, the contrariety of bases is what yields contrariety between true and false on the part of the terminus (for the reason 'Socrates is sitting' is said to become false when he gets up is because there is a contrary to it which is true, namely, the sen-

¹ The theory was that black was caused by paucity of light and so had the effect of limiting or contracting vision, while white came from abundance of light and so tended to expand vision. See the end of Aquinas' *De ente et essentia*.

² Two white things were called similar on the basis of their color. A white thing and a black one were called dissimilar on the same basis (the quality called color).

tence, 'Socrates is not sitting'; for unless there were contrariety between these *sentences*, a change from true to false would not have what it takes to be genuine contrariety). For all these reasons, the text makes no mention of any contrariety except that arising from the bases. And rightly so: for we mostly see the nature of the relation from the nature of its basis, in that the former is either the same as the latter or is a state it is naturally made to acquire.

Understanding the answer *ad* (2)

v. In the answer *ad* (2), please observe that 'contra-

ry' is being used there in the broad sense that also covers privative/positive opposites. This is obvious from the use of 'good' and 'evil' here as transcendentals and from the words that come next: "just as every lack-of-being is rooted in a subject which is a being, so every evil," *etc.* The author did not do this out of carelessness. As far as the force of his argument is concerned, privative/positives yield the same conclusion as contraries; and so Aquinas wanted to insinuate that his own answer would also be the same, whether the terms were opposed contrary-wise or privation-wise. Thus he taught us to broaden the talk of contrariety.



Inquiry Eighteen: Into God's status as living

Since understanding is an act of living things, now that we have considered the divine knowing and understanding, it is time to consider God's status as living. Four questions are raised about this:

- (1) to what things does the act of living belong?
- (2) what is life?
- (3) is being alive something that suits God?
- (4) are all things "life" in God?

article I

Does the act of living belong to all natural things?

In III Sent. d.35, q.1, a.1, In IV Sent. d.14, q.2, a.3, q.2, d.49, q.1, a.2, q.3, 1 CG c.97, De Veritate q.4, a.8, De Potentia q.10, a.1, In De div. nom. c.6, lectio 1; In Joan. c.17, lectio 1; In I De anima, lectio 14, In II De anima, lectio 1

An act of living seems to belong to all natural things.

c.1, 250b 14 (1) In *Physics VIII* [c. 1], Aristotle says that motion is "a sort of life, as it were, to all naturally constituted things." But all natural things share in motion. So all natural things share in life.

(2) Besides, plants are called alive because they have within themselves a source of the "motions" of growing and shrinking. But local motion is more complete and prior by nature to growing and shrinking, as is shown in *Physics VIII*. So, since all natural bodies have [in themselves] some source of local motion, it seems that all natural bodies are alive.

c.7, 260a 28ff (3) Furthermore, among natural bodies, the least complete are the elements. But life is attributed to them; we speak of "living water." *A fortiori*, the other natural bodies have life.

PG.3, 856 ON THE OTHER HAND, there is what Denis says in chapter 6 of *De divinis nominibus*: "plants have life according to the last echo of life." One can gather from this that plants occupy the lowest rung of life. But the inanimate bodies are lower than the plants. Therefore, the act-state of living does not belong to them.

IANSWER: we can learn which things have an act-state of living from those that are obviously alive. The animals are obviously alive; it says in the book *De Vegetabilibus* [actually, Aristotle's *De Plantis*] that "in animals, life is in plain sight." So, one should distinguish the living from the non-living according to the criterion by which animals are said to be alive — *i.e.* by what is first detected as life in them and last remains as life in them.

c.1; 815a 10 Well, we first say an animal is living when it starts to move on its own [*ex se*], and we judge that an animal is still alive so long as such moving appears in it. When it no longer has any movement of its own but is only moved by something else, then we say the animal is "dead" by cessation of life. From there it is evident that those things are properly-speaking "alive" that move

themselves with some kind of motion or change — whether 'change' is taken in the strict sense, in which changing is called the act of an incomplete thing (a thing existing in potency to a further trait), or is taken in a broad sense, so that even acts of a complete thing are called changing, as understanding and sensing are called changing in *De Anima III*. So, let all those things be called "living" which move themselves to any change or operation; by contrast, the things whose nature is not such as to move themselves to any change or operation cannot be called living, except by some figure of speech.

c.4,
431a 6

TO MEET THE OBJECTIONS — *ad* (1): that remark of Aristotle's can be construed as about the primordial motion (that of the heavenly bodies) or else as about motion in general. Either way, motion is called the quasi-life of natural bodies by a figure of speech, not by strict usage. [Here is why the figure seems apt.] In the universe of natural bodies, the motion of the heavens is like the heartbeat in an animal that keeps it alive. Likewise, any natural motion occurring in natural things can be compared to a vital operation. So, if the whole universe were one living thing, so that the motion in it were coming from its inwardly moving itself (as some writers have maintained), it would follow that motion was the "very life" of all natural bodies.

ad (2): heavy and light bodies can only move because they are *outside* their natural condition,* *i.e.* outside their own place: for when they are in their natural place, they [*cease* moving and] rest there. By contrast, plants and other living things exercise vital movement because they are *in* their natural condition, not approaching or leaving it (indeed, to the extent they *cease* their vital movement, they *leave* their natural condition). Also, heavy and light bodies are set in motion by an outside mover — be it what produces them by giving them their form, or what removes an obstacle to their moving, as it says in *Physics VIII*. Thus they do not move themselves, as living bodies do.

* *extra div
onem suae
rue*

c.4,
255b 35

ad (3): by figure of speech, constantly flowing water is called "living;" standing water which is not continuous with an ever-flowing source (e.g. water in cisterns and ponds) is called "still" or dead by figure of speech. Insofar as the waters look as if they were moving them-

selfes, they have a simulacrum of life; but what it really takes to be alive is not in them, because they do not have their motion from themselves but from the cause producing them, as is also the case with the motion of other heavy and light bodies.

Cajetan's Commentary

The title is clear. — In the body of the article, there is one conclusion answering the question: those things are properly-speaking "alive" that move themselves in some sort of change.

This conclusion is first supported and then explicated. The support goes thus. [*Antecedent:*] The difference between living and non-living things is to be drawn from those obviously alive; so [*1st inference:*] it is to be drawn from the life of animals; so [*2nd inference:*] it is to be drawn from the criterion whereby life is first detected in an animal and last [seen to] remain; so [*3rd inference:*] it is to be drawn from the exercise of self-movement. [*Conclusion:*] Ergo those things are properly-speaking alive that move themselves in some sort of change. — The first inference is supported by the authority of *De Vegetalibus*. The third is supported on the ground that we judge an animal to be alive so long as it shows movement on its own, etc.

The conclusion is explicated as to its terms (a) by saying that 'change' is taken broadly, and (b) by the contrast that things which do not move themselves are only called alive by a figure of speech.

Understanding the answer *ad* (2)

ii. In the answer *ad* (2), notice that the text does not intend to limit the conclusion already reached, as if to append the further clause, 'in their natural condition'. The intention, rather, is that from this difference, heavy and light things do not move *in* their natural condition, whereas living things do, you should see that only the living things, not the heavy and light ones, are up to self-movement in a non-relative sense. For thus it emerges that the motion of heavy and light things bears intrinsically upon approaching their natural completion, and so bears on finishing their process of generation; and since nothing generates itself, but its process of generation is finished by what brings it to be (and not by itself), the motion of heavy and light bodies is attributed to what brings them to be [and not to themselves]. But in the movement of living things, it is quite clear that none of this applies. And so living things alone "move themselves." — Pay close attention to these points about the motion of heavy and light bodies, because here you have a very subtle and very clear account of the matter.

article 2

Is being alive an activity?

1 *ST* q.54, a.1 ad2; In *III Sent.* d.35, q.1, a.1 ad 1; In *IV Sent.* d.49, q.1, a.2, q.3; 1 *CG* c.98, In *De div. nom.* c.6, lectio 1

* *operatio* It looks as though being alive is an activity.*

(1) After all, a generic term is only broken down into species of its kind. But being alive is broken down into certain operations, as you see Aristotle doing in c.2; *De Anima II*, where he breaks living down into four 413a22 activities: taking in nutrition, sensing, moving, and understanding. So being alive is an activity.

(2) Besides, an active life is said to be "another life" from the contemplative. Contemplatives only differ from active religious in certain activities. So "a life" is an activity.

(3) Also, knowing God is a [mental] activity. But it emerges from John 17: 3 that this is life: "This is life eternal, that they should know thee, the only true God." So, life is an activity.

ON THE OTHER HAND, there is what Aristotle says in *De Anima II*: "for living things, being alive is their existing [*vivere viventibus est esse*]." c.4; 415b13

q.17, aa.1, 3 ANSWER: as has come out in previous remarks, our understanding (whose distinctive role is cognizing as its proper object a what-it-is of a thing) receives information from the senses, whose proper objects are overt accidents. So in progressing towards knowing a thing's essence, we move from how it appears overtly. As also came out in previous remarks, we describe things as we come to know them. The upshot is: we often use words derived from overt properties to *mean* things' essences. At times, then, these words are used properly to mean what they were mainly introduced to mean, the very essences of things, and at times less properly, to mean the properties whence they were derived. An example is the word 'body', introduced to mean a class of substances because three dimensions are found in them; but sometimes 'body' is used for the dimensions themselves, since 'body' is used for a kind of quantity.¹

The same needs to be said about 'life'. The word 'life' is derived from what outwardly appears about the issue, which is self-movement. It is not used to *mean* self-movement, however, but a substance whose nature equips it to move itself or prompt itself into operation in one way or another. Thanks to this usage, 'to live' is nothing other than 'to exist in such a nature', and 'life' means to live (but in the abstract), as 'a run'

¹ The example '*corpus*' does not work in English, because in geometry we call a polyhedron a "solid," not a body. But other examples come to mind. We use 'square' to mean a plaza but also use it in geometry to mean the four-sided shape itself. We use 'tube' to mean a subway but also the three-di-

means to run (in the abstract).² So 'alive' is not an accidental predicate but a substantial one.³ — Yet sometimes 'life' is used less properly for the vital activities from which the word was derived; Aristotle uses it this way in *Ethics IX*, where he says, "living is mainly sensing or understanding."

TO MEET THE OBJECTIONS — *ad* (1): in that passage, Aristotle is using 'being alive' for vital activity. — An alternative and better answer is to say that verbs like 'sense' and 'understand', while often used for activities, are also sometimes used for the very being of those who thus act. For it says in *Ethics IX* [c.9] that "sensing or understanding is being," *i.e.* having the nature for sensing or understanding. This is how Aristotle broke down "being alive" into these four. For the genera of living things are in these four divisions. Some have only a nature for taking in nutrition and enjoying its consequences, which are growth and reproduction; others have a nature for sensing as well, as one sees with immobile animals, such as oysters; some have alongside these traits a nature for also moving themselves about (the complete animals); and some, like man, go even further and have a nature for understanding.

ad (2): we have a special name for the kind of work whose source is in the doer in such a way that we induce ourselves to do such activity: we call it our "life work." Now it so happens that the sources in a person of some works are not just natural sources, like our natural faculties, but further added sources, like the *habits* inclining us to certain kinds of doings as quasi-natural and making them delightful. As a result, in a kind of figure of speech, we single out the activity which is delightful to us, to which we are inclined, in which we spend [as much as possible of] our time, and for whose sake we arrange our life, and we call it our "life." Thus some are said to lead an indulgent "life"; and some, an upright "life." In this way, too, the contemplative "life" is distinguished from the active "life." And in the same way, the [mental activity of] knowing God is called eternal "life."

How to answer (3) is clear from what I just said.

mensional shape. 'Slth' means a slow and reluctantly moving animal but also the observable trait (in humans, a vice) of behaving that way.

² A noun formed from a verb was called "abstract" because it abstracted from the verb's temporal aspect or tense.

³ A substantial predicate was one that applied to every member of a class of substances, say the *A*-class, and applied necessarily in the sense that no *A*-thing could exist without it.

c.9
1170a 18

c.9
1170a 33

 Cajetan's Commentary

The title is clear. — In the body of the article, one conclusion answers the question: properly speaking, being alive is substantial being; less properly, it is an activity.

Both parts of the conclusion are supported together, thus. [*Antecedent:*] Our intellect receives from the senses; so [*1st inference:*] we move from how a thing overtly appears in getting to know its essence; so [*2nd inference:*] words derived from overt properties are often used to mean things' essences; so [*3rd inference:*] such words are sometimes used properly for the essences themselves and sometimes less properly for the traits whence they were derived; so [*4th inference:*] 'life' is used properly for a substance whose nature equips it to move itself, and less properly for a vital operation; so [*5th inference:*] 'to live' is properly just 'to be in such a nature', and so [*6th inference:*] 'life' means just such being, and [*7th inference:*] 'alive' is not an accidental predicate but

substantial. By the whole chain, then, life is properly speaking substantial being; less properly, an activity. — In the first inference, two terms in the consequent ('whatness' and 'overt') are supported by two in the antecedent ('intellect' and 'sense'); the first, because intellect is such as to cognize a thing's whatness; the second, because outward accidents are proper objects of the senses. The second inference rests on the ground that we describe as we come to know. The third is illustrated by the word 'body' *vis-à-vis* substances and quantity. The fourth rests on the ground that 'life' is derived from the external appearance of self-movement. The fifth inference is left as obvious. The sixth is supported by the fact that 'life' only differs from 'to live' in *how* it signifies (*i.e.* in the abstract), and it is illustrated by 'run'. The seventh inference is self-evident. Even so, the second part of the conclusion is confirmed by the authority of *Ethics IX*.

Is 'alive' a suitable description of God?

1 CG cc.97-98; 4 CG c.11; In Joan. c.14, lectio 2; In XII Metaphys., lectio 8

It seems that being alive is not a suitable thing to ascribe to God.

aa.1, 2 (1) After all, things are said to "live" insofar as they move themselves, as already said. But it does not suit God to move. So living does not suit Him.

c.4; 415b 8 (2) In all things that live there is a source of living, which is why *De Anima II* says, "the cause and source of a living body is a soul." But God does not have any source. So He is not equipped to live.

* *anima vegetabilis* (3) The source of life in the living things with which we are acquainted is a nutritive soul,* which is only found in bodily things. Therefore, bodiless things are not equipped to live.¹

Vg. Ps 83 4 ON THE OTHER HAND, there is what it says in Psalm 84:2, "My heart and my flesh crieth out for the living God."

ANSWER: life is supremely distinctive of God. To see this, one needs to ponder the following. Things are said to be alive because they operate of themselves and not as moved by others; so the more perfectly a thing has this trait, the more perfectly "life" is found in it.

In things inducing and undergoing change, three items are found in order. First, a purpose prompts the agent; the agent is the principal change-inducer because it acts *via* its own form; and sometimes it acts *via* an instrument (which does not act by virtue of its own form but by virtue of the principal agent); the instrument is only equipped to execute the action.

There are some things, then, that change themselves <not with respect to the form or purpose found in their nature but> only with respect to executing a movement; the form *via* which they act and the purpose for which they act are both fixed for them by their nature. Plants are of this type. Because of a form put into them by nature, they change themselves only along the line of growth-movement or shrinkage.

Then there are things that change themselves in a further way, not only with respect to executing movement but also with respect to a form which is the source of it: they acquire this form by themselves. Animals are of this type, since their source-of-motion is not a form they are born with, but a form acquired through sensation. The more sensitivity they have, the more thoroughly they move themselves. Those with just a sense of touch move themselves only by dilation and contraction, like oysters, barely going beyond plant-movement. But those with complete sen-

sory power, so as to cognize not only things adjoining and touching them but also things at a distance, move themselves to other places by progressive motion.

Now, although such animals get from sensation the form/source of their behavioral changes, they do not furnish themselves with the *purpose* of their operation or self-motion; the purpose is rather born in them by nature, and it is by natural instinct that they are moved to do something *via* the form sensorially apprehended. Superior, then, to such animals are those that change themselves even with respect to the purpose they set for themselves. This happens only through reason and understanding, whose rôle is to cognize the relation* of end to means, and to order one thing to another. Thus the more perfect mode of "living" is the mode of those who have understanding, because they "move themselves" more completely. A sign of this is the fact that, in a single human being, the intellective power moves the sense powers, which by their command move the organs, and these execute the movement. Also among the arts, we see that the art of *using* a ship (*i.e.* piloting it) sets the norms for the [design] art that gives form to the ship, and this sets the norms for the [carpentry] art that only has execution in disposing the lumber.

But although our understanding moves itself to some items, others are still furnished to it by nature, like the first principles about which we cannot think otherwise, and the ultimate purpose which we cannot not-will. Thus despite the fact that our intellect moves itself *vis-à-vis* some things, there are still other things toward which it must be being moved by another. The very highest level of "life," therefore, is occupied by That Whose nature is Its very act of understanding and Whose natural endowments are not fixed for It by anything else. Such, of course, is God. This is why there is "life" most of all in God. And this is why in *Metaphysics XII*, Aristotle, after showing that God is intelligent, concluded that God has the most perfect and everlasting life, on the ground that God's understanding is supremely complete and always in act.

TO MEET THE OBJECTIONS — ad (1): as *Metaphysics IX* says, there are two kinds of action. One is transitive, going forth into a matter outside the agent, such as heating something up or drying it out. The other is immanent action, remaining within the agent, such as understanding, sensing, or willing. The relevant difference between them is that the former is not a completing of the agent effecting the change but of the thing undergoing it, whereas the latter is a completing of the agent. So, since "to change" is to actualize a changeable thing, and the second kind of action is actualizing the doer, it is called a "change" of the doer on the basis of a similarity saying that

¹ It doesn't take much to update this objection. The basis or source of "life" as we know it is a set of biochemical processes; these take place only in material things; so an immaterial being, such as God, cannot be alive.

* *proportio*c 7;
1072b 27c 8;
1050a 22

as change is the actualizing of a changeable thing, so immanent action is the actualizing of an agent, even though "change" [strictly speaking] is the actualizing of an incomplete thing (one existing in potency to a further trait), while immanent action is the actualizing of a complete thing (one existing in act), as it says in *De Anima III*. In the sense, then, in which understanding counts as a change, what understands itself is said to "change itself." In this sense, even Plato held that God "moved Himself," but not in the sense in which change is the actualizing of

c.7;
431a 6

an incomplete thing.

ad (2): since God is His very act of existing and understanding, He is also His very act of living. This is why He is alive in such a way as to have no "source" of being so.

ad (3): here below, life is received in a corruptible nature, which needs both reproduction for the preservation of the species and nourishment for the preservation of the individual. This is why, here below, life is not found without a nutritive soul. But such a soul has no rôle to play in things incorruptible.

Cajetan's Commentary

In the title, 'suitable description' is taken [to ask if having life] *form-wise* [fits the case of God]. For it was proved already in Inquiry 4 that the completive trait of being alive suited God power-wise.

Analysis of the article

ii. In the body of the article, there is one conclusion answering the question: life is distinctively present in God to the fullest. — But notice here that, before he supports this, Aquinas asks and answers another question. He asks the simple 'does it exist?' question about life in God's case; but he answers it in terms of the most eminent *manner* of living. He does this because it was already clear enough that God was alive, since it had already been stated that God was an intellectual nature's act of existing. But *in what manner* He was alive — that needed to be shown from properly relevant considerations.

The support goes as follows. [*Antecedent:*] Things are said to "live" inasmuch as they operate of themselves, not as moved by other things; so [*1st inference:*] the more completely a thing has this trait, the more perfectly life is found in it; so [*2nd inference:*] things that change themselves in their purpose, form, and execution "live" more perfectly than things that change themselves in form and execution alone; and these latter "live" more perfectly than things that change themselves in execution alone. Ergo [*3rd inference:*] that whose nature is existing/understanding itself, and whose natural endowment is not fixed for it by another, enjoys the highest level of life; so [*4th inference:*] in God there is life to the fullest.

To make plain the second inference — since a comparison cannot be understood unless one is shown the degrees of the things compared — Aquinas puts things-moving-themselves into degrees and shows that the inference is necessary from the gradation itself. So he does two jobs: (1) he exhibits the factors by which living things are put onto levels; (2) he sets forth in order three levels of living things. The three

factors are purpose, form, and execution. Hence

- Some things change themselves in execution only;
- others, in execution and form; and these change themselves more completely.
- Some change themselves in execution, form, and purpose; and these change themselves most completely.

On the first level are plants, as is seen from their self-movement of growth. On the second level are animals, (a) as is seen from the fact that the source of their movement is not a form naturally embedded in them but a form acquired by sensation, and (b) because of the latitude in animals (the more thoroughly they sense, the more completely they change themselves), which is exhibited by the difference between how complete animals move and how incomplete ones do. On the third level are things having understanding. This is supported on the ground that *cognizing* the relation between a purpose and what is to the purpose, ordering one thing to another, and so furnishing oneself with a purpose, are jobs reserved to reason and understanding. The fact that this kind of life is higher is indicated by the fact that, in a single human being, the intellective power moves the sense powers and, through them, the bodily organs. A confirming example is drawn from the arts.

For the third inference, meanwhile, the text posits a latitude at the highest level of living and so [gradates that level further and] shows what is the highest of that level. Of the things that change themselves in execution, form, and purpose

- some do so with respect to certain such items, while other such are furnished to them by another;
- but others change themselves with respect to all such items, so as to have nothing from another.

At the former level are created intellects; at the latter, God Himself. The former is instanced by our intellective part: our intellect, because first principles are furnished to it; our will, because an ultimate purpose is furnished to it which it cannot not-will. The other

points are familiar. The course of the argument is also confirmed by how Aristotle argued in *Metaphysics XII*.

A doubt about the animal level

- iii. Concerning the second level of living, a doubt arises about how it can be true that animals “acquire for themselves” the form *via* which they move themselves. For as *De Anima II* says, a sense power is ^{c 5, 416b 33} passive potency compared to the sense object, and sensing is a matter of undergoing [change induced by that object]. So animals are involved purely passively in getting a sense form; ergo, they do not “acquire it by themselves.”
- iv. The short answer (because this is not the place to handle the topic fully) is that an external sense concurs purely passively in having the sense-form, if you mean *the sense-form as a kind of being* (or having it in its intermediate mode between potency and act); but even an external sense concurs not just

passively but also actively towards having *the sense-form as a knowable* (or in act unqualifiedly and purely). The reason is because the soul (as *De Anima II* [c.4] says) is the efficient cause of the alteration wherein sensation lies or (what comes to the same) of the alteration that *is* sensation. Clearly, to sense is not just to undergo change at the hands of the thing sensed (because then one would also see the transparent) but to undergo change *vitally* at the hands of the thing sensed. This last is the sense-in-act being the sense-object itself in act as sensible (as you see from the remarks above in q.14). So, yes, the animal has its sensation from another, but the animal also makes its sensation within itself. So, the text is worded very well in saying that an animal “changes itself” with regard to this form and acquires it “by itself,” etc.

415b 22-25

Take careful note of these points, so as to know how to interpret the various statements of Aristotle and Aquinas correctly.

article 4

Are all things life in God?

4 CG c.13; De Veritate q.4, a.8; In Joam. c.1, lectio 2

It does not seem that all things are life in God.¹

(1) It says in Acts 17:28, "In Him we live, *move*, and have our being." But not everything is movement in God. So not everything is life in Him.

(2) Besides, all things are in God as in a first exemplar. But everything copied from an exemplar has to match it. So, since not everything is alive in itself, it does not seem that everything is life in God.

c.29.
PL 34, 145 (3) As Augustine says in *De vera religione*, a living substance is better than any non-living substance. So if things not alive in themselves are life in God, things seem to be more real in God than they are in themselves — which seems false, because things are actual in themselves but only potential in God.

(4) Also, as God knows goods and the things brought about at some time, so also He knows evils and the things He could bring about but never does. So, if all things are life in God because they are all known by Him, it looks as though evils and things that never happen are also life in God because they are known by Him. And that seems awkward.

ON THE OTHER HAND, it says in John 1:3-4, "that which was made in Him was life." But all things other than God were made. Hence all things are life in God.²

q 14, a.4
q 18, a.3 ANSWER: God's act of living = His act of understanding, as I said before. But in God's case, the intellect and what it understands and the very act of understanding are all the same. So, whatever is in God as an item understood is His act-of-living or "life." Therefore, since all the things that have been made by God are in Him as items understood, it follows that they are all, in Him, the divine life.

TO MEET THE OBJECTIONS — *ad* (1): creatures are said to be "in God" two ways. One is as they are contained in, and preserved by, God's power (as we say that what is in our power is "in our hands"). This is the sense in which creatures are said to be "in God" even while existing in their own natures; and this is how to take the word of St. Paul, "in Him we live, move, and have our being," because our acts of living, being, and moving are caused by God. The other way things are said to be "in God" is as in a Knower. In this way they are in God through their

distinctive explanatory accounts, which are not another reality in God from His essence. So insofar as things are "in God" in this way, they are the divine essence. And since the divine essence is life but not movement, the things that are "in God" in this manner of speaking are not movement but are "life."

ad (2): the copies have to match the exemplar according to the defining ingredients of their form but not according to their manner of being. Sometimes the form has different modes of being in the exemplar and the copies: the form of a house has an immaterial and intelligible mode of being in the builder's mind but a material and palpable mode of being in the house itself, outside his mind. So, too, the accounts of things that are non-living in themselves are "life" in the divine mind, because they have divine being there.

ad (3): if matter did not enter into the scientific account of natural things, but only form, natural things would be in every way "more real" [*verior*] as they are in God's mind through His *ideae* than they are in themselves. This is also why Plato claimed that the separate *Idea* of Man was the real human being, while a material person was human by participation. But since matter does enter into the scientific definition of natural things, we have to speak as follows. The *existing* that natural things have in the divine mind is unqualifiedly more real than their existing in themselves (because in the divine mind they have uncreated being; in themselves, created being). But the *being-a-this* that they have — say, being a man, or being a horse — is more real in their own nature than in the divine mind, because *being a material thing* pertains to the genuineness* of a human being, and being material is not something a human being has in the divine mind. In just the same way, a house has a nobler being in its builder's mind than it does in matter; and yet we call the house-in-matter "more real" than the house-in-mind, because the house-in-matter "is a house" in act, while the other "is a house" in potency.

ad (4): although evils are in God's knowledge inasmuch as they are comprehended within the scope of His optimal knowing, they are not in God as things created or conserved by Him, nor as things having their own account in God; rather, He takes cognizance of evils through the explanatory accounts of goods. So, it cannot be said that evils are life in God. As for the things that do not come about at any time: they can be called life in God [in one sense, namely] in the sense in which 'living' names sheer understanding (because they are understood by God), but not in the sense in which 'living' implies a source of operation.

¹ For the sense of this issue, see the ON THE OTHER HAND.

² We usually see John 1: 3-4 punctuated as saying, "without Him was not anything made that was made; in Him was life ..." But Aquinas is following a punctuation found in the Alexandrian Fathers and Augustine; it generates the present query.

 Cajetan's Commentary

The title is clear. — In the body of the article, there is one conclusion, answering the question affirmatively: all things in God are divine life. The support is this. [*Antecedent:*] In God, the intellect, what it understands, and the act of understanding are all the same; so [*1st inference:*] whatever is in God as an item understood is God's life; so [*2nd inference:*] all things in God are divine life. — The first inference is supported on the ground that God's act of being alive is His act of understanding. The second rests on the ground that all things which have been made are in God as items understood.

Two points to note

Notice here first that, because the full defining make-up of 'life' is only satisfied in things that are brought to be at some time, as the answer *ad* (4) will make clear, the text has more or less limited 'all things' to all that are made, *i.e.*, all that at some time have been made, are made, or will be made. — Notice secondly that, as also becomes clear in the answer *ad* (4), the proposition defended here, whatever is in God as an item understood is His life, is to be construed as talking about items understood in and of themselves, to exclude evils, which are understood through something else, *i.e.*, through goods.

On the answer *ad* (3)

ii. If you stretch the force of this answer and the scope of this argument to cover everything, then under-

stand 'matter' to mean anything that stands as matter, *i.e.* any potency. For here is where a divine *idea* goes beyond a Platonic one: the latter is just matter-independent, while the former is clear of matter *and* potency, being pure act. Thus Gabriel, whose defining makeup excludes matter but not potency, is more really Gabriel in himself than in God. But the text mentions matter because the argument was about non-living things, which of course are material things and have an obvious impediment to being more real in God.

On the answer *ad* (4)

iii. In the answer *ad* (4), recall what was said in article 2, to the effect that 'living' properly means the very being of a living thing, which is the source of a vital operation, and only less properly means a vital operation itself. It follows that something is said to live or "be life" in two ways:

- (1) because it is a vital operation (and thus all things whose account or likeness is in God "live" in Him, because they are His act of understanding);
- (2) because it is the source of a vital operation (and thus only the good things that are brought to be at some time "live" in God, because these alone in God "move themselves" to be outside God; they are in God as creative essences, so to speak.

Other makeable things do not "live" in way (2) because they never "move themselves" to the state of being in themselves. Thus the text at the very end of this answer means to say what had been put more clearly in the last article of *De Veritate*, q.4.

Inquiry Nineteen: Into God's will

After looking into the topics that pertain to divine knowing, one must look into those that pertain to divine willing. One should proceed in such a way that one first considers the divine will itself [q. 19], then the topics pertaining to His will independently [of His understanding] [q. 20-21], and thirdly the topics that pertain to His willing in relation to His understanding [q. 22]. Concerning His will itself, twelve questions are asked:

- | | |
|---|--|
| (1) is there a will in God? | (7) is God's will changeable? |
| (2) does God will things other than Himself? | (8) does His will impose necessity on the things willed? |
| (3) does He necessarily will whatever He wills? | (9) is there willing of evils in God? |
| (4) is God's willing a cause of things? | (10) does God have free choice? |
| (5) does His willing have a cause? | (11) should a "symbolized will" be distinguished in God? |
| (6) is God's will always carried out? | (12) are five "symbolized volitions" suitably posited? |

article 1

Is there a will in God?

1 *ST* q. 54, a. 2, 3 *ST* q. 18, a. 1; *In I Sent* d. 45, a. 1; 1 *CG* cc 72-73;
4 *CG* c. 19, *De Virtute* q. 23, a. 1, *Compend. Theol.* c. 32

It seems that there is no will in God.

(1) An object of willing, after all, is a purpose as well as a good. But one cannot say that God is for a purpose. So there is no will in God.

* *appetitus*
(2) Moreover, a will is an ability to seek things.* Since 'seek' means strive for a thing not had, it indicates an incompleteness, and that does not suit God. Ergo, there is no will in God.

c 10;
433b 16
c 5;
258b 10
(3) Furthermore, according to Aristotle in *De Anima III*, the will is a faculty that undergoes change in inducing change. But God is the first and unchangeable Change Agent, as is shown in *Physics VIII*. In God, therefore, there is no will.

ON THE OTHER HAND, there is what the Apostle says in Romans 12:2, "that ye may prove what is the good and acceptable and perfect will of God."

ANSWER: there is willing in God in the same way as there is understanding in Him; willing, after all, is a consequence of understanding. For as a natural thing has the actualness of being [what it is] through its form, so an intellect has the actualness of understanding [a thing] through an intentional form [of it]. Now, anything you please [say, x] has a bearing toward its natural form such that

when x does not have it, x tends towards it,
and when x does have it, x stays at rest in it.

The same holds for any natural complete trait that is a good of the thing's nature. In things lacking cognition, this bearing towards a good is called natural seeking.* An intellectual nature, too, has a similar bearing towards a good apprehended through an intentional form, so that when the intellectual nature has it, it rests in it, and when it does not have it, it seeks it. Both of these pertain to the "will." Hence,

* *appetitus naturalis*

in anything having understanding, there is a will (just as, in anything having sensation, there is animate seeking*). Thus, there has to be willing in God, because there is understanding in Him.¹ Moreover, as His act of understanding is His being, so is His act of willing.

TO MEET THE OBJECTIONS — *ad* (1): while nothing other than God is God's purpose, nevertheless He Himself is the purpose of all the things that arise from Him — and He is this by His essence, since He is good by His essence (as shown above); for what has what it takes to be a good is a purpose.

ad (2): in our case, the will pertains to the part of us that seeks things; and while this part is named after seeking, it does not have only the act of seeking what it lacks; it also has the acts of *loving* what it has and *delighting* in that. It is along the line of these latter acts that a will is posited in God. His will always has the good that is the object-it-wills, because it is by essence indistinct from that object, as I just said.

ad (3): a will whose initial object[†] is a good outside that will itself, has to undergo change from some quarter. But the initial object of God's will is His own good state,[‡] which is His essence. So since God's will *is* His essence, it does not undergo change from any quarter but itself, [which means it does not undergo change at all, unless you are] taking 'change' in the sense in which understanding or willing is called "changing" (which was the sense in which Plato said the First Mover "changes itself").²

* *appetitus animalis*

q 6, a. 3

ad (1)

† *objectum principale*

‡ *bontas*

¹ On the case for God's understanding, see q. 14, a. 1.

² Plato's remarks are in *Timaeus* 34 B, *Phaedrus* 245 C, and *Laws* 894 E.

 Cajetan's Commentary

In the title, 'will' is taken two ways: (1) for the act of willing, and (2) for the source thereof, the faculty that elicits the act of willing. In this context, it does not matter which way the word is taken. For where either is present, so is the other.

Analysis of the article

In the body of the article, three jobs are done: (1) a [two-part] conclusion is set down answering the question, with an indication of its means of proof; (2) this means is supported, its force is shown, and the first part of the conclusion is deduced; (3) the second part is supported (at the very end of the text).

ii. As to job (1), the conclusion is [1st part:] there is a will in God, [2nd part:] such that His willing is His being. — The means of proof is:

willing is a consequence of understanding;
in God there is understanding; ergo.

Pause to notice two points here. First, although the second part of the conclusion is not made explicit in the [opening of the] text but is only drawn at the tail end, it is meant as implicit in the 'same way' phrase, where willing is said to be in God "in the same way" as understanding is in Him. — The other point to notice is [the powerful character of the means of proof, namely] that, because the proof is by means of who or what alone does any willing (i.e. the intellective part is firstly and of itself what does any willing), proving that willing is a consequence of understanding will be the same as proving *a priori*

- that there is a will, and
- what a will is, and
- why there is a will,

although in general, of course, the proposition that there is a will needs no proof, because we experience its being there within ourselves. So very close attention is to be paid to the points that are coming up, as they are about to elucidate a hidden, difficult matter.¹

iii. As to job (2), the argument goes thus. [Antecedent:] An intellect actually understands [this] through

¹ A proof was called *a priori* when it went from cause to effect. A proof that a will exists from an hypothesized reason for its existence was unprecedented, because the existence of volition was usually taken as empirically obvious. But here philosophy was being called upon to lend support to the revealed datum that a will exists in God. It was hard to see what form such support could take, other than a persuasive argument that willing would have to occur because of some feature already admitted to exist in God with philosophical support. Aristotle's account of the conditions for cognition made his philosophy *compatible* with the revealed datum that understanding occurs in God. So Aquinas tried here to argue from that feature to the occurrence of volition, in the form of God's valuing what He has and is. If the argument succeeds, it will shed noteworthy light on an obscure connexion (as Cajetan says), and it will make God's willing *compatible* with Aristotle's philosophy.

its intensional form [of this], just as a natural thing is [what it is] through its form; so [1st inference:] an intellectual nature stands to a good apprehended through its intensional form in such a way that, when it does not have that good, it seeks it, and when it does have it, it rests in it; so [2nd inference:] in anything having an intellect there is willing; ergo [3rd inference:] there is willing in God.

The first inference is supported by the proportional similarity [i.e. analogy] assumed in the antecedent between a natural form and an intensional form. [In other words, the first inference rests on the ground that] Any natural thing *x* verifies two points: (1) *x* has a bearing towards its natural form or natural complexive trait such that, when this is had, *x* rests in it, and when this is not had, *x* inclines towards it; (2) in things lacking cognition, this bearing is called natural seeking.²

The second inference is supported on the same analogy in two ways: (1) on the ground that such-and-such acts [loving what is had and delighting in it] both belong to the will; (2) on the ground that, by the proportional similarity, there is animate seeking in anything having sensation, for the same reason.

The third inference is supported on the ground that there is understanding in God.

Two Doubts

iv. The first inference is dubious because the proportional similarity is so stated as to waffle from the intensional form to the good apprehended through it. The argument needed to proceed in such a way as to infer as follows: because an intensional form is like a natural form, an intellectual nature *N* stands to its intensional form in such a way that, when *N* has it, *N*

² This alleged bearing of all natural things (that they seek to keep or acquire forms appropriate to their natural kind) is Aristotle's *orexis* (*inclination, tendency*). He got the idea by taking "how things tend to be for the most part" (a statistical affair) on the analogy of "how living things tend to turn out" (a genetic affair). Atoms do tend to complete their valence shell, but otherwise, today's science undermines the Stagirite's analogy. In physics and chemistry, the best we can do is distinguish stable from unstable states of a thing (and observe that most frequently, of course, a thing is in one of its stable states). In biology, we can admit that a living thing's genotype (a) puts it into its natural kind, (b) prescribes a certain path of development, and (c) partially determines the environment it will need if it is to "flourish." It may be true that the naturally occurring paths of development are (for the most part) paths to a stable state of the organism as a whole. But it will no longer do to say that, above the atomic level, each inanimate substance "seeks" a stable state proper to its kind, as if it, too, were following a developmental path. It will be important to see, therefore, how far Aquinas' deduction of willing from understanding depends upon Aristotle's obsolete analogy.

rests in it, and when *N* doesn't have it, *N* inclines toward it. Yet the argument in the text slips to the good apprehended through the intensional form. Thus the reasoning seems to be bad, as having no basis.³ — And the doubt gets worse, when one recalls that the intensional form is inside the agent, while the good apprehended is an item outside, as one sees from *Metaphysics VI*.

c. 4,
1027b 25-27

Doubt arises also about the second inference. The sort of reasoning used here yields no result except that, in an intellectual nature, "inclining" occurs towards an intensional form (or if you insist, towards the thing apprehended). But the reasoning does not get from there to the point that this inclining is an elicited act. Yet this is what had to be proved. Otherwise, making the inference that this inclining *pertains to the will* is assuming the will it was supposed to prove.⁴

Resolving these doubts

v. To clear these up, we have to pay attention firstly to the difference between natural seeking and animate seeking (the latter being that which is further divided into rational seeking and sense appetite, etc). The two differ in that

c.3,
141b 1ff

(1) animate seeking is a special kind of power of a soul (as is clear from *De Anima II*), while natural seeking is common to everything;

(2) a thing's natural seeking is a consequence of the thing's defining makeup taken just in itself [*absolutē*], while animate seeking is a consequence of the thing's nature as it apprehends other things;

(3) natural seeking is actual from the thing's nature alone, while animate seeking can rise into actuality only from an apprehension;

(4) to seek naturally is not an elicited act but a sheer inclination of this-to-that, while to seek as a living thing is an activity*, a case of second act;⁵

* *operatio*

(5) natural seeking is for *one* state, while animate seeking is for *many* states, according to the plurality of apprehended goods;

(6) a thing has natural seeking for what suits just a

³ Of course, if the argument did not "slip" in this way, the comparison between natural and intensional forms would be open to obvious objections. A cat may naturally stick to being a cat, but one's mind does not naturally stick to one subject; one's intellect moves easily from topic to topic without seeming to "seek" any topic in particular as its natural resting place; well, each conscious shift of understanding from one topic to another requires the intellect to be acting through a new intensional form; ergo it seems blatantly false that an "intellectual nature" is like a "natural thing" in its bearing towards the "form" through which it is operating.

⁴ A will was a specific power or faculty (*potentia*) within an intellectual nature, such that acts-of-willing were act-states triggered (*elicita*) from that faculty by something understood. So, unless one showed that an *appetitus*/seeking was an elicited act, one had not shown that it was willing.

⁵ "Second act" was distinguished from "first act" thus: a thing's first act was just its actual being-what-it-was, while its second act was some doing or "operation" it performed.

given particular power-to-seek [*appetitus*], while a thing has animate seeking for what suits the thing as a whole (or as a referent);

(7) natural seeking is actually present in a thing *x* from another [*i.e.*, from *x*'s productive cause], while animate seeking is actual in *x* from *x* itself, and not from another, because what "moves" *x* is the good *qua* apprehended by *x* itself seeking.

vi. What emerges from these facts is the point we are now after, namely, that

- whatever is sought but not sought *qua* apprehended is sought with natural seeking;
- whatever is sought *because* it is apprehended is sought with the elicited act of a sensual or intellectual seeking.

Now take the case of mental apprehension itself: it can be sought in two ways:

- (1) it can be sought with natural seeking, and this is how it is sought by the intellect, inasmuch as the intellect naturally inclines to the completion of itself which is apprehending a thing;
- (2) it can be sought with a rational seeking, and this is how apprehension is sought by the will as an object apprehended.

This is vivid for us when we *have thought of* what a great and optimal thing it would be to see God, or to grasp the natures of the heavenly bodies, etc., and we thereupon *desire* to have that cognition and *rejoice* if we have it. We experience within ourselves that these are acts of the will, not workings of nature.

Well, from this truth you have it, plain as day, that seeking with an elicited act is a consequence of apprehending, just as inclining naturally is a consequence of some nature (even a very incomplete "nature," like prime matter).

vii. If you have also pondered the fact that taking cognizance is the cognizer's *being in act the thing cognized*, plus the fact that (because every case of being is along the lines of some form) the case of being indicated here by "take cognizance" is along the lines of the cognizable form in act in its kind as a knowable, you will see two things.

(1) The first is that the intensional form's putting the intellect into act is its putting the intellect into *being* the thing apprehended *qua* apprehended. So the move made in the text when the first inference moved from the intensional form to the thing apprehended was no fallacy, no waffling, but artful expression, because the argument was not talking about the intensional form in its kind as a being [*i.e.* in its physical structure] but in its kind as an intelligible [*i.e.* in its function as an intensional form], and it was talking about the latter not just any old way but *qua* putting the intellect into *being* the thing cognized as it has been apprehended.*

* *apprehensibiliter*

(2) The second is that (since a seeking is a consequence of any case of being, and such-and-such seeking follows proportionally from thus-and-such being) it is correct to say that (since there are just two orders of being: (a) that by which a thing is something in its

natural being, and (b) that by which a thing is something in apprehending it) two "seekings" have to be posited proportionally, such that (because the first order of being is a matter of being after the fashion of first act, while the second is a matter of being through the second act that is apprehending) the "act of seeking" done with a seeking that follows from natural being is not a case of second act but a sheer inclination, as I said, while the "act of seeking" done with a seeking that follows from the being that consists in cognition is a case of second act, elicited from an ability for seeking, as a consequence of the nature *insofar as it can apprehend*. This is the foundation assumed in the text; this is the proportional similarity between natural and intentional forms. The argument obviously started from this fact: *As* a natural form constitutes a being, *so* an intentional form constitutes a cognizer, *i.e.* makes the cognizer "a being" in the way I have explained here and above.

in comments on q 12, a.2, and on q 14, a.2

viii. Thereby the solution to the second doubt becomes clear, too. The support for the second inference did not fallaciously assume a will; it took what was concluded in the first inference, *i.e.*, that (a) tending towards an apprehended thing-not-had and (b) resting in one-when-had both occur in an intellectual nature as such (which is to say that elicited acts occur), and optimally inferred from there that *ergo there is a will in such a nature*, since these acts have to do with a will, as experience testifies and the argument persuades.⁶

⁶ Does the argument persuade? To answer, ignore for the moment the comparison with "natural inclination," and focus entirely on what Aquinas says happens in an intellectual being (hereafter, for short, an *IB*). He says any *IB* can apprehend an *x* in such a way that volition results. What way is that? Well, he calls the *x* a good. So the question is: how can an *IB* apprehend a good in such a way that volition results? Cajetan's examples suggest (and it was the obvious suggestion in any case) that what the *IB* needs to do is apprehend the good *as good enough*. If this is right, the doctrine amounts to this: as soon as an *IB* understands some *x* in such a way as to evaluate *x* as good enough, the *IB* is willing *x*. Set aside for now the question of whether this happens for any *x* that an *IB* evaluates as good, or only for some. Take Aquinas simply to be saying

for any *IB*, there is some *x* such that, when *IB* evaluates *x* as good enough, *IB* is willing *x*. so as to focus next on what this says about willing. Aquinas always distinguished the will and willing from what he called the "sense appetites" (hunger, thirst, sexual yearning, etc.). He was not saying that, if an *IB* evaluates *x* as good enough, the *IB* has a sensual longing for *x*. No; the will was said to be a capacity for *rational* seeking. An *IB* equipped with a body and senses could *rationally seek* sensory goods,

Analysis resumed

ix. As to job (3), the second part of the conclusion is supported thus. [*Antecedent:*] God's act of understanding is His being; ergo [*inference:*] God's act of willing is His being. The inference is based on a proportional similarity expressed by 'as ... so ...'. For since both are second acts and both are immanent, etc., it has to be the case that if one of them is identified with the divine being, the other is, too.

of course, but could also seek non-sensory things. To follow Cajetan's examples again, willing is the kind of "wanting" one experiences in wanting to know what the moon is. But even this can be misleading. Aquinas is explicit in this article, especially in the answer *ad* (2), that willing is more general than "wanting." There is willing going on when one already knows what the moon is and is just "glad to know it." In short, Aquinas' notion of willing was so refined (or so thin) that just *valuing what one has* counted as a case of willing. Well, isn't it a tautology, or next door to a tautology, that

when one evaluates something as good enough, one values it?

So if willing is as Aquinas defined it, we have it already that when one evaluates something as good enough, one wills it.

The whole case for volition in God thus boils down to this: God understands that what He has-and-is is very good; so He evaluates what He has-and-is as good enough; so He values what He has-and-is; so He wills it. In other words, the whole case turns on a near-tautology plus a definition.

One now sees the point of Cajetan's clarification of "animate seeking" as elicited act. An act of willing was supposed to be an elicited act. No problem. An elicited act is simply one triggered by apprehension. God values what He has-and-is because He *apprehends* it as good enough, ergo His valuing it is an elicited act; and therefore (again) His valuing it counts as willing.

And now one sees the rôle of certain intentional forms. The intentional form through which an *IB* apprehends *x* (not just any old way but) *as good enough* puts the *IB* into the being which is being-cognizant-of-*x*-as-good-enough and so puts the *IB* into the posture of valuing-*x*.

And now one can follow Cajetan in puzzling out what Aquinas' comparison between intentional form and natural form was meant to say. If nature works as Aristotle thought, then the natural form that puts a natural thing (call it *NT*) into its natural kind gives *NT* the being which is being-of-its-natural-kind and so puts *NT* into the posture of inclining towards (not just any completeness but) such completeness as goes with being of that kind. So if nature works as Aristotle thought, there is an interesting and illuminating similarity between the *NT*'s posture of inclining and the *IB*'s posture of valuing; and if nature does not work that way, there is no such similarity, but the argument that there is willing in God goes through anyway. The appeal to *orexis* is purely illustrative, not probative.

Does God will things other than Himself?

In I Sent. d.45, a.2; I CG cc.75-77, De Veritate q.23, a.4

It looks as though God does not will things other than Himself.

(1) After all, God's willing = His being. God does not *be* anything other than Himself. Ergo, He does not will anything other than Himself.

(2) Besides, a willed thing moves the will as an appetizing thing moves an appetite, according to *De Anima III*. So if God wills anything other than Himself, His will is being moved by something else — which is impossible.

(3) Also, whenever a willed object is enough for a will, the will seeks nothing beyond it. God's own good state is enough for Him, and His will is satisfied with it. Ergo God wills nothing other than Himself.

(4) Moreover, the count of acts-of-willing rises with the count of things willed. So if God wills Himself and things other than Himself, His acts-of-willing will be many; and since His willing is His being, the result will be that His acts-of-being are many. Well, this last is impossible. Ergo, He does not will things other than Himself.

ON THE OTHER HAND, there is what the Apostle says in I Thessalonians 4:3, "this is the will of God, even your sanctification."

I ANSWER: God does not will Himself alone but also things other than Himself. This emerges from a similarity already introduced. A natural thing has a natural inclination not just to its own good (to acquire what it does not have, or to rest in what it has) but also to diffuse its good to others to the extent possible. Thus we see that every agent cause, insofar as it is in act and complete, produces an effect similar [in some way] to itself.¹ So it also pertains to the defining makeup of willing that the willer should communicate to others (to the extent possible) the good that it has. This bent pertains especially to the divine will, from which, *via* one resemblance or another, every complete trait [of every creature] derives. So, if it is characteristic of natural things, to the extent they are complete, to communicate their good to others, it is a *fortiori* characteristic of the divine will to communicate God's good to others *via* resemblance, to the extent possible. In this way, then, God wills both Himself and other things to be.

¹ This famous dictum, *omne agens agit sibi simile*, meant vastly less than it seemed to say. It did not require that an effect resemble its cause in any trait shared univocally, nor even in one shared formally. It was sufficient that the cause had the power to produce what the effect exhibited. Thus communication of the cause's "good" to others could be as little as putting effects "into actuality" in some way within the cause's power.

But [the structure of His willing is that He wills] Himself as the purpose and other things as for the purpose, because it befits God's own good state* that other things should share in it, too.

* *bonitas*

TO MEET THE OBJECTIONS — *ad* (1): although 'God's willing' and 'God's being' refer to the same thing, they still differ in definition because of a different way of understanding and signifying, as emerged above. For in saying 'God wills' a relation to something is implied, while nothing of the kind is implied in saying 'God exists'.² And so even though His will is not another *thing* than Himself, He still wills something other than Himself.³

ad (2): in the cases where we will things for a purpose, the whole explanation for our endeavor⁴ is the purpose, and this is what moves our will. This is especially clear in the cases where we will things solely on account of the purpose. One who wills to consume a bitter drink wants nothing but his health in doing so, and this alone is what moves his will. (The case is not so clear with one who consumes a sweet drink; he might will it not only for his health but also for its own sake.) So, since God only wills other things on account of the purpose which is His own good state, as I said, His willing them does not carry the consequence that anything else moves His will besides His own good state. Thus, just as He understands things other than Himself in understanding His own essence, so He wills things other than Himself in willing His own good state.

† *ratio movendi*

ad (3): from the fact that God's good state is enough for His will, what follows is not

He wills nothing else

but

He only wills anything else by reason of His good state.

In much the same way, the divine understanding, too, although completed by its cognizing the divine essence, still cognizes therein other things.

ad (4): as the divine understanding is *one* act, because God only sees many things in *one* object, so also the divine willing is one and simple, because God only wills many things through *one* object, His good state.

² 'Wills' is a two-place predicate, whereas 'exists' is one-place. This much is surface grammar (*modus significandi*).

³ Now the answer turns to a deeper point. 'God exists' posits an extra-mental (extensional) thing. But in 'God wills ...', the blank has to be filled with an intensional object. The object willed, *qua* object, is not an extra-mental *thing* but a mental formation, an evaluated "known." So if God wills Himself and also wills *O*, the fact that *O* is other than God does not make God *be* another thing, extensionally.

Cajetan's Commentary

The title is clear. — In the article's body, Aquinas does two jobs: (1) he answers the question with yes, God wills other things; (2) he indicates how God does so (where it says, "But the structure of His willing ...").

As to job (1), the conclusion answering the question is: God wills Himself and other things as well. — The support is this. [*Antecedent:*] Natural things, insofar as they are complete, are naturally inclined to communicate their good to other things; so [*1st inference:*] it pertains to the defining makeup of a will that it would communicate to others the good one has; so [*2nd inference:*] this pertains especially to the divine will; so [*3rd inference:*] God wills Himself and other things, too.

The antecedent is clarified and supported. It is clarified by distinguishing a nature's inclination into two: (a) inclination to its own good, and (b) inclination to the good of other things. The support is from an effect: each complete agent yields an effect similar to itself.¹

The first inference rests on the proportional likeness between natural inclining and rational inclining (*i.e.* willing). — The second inference is supported on the ground that every complete trait is derived from God's will as bearing a similarity to it, as a house in timbers bears a similarity to the house willed by the architect. — The third inference needs no support.

A first doubt

ii. Doubt arises about the course of this argument. The reasoning seems to rest on the rule that any complete trait of a lower thing is to be posited proportionally [*i.e.* in analogous form] in a higher thing. The first and second inferences both seem to rely on this:

– the first does, because it goes from the fact that, if a nature is complete, its inclination tends toward the good of another *to alleging that* an inclination prompted by an apprehension also tends towards the good of another;

– the second does, too, because [it says that] if this is found in any will, it is found most especially in the divine Will as the most perfect one and the one that better yields effects similar to itself than any other will or any other complete agent, since every complete trait is derived from It.

¹ The idea that every complete thing tends to spread its good/complete state is not from Aristotle's genuine works but from neo-Platonic sources (the *Liber de Causis* or the works of Denis the pseudo-Areopagite). It creates a lovely world-picture, but it has even less scientific support than Aristotle's *orexis*. Ask the antelope how a mature lion "spreads" its good state. In biology, at least, a thing once mature does tend to re-produce itself; but in physics, an element whose atom is complete is causally inert. The scholastics salvaged the spreading good by reducing it to the tautology that every complete thing produces such effects as it has the power to produce. But then there is no *informative* analogy at all between the animate and the inanimate. So, one is sorry that this alleged comparison between willing and natural tending seems not to illustrate Aquinas' argument in this article but to constitute it. Important remarks are about to come up, however, in Cajetan's comments.

Well, in reasoning on this basis there is latent the following false proposition:

(C) God's willing other things is a *complete* trait of His will.

Ergo, the reasoning is false. — That (C) is latent in the reasoning can be seen this way: if inclining towards the good of another were not being taken for a *complete* trait, it would not be valid to infer

so such inclining is to be posited in a will,
nor so it is to be posited in the divine will especially,

because all predicates applied to God and creatures ('wills', 'understands' *etc.*) are so treated that we take the predicate to apply to God just in what there is of perfection in it, with all incompleteness removed. — That (C) is false is obvious. If God did will nothing but Himself, He would be just as "complete" as He is now. Willing other things adds nothing to His *being-complete* [and so it is not a complete trait].

Resolving the doubt

iii. There are two ways to respond to this, one for each sense in which 'God wills other things' can be taken, namely, (1) God is actually willing other things, or (2) God potentially wills other things. *i.e.* has what it takes to will other things, whether He actually does or not. If Aquinas' conclusion is understood in way (2), there is nothing dubious about it; having what it takes to will other things is a complete trait in God, as having what it takes to produce other things is complete of a nature. And God could not fail to have what it takes to will other things, though it could have been the case that He did not actually will other things.

But if Aquinas's conclusion is taken in way (1), the doubt is hard to resolve. Still, it seems to me that

- the inference should be called optimal, if we are talking about willing in general. Traits like friendship-love and generosity, by which we will a good of others, pertain to perfecting willing in such a way that [without them] completeness would be lacking to acts of willing. A sign of this is the fact that charity is [a grace] infused into the will, and a grace does not change the nature of the subject *S* receiving it but completes *S* in *S*'s own line.²
- The inference is also good if we are talking about the divine will specifically, but proportionality must be taken strongly into account. If inclining toward the good of other things is a complete trait of a

² Cajetan has started to argue independently of comparisons to natural inclining. He has picked up what the *dubium* faulted, the latent premise (C), counted it true, and so deduced willing good to others from the nature of willing itself, on the ground that what can perfect an item is some kind of fact about its nature. (The argument could also have been made by sticking to acquired moral virtues as the "signs.") However, the *dubium* is not routed yet. Can one count (C) true without running into a theological error? Cajetan faces this next.

nature *N* in the manner of the nature *N*, then it follows that inclining toward the good of other things will be a complete trait of a will in the manner of a will, i.e. as a voluntary trait. And if inclining toward the good of other things voluntarily is a complete trait of a will, then inclining toward the good of other things divinely voluntarily will be a complete trait of divine willing.

When you add 'divinely voluntarily' to a complete trait, you are putting two constraints on that trait: (a) that it be voluntary, and (b) that it be totally free and independent, to match the nature of the First Will. Now, conceding that God's willing other things is a voluntary and entirely free complete trait is not awkward in any way. For it does not carry the implication some complete trait (that of willing other things) could have been absent from God,

but a voluntary and entirely free complete trait could have been absent from God.

The modifier restricts the definition of being "a complete trait" with respect to the subject in which it is found, because it means that the trait's opposite is not an imperfection [in that subject].³

Another doubt

iv. Concerning the same deduction, *re* the very wording of the text, another doubt arises. What seems to follow from Aquinas' reasoning is not only that God wills other things but that He wills all of them He can. (This comes out in the text where it says the divine will is supposed to communicate good to other things "to the extent possible.") But this is false. God obviously *can* will many things He does not will.

The SHORT ANSWER is that God's willing other things — as the next article is about to say — is entirely free and has no cause; *that* God wills other things can only be learned *after the fact* or from revelation; and hence that He wills *these or those* other things can only be learned the same way. Moreover, the course of argument in this article was not designed to show

that He wills other things,
but only to show

that willing other things belongs to the perfection — but voluntary perfection — of divine willing.⁴
Hence willing *all* other things vs. *some* other things, these vs. those other things, is not yet under discussion here, and cannot be. Since what is concluded to here is

³ The general point here is that a trait ϕ is "complete" relative to a given *kind* of thing only. Hearing helps to complete an animal but not a mineral, and so lacking ears is no imperfection in a diamond. But there is also a more specific point of interest. A *voluntary and free* complete trait (for a kind *K*) is an optional alternative way for a *K*-thing to be "perfect." Inclining to share the good one has with others is not an optional way for human willing to be perfect (nor any other created kind); but it is optional for God's willing.

⁴ Cajetan's interpretation has to be correct, because there

a voluntary perfection, and since the divine will is a law and reason unto itself, nothing can be said reasonably at this point except what the text does say, i.e., that willing other things pertains [to God's willing] to the extent possible (taking 'possible' in terms of ordinate power, not unqualified power) which amounts to saying: *to the extent the divine will itself wills it.*⁵

Analysis resumed

v. As to job (2), Aquinas distinguishes two ways in which an item is willed: (a) as the purpose, (b) as for the purpose. He says that God wills Himself as the purpose, other things as for the purpose. How each is the case is supported or clarified by saying, "because it befits God's good state that other things should share in it." We experience in our own case that, when we love ourselves perfectly, we not only will ourselves to exist, live, etc., but also will for ourselves what befits us; and from there we will to be of good effect — it is not that we first-off will goods for others, but that, because we will what befits us, the good of others follows. Because it befits God's good state to be shared in, God wills goods for other things because it befits Him (or His good state). So He wills Himself as the purpose and wills things other than Himself as for the purpose, since they are "for Himself" in the way stated.

This is not to demean the generosity or love of God towards us, so highly praised in Scripture, but to glimpse that God's own good state is so vastly lovable that a creature is not even open* to being loved this way. What is not loved by God in a way it cannot be loved by God loses nothing [in not being loved that way]. Indeed, we glimpse supremely generous love towards us when we see that being-shared-in suits God's good state in such a way that not-being-shared-in does not ill-suit it! Being-shared-in suits God's good state in such a way that nothing accrues to Him, but only to us! Thus it emerges that God's freely willing this suitable item = His choosing *our* good, because it is willing His own good state in such a way that we, too, exist. For without any hurt to Himself, He could also have willed His good state in such a way that nothing shared in it, as is about to come out in the next article.⁶

is no other way to reconcile a.2 with the up-coming a.3. And notice how big a difference this makes in how a.2 is to be read! If it was not designed to prove *that God wills other things*, then it was not designed to prove *this* from the natural inclinations of things, as if the inevitability of creatures were demonstrable in an Aristotelian science of nature. No, if a.2 was only designed to prove that willing other things is a (voluntary) perfection suitable to divine willing, then its argument from natural inclinations only shows that science is *compatible with and illustrative of* the doctrine coming next in article 3.

⁵ God's ordinate power covered what was possible for Him to produce *consistent* with His (logically) prior decisions.

⁶ In this closing section, Cajetan (a) finds another way to argue from the nature of willing itself, independently of comparison to natural inclining, and (b) spikes the idea that God's willing other things, though free, was His only good option.

Does God necessarily will whatever He wills?

In I Sent. d.43, a.2; 1 *CG* cc.80-83; 3 *CG* c.47; *De Veritate* q.23, a.4, *De Potentia* q.1, a.5, q.10, a.2 ad 6

It seems that, whatever God wills, He wills necessarily.

(1) After all, anything eternal is necessary. Anything God wills, He wills eternally (otherwise His will would be subject to change). Ergo, anything He wills, He wills necessarily.

(2) Besides, God wills things other than Himself insofar as He wills His own good state [*bonitas*]. But He wills His own good state necessarily. So He wills other things necessarily.

(3) Moreover, whatever is natural to God is necessary, because God is intrinsically "necessary to be" and is the source of every necessariness, as shown above.¹ Well, it is natural to Him to will whatever He does will, because there can be nothing in God but His nature, as it says in *Metaphysics V*. Therefore, He necessarily wills whatever He wills.

(4) Again, 'not necessary to be' is equivalent to 'possible not to be'. So if it is not necessary that God will an item He does will, it is possible for Him not to will that item and to will something else He doesn't. In that case, God's will is contingent, i.e. can go either way. In that case, His will is incomplete, since everything contingent is incomplete and subject to change.

(5) Also, from a cause that can go either way, no definite action follows unless that cause is inclined one way by something else, as Averroes says on *Physics II*. So if God's will can go either way on certain points, something else determines which effect it will have. And in that case, God's will has a cause prior to itself.

(6) Furthermore, whatever God knows, He knows necessarily. But as God's knowing is His essence, so His willing is His essence. Hence, whatever God wills, He wills necessarily.

ON THE OTHER HAND, in Ephesians 1:11, the Apostle calls God the one who "worketh all things according to the decision of His will." We do not necessarily will what we do out of the decision of our will. It is not the case, therefore, that God necessarily wills whatever He does will.

ANSWER: a proposition is called necessary two ways: (1) in its own right, or (2) given this and that. A proposition necessary in its own right is judged to be so by the connexion* between its terms, e.g. because the predicate enters into defining the subject (as 'a man is an animal' is necessary), or because the subject comes up in defining the predicate (as 'a number is even or odd' is necessary). There is no necessity of this kind about

* *habitudinis*

¹ This is an allusion to the notorious Third Way, where modal notions that are ambiguous as between a temporal and a non-temporal interpretation are used to prove that there is a thing which is "of itself" necessary-to-be (i.e., self-perpetual). See above, footnote 5 on the text of q.2, a.3.

'Socrates is sitting', and so it is not necessary in its own right. But it can be necessary "given this or that," e.g., given that he sits: 'he sits while he sits' is necessary.²

This has to be borne in mind when thinking about the items God wills. His willing some is necessary in its own right, but this is not true of all the items He wills. After all, the divine will has a necessary connexion to His good state, which is its proper object. So God necessarily wills that His good state be there — much as our willing necessarily wills that our happiness be had, and much as any other faculty has a necessary connexion to its proper first-off object (as sight has to color) because it belongs to the faculty's defining makeup that it should tend to that object.

But God wills things other than Himself insofar as they are ordered to His good state, as to their purpose. When we will a purpose, we are under no necessity to will *particular* means for the purpose, unless they are such that, without them, the purpose cannot be had at all (which is how we will food when we aim to stay alive, and how we will a ship when we aim to cross the sea). But we are under no such necessity to will means *without* which the purpose can be had (such as a horse for travel, because we can get there without it, and the same goes for other travel-aids). The upshot is this:

- since God's good state is complete and can exist without the other things (because no scintilla of perfection accrues to Him from them), 'God wills other things' is not necessary in its own right;
- nevertheless, it is necessary given this or that: given that He wills them, He cannot not will them, because His will cannot be changed.

TO MEET THE OBJECTIONS — *ad* (1): 'God wills x eternally' does not imply 'God wills x necessarily', except in the given-this-or-that sense.³

ad (2): although God necessarily wills His own good state. He does not necessarily will the items He wills for that state, because it can exist without them.

ad (3): willing the other items (the ones He doesn't will necessarily) is not "natural" to God, but neither is it "unnatural" or "against nature." It is voluntary.

ad (4): at times a necessary cause has non-necessary connexion to an effect because of defect in the effect, not in the cause. The sun's power has non-necessary

² Calling a proposition, *p*, necessary "given this or that" meant either the case where *p* was the consequent in a strict implication, e.g., $c(p \supset p)$, or it meant that events had made *p* true; cf. q.14, a.13, especially notes 15 and 16.

³ The objection identified eternal with necessary because it mistook 'does not change over time' for 'cannot be otherwise'. 'God wills x' could have been otherwise at eternity; but if it is true at eternity, it cannot become false over time.

connexion to some of the things that turn up contingently here below, not because of a defect in the sun's power, but because the effect fails to be made necessary by a further cause's arrival. Similarly, the fact that God does not necessarily will some of the items He wills does not arise from a defect in God's willing but from one attaching to the item-willed thanks to its reason for being willed, *i.e.*, because the item is such that God's good state can be complete without it. This defect attaches to every created good.

ad (5): a cause contingent *in itself* has to be determined to a given effect by something outside it. But God's willing has necessariness in itself, and it determines itself to a willed item to which it has no necessary connexion.

ad (6): the divine willing in itself, like the divine knowing in itself, is necessary, just as the divine being in itself is necessary.⁴ [But in relation to their objects,

⁴ This sentence is about the exercise of these acts. As God's exercise of existing (*esse*) is necessarily occurring, and His *esse* = His *scire* = His *velle*, His exercise of knowing and willing is necessarily occurring.

the knowing and the willing are different.] The divine knowing has necessary connexion to its objects-known, whereas the divine willing has no such connexion to its objects-willed.⁵ The reason for this difference is that knowledge of things is had "as they are in the knower" [*secundum quod sunt in sciente*] whereas willing bears upon things "as they are in themselves" [*secundum quod sunt in seipsis*].⁶ So since all items other than God have necessary being "as they are in God" but do not have it in their own right "as they are in themselves," so as to exist necessarily of themselves, the result is that God necessarily knows whatever He knows but does not necessarily will whatever He wills.

⁵ Existing does not take an object, but knowing and willing take objects which specify them to be a knowing-of-this, a willing-of-that. Given God's exercise of knowing and willing, then, their object-wise specification is a further issue, and here they differ.

⁶ This does not mean that the will takes extensional things as its objects but that willing an item is about *making* it an extensional thing (an existent in the real). This is why we speak of one's will as being "done" or "carried out" when its objects are made to exist or occur in the real.

Cajetan's Commentary

The title is clarified in the text. — In the body of the article, two jobs are done: (1) the term 'necessary' as used in the title is clarified as to how many ways it is used; the necessary "in its own right" is distinguished from the necessary "given this or that," as one can see; (2) a conclusion is laid down answering the question: God's willing some object is necessary in its own right, but His willing every object can only be called necessary in the sense of "given this or that."

This conclusion has three parts. The first part [God's willing some object is necessary in its own right] is supported thus. [*Antecedent:*] The will, like any faculty, has a necessary connexion to its proper first-off object; ergo [*inference:*] God necessarily wills His own good state; so He necessarily wills something.
* *inducto* — The antecedent is supported two ways, by example* and by a reason. The examples are our own will and eyesight. The reason is: because it belongs to the faculty's defining makeup that it should tend to this, *i.e.* to its distinctive and first-attained object. — Drawing the inference is supported on the ground that the divine state of well-being is the distinctive and equivalent object of the divine will.

Next, the second part of the conclusion [that not every object God wills is willed necessarily in its own right] is supported, as follows. [*Major:*] When we will an end, we do not necessarily will definite means to it, unless they are such that, without them, the end cannot be had; [*minor:*] but the way God wills things other than Himself is as ordered to His good state, as

[means] are ordered to their end, and His good state can exist without them; [*conclusion:*] ergo God does not necessarily will things other than Himself. So, not all objects are such that God's willing them is necessary in its own right. — The major premise is supported and made visibly true by three examples, the first two bearing on the exceptional case [where the means must be willed], and the third bearing on the case at hand. — The minor premise is supported on the ground that God's good state is so complete all by itself that no perfection accrues to it from other things.

Last, the third part of the conclusion [that God's willing other things can be necessary "given this or that"] is supported thus. God's will can't be changed; so, given that He does will *x*, He cannot not will *x*. So, His willing things other than Himself is necessary "given this or that," which was the point to be proved.

Thus the whole conclusion is duly and properly supported.

On the support for the first part

- ii.* *Re* the support for the conclusion's first part, observe that the general principle appealed to, every faculty has necessary connexion to its proper object, is not taken as a statement about the *exercise* of the faculty's act, but about the *specification* of it. In other words, it is not saying that every faculty, *F*, is necessarily in exercise towards its object (for we experience that our faculties are sometimes idle), but that if *F* is in

exercise, it has to be in exercise towards *F*'s proper object. This is tantamount, after all, to saying that *F*'s exercised act has a necessary connexion to *F*'s proper object. This is what is meant by that general principle, and it serves perfectly well in this context, where the question is not about the exercise of an act but about the specification of an exercised act. The question is not whether God *does any willing* but whether *what He wills* is necessarily willed. It is obvious here that what is being asked for (*re* the exercised act implicitly mentioned in 'whatever He wills') is its specification: is the act connected necessarily or non-necessarily to the object willed? — The accuracy of the inductive examples (whether sight connects this way to color exactly, or our will to happiness exactly) is of no concern to our present topic. It is neither here nor there. If they do not connect this way to those objects, they connect to their correct proper objects, whatever they are. We give examples, after all, so that students may understand.

Doubting the support for the second part

iii. Concerning the support for the conclusion's second part, doubt arises. For it seems false to say that no perfecting of God's good state accrues to it from His willing other things. After all, in the preceding article and in 1 *CG* c.75, you have it in so many words that God wills other things because of willing His own completion in perfection. Ergo the divine essence's being willed *perfectly* depends on His willing other things. And if that is the case, then since God has to will His essence perfectly, it follows that other things *have to be* willed by God — the very opposite of what Aquinas concludes here and elsewhere.

The answer cannot be to say: look, the text does not claim that no perfecting accrues to God's good state from the *willing of other things*; it just says that none accrues from the other *things willed*. This reply is childish. For one thing, the reasoning in the text, asking about the *willing* of other things, would become worthless. For another, the objection cuts against precisely the *willing* of other things, even if this text never existed.

Again, the answer cannot be to say: look, whether God's good state is loved perfectly does not depend on His willing other things, but *vice versa*, i.e. His willing other things depends on the fact that His good state is loved perfectly. For while this is true (as it says in the same passages), it does not evade the difficulty. For with this being the case, it still follows that other things are willed by God necessarily. For since it is not only necessary that God will His good state but also necessary that He will it perfectly. His willing other things is a *necessary* concomitant, as the objection said. Ergo [the doubt is not resolved].

Solution

iv. The thing to say is that there are two senses in which a thing is willed [more perfectly or completely]: one is the *intensive* sense, and one is the *extensive*

sense. These are so different that the first sets the level of a love's perfection, while the second does not but only extends what the love embraces. (If we find it written sometimes that the second pertains to love's *perfectio*, the remark is to be understood in terms of full-extent-of-scope, not flat-out "perfection.") So, in the case at hand, God's own good state is willed by God necessarily and "utterly perfectly" in the sense of intensive perfection, because it is loved infinitely, as it is infinitely lovable. But the modality with which it is "perfectly willed" in the sense of extensive coverage is not "necessarily" but "freely." His good state's being loved along the lines of what befits it from without, or as it is diffused, shared in, and multiplied along the lines of resemblances to it, does not pertain to the intensive perfection of love, but to extensive completeness and so should not be counted among the traits necessary for God but among those suiting Him *at His discretion*.^{*} So: it is because God *freely* loves His good state "perfectly" in this sense of 'perfectly' that He *freely* wills other things, and not *vice-versa*. Properly speaking, then, no scintilla of perfection even in the sense of extensive completeness accrues to God's good state *from other things or from the willing of other things*; but the other way about: from the extensively complete volition of His own good state. God wills existence and other complete traits for other things.

Grasping the answers *ad* (4) and *ad* (5)

v. For the answers *ad* (4) and (5), pay close attention to the teaching in 1 *CG* c.82, on how the trait of being contingent-to-go-either-way arises on two sides: at times from the cause, and at times from the effect of which it is predicated. From that passage you will understand more fully what is said here very tersely.

Plus, from the remarks made here and explained there, you see how <crude and> novel the discussion by Scotus was (on 1 *Sentences* d.39), in which he called God's will the "first contingent cause." It is out of bounds to say there is "contingency" in the divine will. Rather, as the text here says, God's willing is necessary in itself but has non-necessary connexion to items secondarily willed (if words like 'necessary' and 'contingent' have to be applied to it at all). It is far more appropriate to speak of it with the word 'free', as St. Thomas says elsewhere, because 'free' holds middle place between 'necessary' and 'contingent'. 'Necessary' posits impossibility to be otherwise; 'contingent' posits possibility to be otherwise *successively*, i.e. by way of being changed.[†] But 'free' means 'can be otherwise' without meaning 'subject to change'.[‡]

* *liberè*

Cf 1 *Sent.* d. 43, q. 2, a. 1 *ad* 4

† *mutabiliter*

[‡] Scotus used the modalities in such a way that their use with a proposition (if its falsity implies no contradiction, it is "contingent") shaped their use with a thing (if its non-obtaining implies none, it is contingent). Aquinas and Cajetan kept an older use, in which modality had a different sense when applied to things: a physical sense related to change with time or over time. This allowed God's attempted will to be *necessary* (*immutable* over time) yet free to will otherwise at eternity.

Understanding the answer *ad* (6)

vi. In the answer *ad* (6), observe that the proposition, “whatever God knows, He knows necessarily,” is perfectly true and free from doubt, if taken to be talking about God’s knowledge by pure understanding, which naturally precedes His act of willing.² And this seems to be what the text intends, because it is dealing in this argument with knowing other things *as distinguished from* willing them. It is true to say of objects known by God independently of His willing that they “have [intensional] being in God necessarily.”

But if anybody wants to take this proposition as talking about *all* objects known by God on any footing whatever, let him bear in mind that contingent states of affairs, such as my being engaged now in writing, do not obtain necessarily but freely, and so they *freely* have being in God, not necessarily. Hence the answer *ad* (6) does not apply to these. Still, there is a *kind* of necessariness involved in God’s knowing even these things, which is not involved in His willing them. For every point knowable, as soon as it is a knowable, *has to be known* by God; but it is not the case that every item willable, as soon as it is willable, has to be willed by God. Of course not. The reason for this divergence is that every “truth” and hence every point-known has to be in God because a known is *known* thanks to being

² The knowledge by pure understanding (*scientia simplicis intelligentiae*) was God’s understanding of Himself and all the possible ways in which He could be resembled. This understanding had logical and explanatory priority over God’s willing, because willing something presupposes understanding it and understanding it as good.

in a knower. But it is not the case that every good has to be (or eventually be) in existence on its own; and hence it is not the case that every good has to be willed by God.

Now from the point just stated there emerges the aforementioned difference between the various objects known by God. Those that are knowables *of themselves* are necessarily known by God in the strong sense of ‘necessary in its own right’. Those objects that get to be true or real, and hence get to be knowable, from the divine will are necessarily known but only in the weak sense of ‘necessary given that they are true or real’. By contrast, of course, nothing other than God, no matter how *good* it is supposed to be, is necessarily willed by God. So, if the words of the text are taken very formally, they can be taken as talking about knowables and lovable across the board — so as to say that every knowable is necessarily known by God [in some sense of ‘necessarily’], but not every lovable is necessarily willed — because every knowable has [intensional] being in God, necessarily (even though, for some of them, their being a knowable is not necessary), whereas not every lovable has or will have existence necessarily.

Mind carefully also, and understand rightly, the wording of the text in giving the reason just discussed. It does not mean to exclude any and all necessity from the universe (as 2 *CG* c.30 proves), but just necessity of *existing*. Nothing flatly “has to be” except God. This is intimated by the words, “so as to exist necessarily of themselves.” But as to [intensional] being in God, the text does mean to say flatly that everything or every knowable has to have it.

Is God's will a cause of things?

In I Sent d.43, q.2, a.1; d.45, a.3; 2 *CG* c.23; *De Potentia* q.1, a.5, q.3, a.15

It looks as though God's will is not a cause of things.

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(1) In c. 4 of *De divinis nominibus*, Denis says: "Just as the sun, without thought or preference, but by its very being, illuminates all things able to share in its light, so also the divine Good, by its sheer essence, sheds the rays of its goodness into all things existent."¹ Well, every agent who acts through willing acts as one thinking and preferring. Ergo God does not act by willing. Hence, His will is not a cause of things.

(2) Besides, what is such-and-such by its essence comes first in any series of such things.¹ In a series of things burning, for example, what comes first is that which is on fire by its essence. Well, God is the first agent. Ergo He is agent by His essence, which is His nature. So He acts by His nature and not by willing. Therefore, the divine will is not a cause of things.

c 32,
PL 34, 32

(3) Moreover, whatever causes an effect by just being thus-and-such is a cause by nature and not by willing. Take the case of fire: it is a cause of other things' getting hot just by being hot itself — whereas a builder is the cause of a house because he wills to make it. Well, in *De doctrina christiana*, Augustine has the famous line, "Because God is good, we exist."² To go by that text, then, God is the cause of things by His nature and not by willing.

q.14, a.8

(4) Furthermore, a single effect has just one cause. But the cause of created things, it was maintained above, is God's optimal knowing. Therefore, His will should not be added as a cause of them.

ON THE OTHER HAND, Wisdom 11:26 asks, "And how could any thing endure, hadst thou not willed it?"

ANSWER: it is necessary to say that God's will is a cause of things, and that God acts by volition — not by necessity of nature, as some writers have supposed. This can be seen on three grounds.

e 5;
196b 21

(1) The first is drawn from the ordered series of agent causes. Since both mind and nature act on account of a purpose, as proved in *Physics II*, it has to be the case that a purpose (plus any necessary means to it) are pre-established for an agent that is acting just by its nature — pre-established by a higher mind, as an arrow's target and a definite path to it are settled in advance by the archer. So, the ordered series has to be such that an agent acting by its mind and will is prior to one acting by its sheer nature. So, since God is the first in the series of agents, it has to be the case that He acts by understanding and willing.

* ratio

(2) The second is drawn from the theory* of natural agency. A thing acting by its nature produces a

constant effect, because a nature works in a constant way unless it is impeded. The reason is that what acts "by its nature" acts because it is such-and-such. So long as it is such-and-such, it only does thus-and-such, because everything that acts by its nature has a limited being [limited to being such-and-such].* Ergo, since the divine being is not limited, but contains in itself the whole completeness of being, the divine being cannot act by a necessity of its nature, unless it were to cause a thing unlimited and infinite in its being — which (as emerged above) is impossible. Therefore, the divine being does not act by necessity of nature. From God's limitless completeness, limited effects proceed thanks to a limit set by His will and understanding.

* esse determi-
natum

q.7, a.2 ad 1

(3) The third ground is drawn from the connexion of effects to their cause. The manner in which effects proceed from an agent-cause is the manner in which they pre-exist in it, because every agent-cause produces something similar to itself. Well, effects pre-exist in a cause after the cause's own fashion. So, since God's being is His act of understanding, God's effects pre-exist in Him after the fashion of things understood.¹ So they proceed from Him after the fashion of things understood. In consequence, they proceed by way of willing;² for inclining to produce what the mind has conceived is a case of willing.

† secundum mo-
dum intelligibile

‡ secundum mo-
dum voluntatis

Therefore, God's will is a cause of things.

TO MEET THE OBJECTIONS — *ad* (1): Denis' text did not mean to exclude choice from God entirely but only in a certain sense, *i.e.* that God does not communicate His goodness to some things only, but to all. In other words, Denis only meant to exclude choice in the sense that implies invidious discrimination.

ad (2): since God's essence *is* His understanding and willing, the fact that He acts by His essence entails that He acts by understanding and willing.

ad (3): "good" is the will's object. So the famous line, "Because God is good, we exist," is tantamount to saying that God's good state is the reason why He willed everything else, as I said above.

q.19, a.2

ad (4): with us, one and the same human product has both our knowledge as its cause (as the guide by which the form of the product is conceived) and our will as its cause (as commanding its production). As present in our intellect alone, the form is indifferent as between being produced or not: only our will settles this; and so our theoretical understanding says nothing about putting [the form conceived] into effect. But a power or faculty is a "cause" of things inasmuch as it puts-into-effect, because 'power' or 'faculty' names the immediate source of a doing. [Ergo, in our experience, the title of being a cause of things goes more properly to the will.] But in God, of course, these [the intellect, the form conceived, and the will] are all one reality.

¹ The kind of series meant was a partially ordered set of φ -things such that, for any x, y in the set, if $x < y$, then y was not φ unless x was φ .

Cajetan's Commentary

The title is clear. — In the body of the article, Aquinas does two jobs: (1) he draws a conclusion, and (2) he supports it on three grounds.

As for job (1), he states three things: (a) the conclusion affirmatively answering the question, *i.e.* that God's will is a cause of things; (b) the implication of this, namely, that God acts by willing and not by necessity of nature; (c) the fact that some people have thought God did act by necessity of nature.

Two senses of 'natural necessity'

ii. Notice here that 'act by necessity of nature' can be understood two ways.

(1) Taken one way, it means the same as 'act nature-wise' in the sense Aristotle distinguished natural agents from those acting by choice in *Physics II* text 49 and in *Metaphysics IX* texts 3 and 10. In this sense, to act "nature-wise" is to act not because the agent wills this (even if he does) but because the agent is thus-and-such. A clear example is human reproduction: even if Socrates wants to beget a child, he does not beget one because he wants to but because he is in thus-and-such natural condition, *etc.*

c.5: 196b 17
c.2: 1046b 9f, 19f

(2) Taken the other way, it means the same as 'act not freely' in the sense in which we say that God loves Himself (or that we love "good") not freely but by natural necessity.¹

Both senses are thought to apply to God: there is something He does, not because He wants to (although He does want to) but because He is of such-and-such a nature (says 2 *CG* c.23), and there is something He does because He understands and wills, but He does so with a natural necessity to understand and will thus (as in 2 *CG* cc.26-27). But in the present text, 'act by necessity of nature' is taken the first way, so that the present intent is to show that there are things God does because He wills, and not because He is.

By conjoining the conclusion of this article to the conclusion of the previous article, you have enough to settle the second issue [the implication listed as point (b) under job (1)]. For if God acts because He wills (as shown here), and the only thing He wills naturally is Himself, so as to will other things freely (as shown in the previous article), then He produces the other things because He freely wills to do so.

The support: ground (1)

iii. As for job (2), the intended conclusion is supported on three grounds. The first, drawn from the or-

¹ In short, *x* does *A* by natural necessity in the first sense when the right explanation of *x*'s doing *A* does not mention what or if *x* wills (but mentions only some other property that *x* has). By contrast, *x* does *A* by natural necessity in the second sense when the right explanation of *x*'s doing *A* does mention what *x* wills but takes the form of saying that *x*'s will itself works in such a way that *x* could not will otherwise.

dered series of agent-causes, goes as follows. [*Antecedent:*] Both nature and the mind act on account of a purpose; so [*1st inference:*] for an agent acting by its nature, a purpose (plus means to it) are pre-established by some understanding; ergo [*2nd inference:*] what acts through its understanding is prior to what acts by its nature; ergo [*3rd inference:*] God is an agent through His understanding and willing.

The antecedent is supported by *Physics II*. The first inference is illustrated with the example of an arrow. The second is left as obvious. The third is supported by the fact that God is the first agent. — Don't be disturbed by the fact that the first inference is so lightly drawn. After all, everyone knows* that acting on account of a purpose [*finis*] requires that the purpose be known, if not by the *x* heading toward it, then by something directing *x* toward it, as in the case of the arrow. And since it is clear that "a nature" *qua* a nature does not know, it has to be directed to the purpose by a knower.²

* *communis animi conceptio est*

Also, there is no difference in this context between acting through understanding and acting through willing. Understanding never produces *x* without willing, which is intellectual striving, and willing never produces *x* without understanding, because an *understood* good is what starts the willing. So Aquinas committed no fallacy in shifting from the one to the other.

Ground (2)

iv. The second ground, from the theory of natural agency, is supported thus. [*Antecedent:*] What acts by its nature acts because it is such-and-such; so [*1st inference:*] it operates in one, constant way; so [*2nd inference:*] it produces one, constant effect; so [*3rd inference:*] it has a limited being; so [*4th inference:*] God cannot be acting by His nature; so [*5th inference:*] limited effects proceed from His infinite good state thanks to a limit set by His understanding and willing.

The antecedent is supported by an effect, *i.e.*, that so long as the agent is such-and-such, it only does thus-and-such. — The first inference, along with the second

² Thus I have Cajetan's support for translating '*finis*' with 'purpose' and for rejecting "natural teleology" unless it admits intelligent design. Of course, the premise that nature works on account of a purpose is widely dismissed today, because Darwin is thought to have provided a conceptual alternative, which has shown immense explanatory power. But the situation is less straightforward than it seems. Darwinian theory offers a clear-cut alternative only to the extent that the factors to which it appeals are sharply distinguished from what the Medievalists called *finis*. As comes out in 2/1 *ST* q. 1, a.2, a *finis* in nature, for Aquinas, was any predictable outcome, and a "tending to a *finis*" was any constraint that gave natural processes predictable outcomes. Evolution, like any other scientific theory, is all about such outcomes and constraints. Ah, but why call them "purposes"? Well, the only reason Aquinas called them purposes was because he thought God intended them. An empirical theory offers no support for this belief, but neither does it pose an obstacle. The obstacle comes from Darwinism interpreted not as bioscience but as an anti-theist metaphysics.

and third, is left as obvious. The first and second proceed, indeed, *a priori*. The third inference (for whose sake the prior steps were introduced) implies the second one *a posteriori*. The fourth inference is supported on the ground that God's being is not limited, which is a clear consequence of the fact that God's being contains within itself the whole completeness of being. The strength of this support is shown by reduction *ad impossibile*: if infinite being were to cause a thing nature-wise, it would cause a thing infinite in being, which is impossible; ergo [God does not cause nature-wise]. — The fifth inference is obvious from how the two types of agents are distinguished.

v. Notice how this argument concludes; it says: God cannot produce some limited effect nature-wise all by Himself. But suppose some thinker theorizes that God does not fully cause anything, all by Himself, but gives being to effects with other causes causing them: such a thinker would say that the infinite divine being's proper effect was unlimited in itself, yet was always found in a delimited state, thanks to the seconding causes.³ But this theory conflicts with itself. If the divine being is infinite, the being of all the other, seconding causes must have already emanated from it, because every way-of-being has to come out of the infinite being. In that case, the theory should concede that God can produce some effect all by Himself. Whereupon, He could not do it by necessity of nature, unless there could be an effect whose being was infinite, as it says in the text. So, the argument stands.

Ground (3)

vi. The third ground, drawn from the relation that effects have to their cause, is supported thus. [*Antecedent*:] Effects pre-exist in their cause after the cause's own fashion.* So [1st inference:] effects exist in God after the fashion of things understood; so [2nd inference:] they proceed from Him after the fashion of things understood; so [3rd inference:] they proceed after the fashion of willing; so [4th inference:] God's willing is a cause of things.

The first inference rests on the ground that God's being is His act of understanding. The second inference is supported on the ground that effects proceed from a cause in the manner in which they pre-exist in the cause. This is turn is supported on the ground that every agent produces something similar to itself. The third inference has the support that inclining to produce what has been conceived by understanding is an affair of willing. The last inference is left as obvious.

How effects proceed = how they pre-exist?

vii. Doubt arises about a claim assumed in supporting the second inference. Either it is false, or else it

³ A position like this was held by Avicenna (Solomon ibn Gabirol, ca. 1020-1070). The seconding causes were Platonic Forms. God produced a universal, indeterminate esse, which the Forms then specified.

clashes with its own support; both alternatives are awkward; ergo [the second inference is unsupported]. The claim in question reads this way:

- (1) The manner in which effects proceed from an agent-cause is the manner in which they pre-exist in it;

and as support for this, the text adds:

- (2) because every agent-cause produces something similar to itself.

Well, now: either this "manner" is meant to indicate the how of the effect that proceeds — how the effect itself is — or else it means to indicate the how of the process — how the effect proceeds. If it means [the former, so that (1) becomes]

(1') an effect, *E*, proceeding from a cause, *C*, has a way of being similar to how *E* pre-exists in *C*, then it is compatible with the support given for it, of course, but it is utterly false (e.g. in its manner of being, the house under construction by a builder does not resemble the house in his mind), and it does not follow from the general principle, (2), because (2) is understood [to posit similarity] only as to the form by which the agent acts.⁴ But if 'manner' means the how of the process, so that [(1) becomes]

- (1'') how an effect, *E*, proceeds from its cause, *C*, is the same as or like how *E* pre-exists in *C*,

the support offered is not germane: for as I just said, (2) is understood to posit similarity as to the form by which the agent, *C*, acts, not as to how the form [of the effect] is in *C*. And even so, the claim [1''] has many counterexamples. A house has intentional being in its agent-cause, yet it proceeds therefrom as a sense-object. Heat has incorruptible and universal being in the sun's light, yet it proceeds corruptibly and as a particular. So the business is dubious either way.

Solution

viii. The answer is that principle (2), though invariably true only of the form, should not be limited to that but should be taken to mean as similar as possible:

- (2') every agent-cause produces something as similar to itself as possible.

For we see that if there is a univocal agent-cause of great strength, it produces something similar to itself not only in form but also in individual conditions: a strong male begets a male child (and an ill-tempered man, an ill-tempered child, says *Ethics VIII*).⁵

In the how of the process, then, two sides need to be seen: (1) the how of the process from the cause's side, and (2) the how of the process from the effect's side. If we look at it from the cause's side, it is invariably true

⁴ The form by which the builder built (*forma qua agit*) was his skill or his muscle-state, not his mental blueprint of the house. So claim (2) required the house under construction to resemble only the builder's skill (or his muscular energy output, perhaps). Thus (2) was not falsified if his skill was so poor that the rising house was unlike the blueprint.

⁵ This bit of folklore had no basis in even Aristotle's science.

* *secundum modum
causae*

that the process resembles the manner of existing in the cause, because it is the manner of the pre-existing before it is the manner of the effect in the line of efficient causing. The result is that, as the [effect's] form is proceeding from a form in the cause and so resembles it, so also the manner of the process from the cause's side is from the effect's way of pre-existing in the cause and so resembles it, because every agent-cause yields something similar to itself. And thus it becomes clear how proposition (1) is true of the "how" of the process and is well supported by principle (2).

But if we look at the how of the process from the effect's side, then (1) is not invariably true, as I said; and neither (1) nor (2) was brought in to support such a claim. For the how of the process from the effect's side is how the effect "shares in" or "receives" the cause, rather than how it proceeds from it.

So the counterexamples mentioned do not militate against the point intended. They talk about the "how" of the process from the effect's side, while the text was talking about it from the cause's side. The house proceeds from the builder's skill as a thing-understood, because it proceeds by choice (as it says in *Metaphysics IX*), but the house is received in matter as a sense-object and gets constructed through bodily organs. The effects of the heavenly bodies, too, proceed incorruptibly and universally from the heavenly bodies' side, after the fashion of the forms by which the heavens act (for they proceed through the heavenly bodies' actions, which are everlasting and commensurate with those bodies), but the "sharing" in them down here in the sphere of things that come-to-be [and pass away] *etc.* is full of corruption and lost unity [*dearticulatio*], because the passive reception does not measure up to the causal action.

c 5;
1048a 10-11

Is there an assignable cause of God's will?

1 *ST* q.23, a.5; *In I Sent.* d.41, a.3; 1 *CG* cc.86-87, 3 *CG* c.97; *De Veritate* q.6, a.2, q.23, a.1 *ad* 3; a.6 *ad* 6, *In Ephes.* c.1, *lectio* 1

It seems that God's will has some assignable cause.

(1) In his *Book of 83 Questions*, Augustine asks, "Who would be so bold as to say that God established everything without reason?" But for a voluntary agent, what serves as his reason for acting is also the cause of his willing. So God's will has some cause.

(2) Besides, when things are brought about by a voluntary agent who wills for no cause, the only cause one can assign to the things is the agent's will itself. Well, God's will is the cause of all things, as was just shown. So if His willing has no cause, then, for all natural things, there will be no other cause to look for but the sheer will of God. But if that were so, all the sciences that try to assign causes to various effects would be useless — which hardly seems acceptable. So, some cause had better be assigned to God's will.

(3) Moreover, what a person brings about voluntarily but for no cause depends upon his sheer will. So if God's willing were to have no cause, each thing He brings about would depend solely on His willing it and would have no other cause. Which is awkward.

ON THE OTHER HAND, there is what Augustine says elsewhere in the *Book of 83 Questions*: "Every efficient cause is greater than what it effects; but nothing is greater than God's will;" ergo, no cause of It is to be sought.

I ANSWER: in no way does God's will have a cause. To see this, bear in mind the fact that, since willing is a consequence of understanding, causing someone to will comes about in the same way as causing him to understand. In the case of understanding, it happens like this: if one understands a premise and a conclusion in separate acts, then understanding the premise is the cause of one's knowing the conclusion in a scientific way.¹ But if a mind were to see the conclusion already in the premise itself, apprehending both in one insight, then, for that mind, its knowing the conclusion scientifically would not be caused by its understanding the premises, because one and the same [insight] is not a cause of itself. And yet such a mind would understand that the premises are causes of the conclusion.²

Things go similarly in the case of willing, where a purpose stands to what is for-the-purpose as premises

¹ Our understanding is "caused" more commonly by experiential things causing us to understand facts about them. Aquinas skips over this (as it does not apply to God's case; we are acted upon by things; He is not), so as to focus on cases where we are caused to know a conclusion by premises giving an optimal proof or explanation of it.

² Let *P* = premises, *C* = conclusion. This mind would grasp the cause-of-being relation between the topics of *P* and *C* or the cause-of-knowing relation between the truth of the two.

stand to conclusions in the intellect. So, if somebody wills a purpose in one act and wills what is for-the-purpose in another, his willing the purpose will be the cause of his willing what is for it. But if he wills the purpose and the means to it in one act, the causal relation cannot hold: one and the same [volition] is not the cause of itself.³ And yet it will be true to say that this person wills to order the means to the purpose.

Now, as God (in understanding His own essence) understands all things in one act, so too He wills (in willing His own good state) all things in one act. In God's case, just as His act of understanding a cause does not cause His act of understanding its effect, but yet He understands the effect in the cause, so also His willing the purpose does not cause His willing what is for it, but yet He wills the means to be ordered to the purpose. In short, He wills that this be on account of that, but it is not on account of this that He wills that.⁴

TO MEET THE OBJECTIONS — *ad* (1): God's will is reasoned, not because something causes Him to will, but because He wills one thing to be on account of another.⁵

ad (2): God wills effects to be such that, for good order among them, they arise from definite causes: so it is not useless to look for other causes, even with His will in place. (What would be useless would be to look for other causes as if they were first causes, independent of God's will. This is what Augustine had in mind in *De Trinitate III*, when he said, "It tickled the vanity of philosophers to assign even contingent effects to other causes, because they couldn't see the cause that is higher than all the others, i.e. the will of God.")

ad (3): since God wills that effects be because of causes, any effects presupposing a prior effect do not depend on the divine will alone but on something else. But [effects not presupposing any prior ones, i.e.] first effects depend on the divine will alone. For example, suppose we say this: God willed man to have hands in order to serve his understanding by doing various works, and God willed man to have understanding in order to be human, and God willed the human to exist in order to enjoy God, or to round out the universe. This last sort of reason cannot be traced back to other created purposes more ultimate than it. So, this sort of thing depends on the sheer will of God, but the other sorts depend also on their relation to the other causes.

³ It is crucial for Aquinas that causing is an irreflexive relation; *pace* Descartes, nothing is *causa sui*.

⁴ Between 'willing *x* to cause *y*' and 'willing *x* causes willing *y*', the gap is not narrow, just hard to express sometimes.

⁵ God's will is reasonable because what He wills supports causal inquiry, not because such inquiry explains His willing it.

Cajetan's Commentary

The title question is to be taken the way it sounds, as asking about a real *cause*. — In the body of the article, a single conclusion answers in the negative: there is no cause of the divine willing. — This conclusion is supported and clarified; at the same time, what makes for difficulty in this area, *i.e.*, the fact that God wills other things on account of a purpose, is salvaged.

The support goes thus. [*Antecedent:*] A will that wills a purpose and the means to it in the same act does not have caused volition; so [*inference:*] divine willing has no cause. — The antecedent rests on the ground that one and the same thing is not the cause of itself; the antecedent is also clarified by looking at the opposite case, *i.e.*, our willing a purpose by one act and what is for-the-purpose by another act. — The inference rests on the ground that the divine will, by one act, wills all things in [willing] its own good state.

Clarification is found in a proportional similarity [*i.e.* analogy] between understanding and willing, as far as having or not having a cause is concerned. [They are alike as to] having a cause, in that a mind understanding premises and conclusions in distinct acts has *caused* knowledge. [They are alike as to] not having a cause, in that a mind understanding premises and conclusions in one and the same act does not have knowledge *caused* by the premises, for the same reason, *i.e.*, that the self-same [insight] is not the cause of itself.¹

What introduces difficulty here, namely, the fact that God wills other things because of a purpose, is salvaged in two ways: (1) The first is by pointing out that (a) 'He wills other things because of a purpose' is one thing, and (b) 'He wills other things to be for a purpose' is another, and that the second is true of God, not the first. (2) The second way is by opening up further the analogy* already introduced. A mind understanding conclusions and premises in one act does not understand the conclusion *from* the premises and yet understands *that* the conclusions *are from* the premises; and the story goes analogously in the will. The reason for this whole analogy is touched upon in the text when it says, "since willing is a consequence of understanding [*cum voluntas sequatur intellectum*]."

Four propositions

ii. To clear up the points made here and in the answer *ad* (3), pay attention to these four propositions:

- (1) *this* state of affairs, SA₂, is because of *that* one, SA₁
- (2) God wills SA₂ to be because of SA₁

¹ Perhaps the idea is this. Let the premises be *P* and the conclusion *C*. A mind that understands in separate acts first understands that *P* is true, then comes to see that 'if *P* then *C*' is true, and so (*via* material detachment) has caused knowledge that *C* is true. A mind that understands in one act sees 'if *P* then *C*' already in understanding that *P* is true and so (with material detachment) sees that *C* is true in the same act.

(3) SA₂ is willed by God because of this other state of affairs, SA₁, which is willed by Him

(4) God wills SA₂ because He wills the other one, SA₁. The difference between these is easy to see. (1) talks about things independently [*i.e.* independently of volition, *i.e.* as things in their own right rather than as objects-willed]. (2) talks about the same things as willed by God with a [single,] simple willing. But (3) and (4) seem to involve the causality of one volition upon another. So, to go by the present text, it looks as though (3) and (4) are both to be denied, since the text says explicitly, "it is not on account of this that He wills that [*non propter hoc vult hoc*]."

iii. However, if we consider the author's intent and his answer *ad* (3) more closely, along with the teaching on the matter in 1 *CG* cc.86-87, we have to [distinguish further and] say the following. The act of divine willing that has* this willed object, the universe, say, or man, lacks a cause *on the act's side*, not only as that act is such-and-such an entity [*i.e.* one identical to God's existing] but also as [an intensional affair] having thus-and-such willed object. Ergo: the divine act's *having* the universe as object is not caused on the act's side by its *having* His good state as object. This is what Aquinas means by saying, "it is not on account of this that He wills that." But the same act has a cause *on its object's side*: the being-had of the one is caused by the being-had of the other. In other words, the being-willed of the one is caused by the being-willed of the other. The result is not only that man's existing is (in the purpose-wise sense) "because of" the rounding-out of the universe but also that man's being-willed by God is "because of" the universe's having-been-willed by God.

Suppose you object to this by drawing an inference from the passive voice to the active voice:

if SA₂ is willed by Him because SA₁ is willed by Him, then He wills SA₂ because He wills SA₁.

Your inference has to be denied. Or at least a distinction has to be drawn:

- the reasoning is correct when the passive matches the active [*quando passivum aequatur activo*], but
- it fails when the acting exceeds the being-acted-on, such that the acting is one and the items-acted-on are many; in that case an item-acted-on is caused by an item-acted-on without its being the case that an acting is caused [by an acting].

Rightly so, because the causing and the being-caused require this divergence: the singleness of the acting that has so many objects-acted-on excludes the acting itself from being-caused; but the multiplicity of items-acted-on according to the high count of objects-acted-on does not exclude one such item's being-caused by another.²

² What Cajetan wants to say becomes nicely clear with the help of the term, 'ordered n-tuple'. God freely wills an ordered n-tuple of creaturely objects, <O₁, O₂, . . . O_n>, to be, for the sake of what He wills necessarily, His own good state. Within the n-tuple, the ordering is causal. To use Aquinas' examples,

* *proportio*

* *attinere*

iv. Going back, now, to the four propositions, the right thing to say, it seems, is that not only do

(1) SA₂ is because of SA₁, and

(2) God wills SA₂ to be because of SA₁ ring true, but also

(3) SA₂ is willed by God because of this other state of affairs, SA₁, which is willed by Him rings true, because (3) does not make the volition of SA₂ depend [on a cause] on the side of the act but on the side of the object-willed, and Aquinas is explicit in the place I cited above that, among the objects willed by God, one is the cause of another's coming under the scope of divine volition. But the last proposition,

(4) God wills SA₂ because He wills the other one, SA₁, should not be granted or put into use, because it indicates dependence [on a cause] on the side of the act. If you come across (4) anywhere in the literature, you should give it a pious exposition, as meaning to speak of dependence on the side of the object willed.

man's having hands is because of his mind, his having a mind is because of human existence, and human existence is because of the rounded completeness of the universe (with 'because of' meaning purpose-causality, so that 'because of' can be replaced with 'for the sake of'). More generally: if $i < j$, then o_j is because of o_i ; and since both are objects *willed with that relation between them*, it is correct to say that God wills o_j to be because of o_i . This is Cajetan's proposition (2), and the causal relation within the n-tuple is what Cajetan means to convey when he says the act of willing is caused "on the object's side." But this relation is entirely within the n-tuple. Neither the n-tuple itself nor any state of affairs in it has this causal relation to the *act* with which God wills it. Thus, any claim like ' o_i causes God to will o_j ' would be false, and this is what Cajetan means to convey when he says the act of willing has no cause "on the act's side."

The business about active and passive can now be explained. A real causal relation can only stand between distinct items. The passive voice accommodates this; 'the being-willed of o_j is because of the being-willed of o_i ' makes acceptable sense, because $o_i < o_j$ and so the being-willed of o_i is at least conceptually distinct from the being-willed of o_j . But the apparent conversion to the active voice, 'God wills o_j because He wills o_i ' fails to make sense. God has no second will-act; so He has no two distinct ones. This was Aquinas's chief point. Now take Cajetan's proposition (2) and make it passive: ' o_j to be because of o_i is willed by God'. The gram-

v. Whence you also have the difference between the second objection in the text and the third. The second is talking about the causes of willed things independently of their status as willed; the third is talking about the causes of things in their relation to the divine willing, but on the side of the object willed. For example, the former is saying it would be pointless to ask why man has hands; the latter is saying it would be pointless to ask why God willed man to have hands. So objection (2) is aimed at our proposition (1), but objection (3) is aimed, properly speaking, at our proposition (3). — With this in mind, you will understand the answers to them.

mar of ordinary English (like that of Latin) will hardly tolerate this, nor even the shorter form without the infinitive: ' o_j because of o_i is willed'. Decent idiom wants to say, ' o_j is willed because of o_i ', which will readily be glossed as ' o_j is the reason o_j is willed'. In 1 *CG* c.86, Aquinas accepts these expressions, and says (in c.87) that they do not imply that God's act of willing has a cause. This is correct, because the passive expressions capture the causal relation within the n-tuple (so that even ' o_j is willed because o_i is willed' can be said), but an active-voice expression like 'because of o_i God wills o_j ' would falsely suggest that the causal relation is not between items within the n-tuple but between some item in it and the act of willing it.

It is now time to correct an oversimplification in this exposition. The object of God's free willing is not really a single n-tuple but a set of states of affairs partially ordered by the purpose-wise causal relation. Call the structure a lattice, in which the items-willed occupy the nodes. The simpler image is still useful because, for each object o_j in the lattice that has prior to it another object o_i in the lattice, o_j is because of o_i ; indeed, a path back, from any object o_j , through prior nodes in the lattice, to a first object o_i is strongly ordered. In other words, any given branch in the lattice has the structure of an ordered n-tuple. See G. Birkhoff, *Lattice Theory* (AMS, 1940).

Finally, one can take a wider perspective. God's whole act of willing is the willing of an ordered pair, $\langle G, L \rangle$, in which the first element, G , is God's own good state, and the second, L , is the lattice just discussed. The order within the pair is causal in the purpose-wise way, but again the causal or explanatory order is entirely within the pair, not between it and the act of willing it. So all of the above remarks apply again. Talk like 'because of G , God wills L ' is to be rejected: active-voice talk like 'God wills L to be because of G ' is true, and passive-voice talk like ' L is willed by God because of G ' is acceptable with caution.

Is God's will always carried out?

1 ST q.22, a.2 ad 1; q.103, a.7; In 1 Sent. d.46, a.1, d.47, aa.1-3, De Veritate q.23, a.2; Quodlibet. XI, q.3; XII, q.4; In 1 Tim. c.2, lectio 1; In VI Metaphys., lectio 3

It looks as though the will of God is not always carried out.

(1) The Apostle says in 1 Timothy 2: 4, "God wills all men to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth." Alas, it doesn't always happen. Therefore, God's will is not always carried out.

(2) Besides, as knowing is related to the true, so willing is related to the good. Well, God knows every truth. So He wills every good. But not every good comes to pass. Many good things could be done but are not. It is not the case, then, that God's will is always carried out.

(3) Moreover, since God's will is a first cause, it does not exclude intermediate [secondary] causes, as was conceded already. But the effects of a first cause can be impeded by deficiency in a secondary cause, as a [pilgrim's] virtuous intent is deprived of its effect by weakness in his limbs. So the divine will can also be deprived of its effect by deficiency among secondary causes. It is not the case, therefore, that God's will is always carried out.

ON THE OTHER HAND, it says in Psalm 115: 3, "He hath done all things whatsoever He would."

ANSWER: it has to be the case that God's will is always carried out. To see this, one must consider the fact that a point in the theory* of formal causes also applies to agent causes, since an effect is conformed to its agent cause according to its form.¹ What that point says about forms is this: a thing can fail to have a particular form, but nothing can fail to have a universal form. There can be a thing which is not a man, or is not alive, but there cannot be a thing which is not a being.² Agent-causes, then, must work the same way. There can be a thing eluding the sway of a particular agent-cause [*extra ordinem alicuius causae particularis agentis*], but there can be nothing eluding the sway of the universal cause under which all particular causes are contained. For if a particular cause fails of its effect, it is because another particular cause is impeding it; but that other cause is still under the sway [*ordo*] of the universal cause, and so the upshot cannot in any way elude the sway of the universal cause.³ We see

* ratio

¹ A "formal cause" was an immanent form, i.e. structure or act-state, because of which a thing was thus-structured or thus-in-act. An agent cause was supposed to make what it was acting on resemble itself in the form with which it acted on it.

² How 'particular' and 'universal' contrast here is not as 'concrete' and 'abstract' but as 'narrow' and 'blanket'.

³ An *ordo* was an asymmetric and transitive relation. The causal claim, "x (by being such-and-such) causes y (to be thus-and-such)", expresses such a relation. So, Aquinas called the scope of x's influence its *ordo*.

as much among physical events. A given star can be impeded from inducing its effect, but any physical result following from the physical cause's impeding it has to be traced back *via* intermediate causes to the universal power of the first heavenly sphere.⁴

So, since the will of God is a universal cause of all things, it is impossible that the divine will should not have its effect. What seems to elude the divine will in one line of influence is connected to it in another. A sinner, for example, who does his best to depart from God's will by sinning, falls back into line with it when he or she is punished by God's justice.⁵

TO MEET THE OBJECTIONS — *ad* (1) the Apostle's words, "God wills all men to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth," can be interpreted three ways. The first way is to make a quantification [over men saved] to match [the one over men God wills], to yield the sense that God wills to be saved all the men who are saved. As Augustine puts it, [the Apostle's point is] "not that there is no man whom He does not will to be saved, but that no man is saved whom He does not will to be saved."⁶

The second way is to make the verse quantify over *kinds* of people, not over the individuals of those

⁴ The first heavenly sphere was the outermost, whose motion was thought to put-in-motion all the spheres within it. One way to update the example would be to talk about a familiar effect of the Big Bang, the universal motion with which the universe is currently expanding. If a star fails to illuminate a given planet because of an intervening dust cloud, the cloud is still where it is with the same universal motion as puts the star where it is. A better way to update the example might be to think of the Big Bang as giving application to the laws of physics as we know them, by unfolding in such a way as to provide all the particles and forces to which those laws currently apply. Then if a star is impeded by a dust cloud, etc., the cloud is still doing its thing by the same consequence of the Big Bang (the same laws of physics in effect) as the star. To move back into theology, think of God as willing the Big Bang to unfold in such a way as to give these laws application.

⁵ If God's will were just that the laws of physics should apply (with all that emerges from them at the biological level), the sinner would never elude God's will at all. But God's will includes more; it includes a governance system, one side of which is what the rewards of following His precepts are to be, and the other side of which is what the deserts of not following them are to be. Without ever eluding the laws-of-physics or the governance system, a sinner by sinning impedes the rewards side of the latter from benefiting him but thereby fails to impede the just-deserts side from impacting him.

⁶ This bit of exegetical violence, giving God a less than universal salvific will, was a departure from Augustine's own earlier thinking, and it was set aside as not to be followed both in late Antiquity and the Middle Ages. But the violence was revived by Jansen and Calvin.

kinds, so as to yield the sense that God wills people from each and every class to be saved, men and women, Jews and Gentiles, poor and rich, but not that He wills all the people in each class to be saved.

The third way follows St. John Damascene [*De fide orthodoxa II* and takes the verse as speaking of God's antecedent will, not His consequent will. This distinction does not apply on the act side of God's willing, where there is no prior and posterior, but on the side of the objects-willed. To understand it, you need to recall that each and every object is willed by God according to how it is good. A thing can be good (or bad) in its first consideration, as it is looked at independently, but have the opposite evaluation as looked at in one or another connexion with something else, which is a [logically] subsequent consideration of it. Thus, that a man should live is good, and that a man should be killed is bad, independently considered; but if we add another fact about a man, that he is murderer, or that alive he poses a danger to the community, then it is good for him to be killed, and bad that he should stay alive. Thus we can say that a just judge antecedently wills all men to live but consequently wills a murderer to be hung. In like manner, God antecedently wills all men to be saved but consequently wills some to be damned according to the requirements of His justice. — Now, what we antecedently will is not what we will *without qualification*; it is only what we will *in some respect*. For willing bears upon things as they are in themselves; and in themselves they are in the concrete. So we will a thing *without qualification* insofar as we will it with all its particular circumstances taken into account — which is consequent willing. Thus we can say that what the just judge wills without qualification is that the killer be hanged; but he wills in a certain respect that the person should live, to wit, insofar as he or she is a human being. Thus the latter can be called a *velleity* [a wish] rather than a flat-out volition. — And thus it emerges that whatever God wills *without qualification* is carried out, while what He wills antecedently is not.⁷

⁷ The lengthy attention devoted to Damascene's solution shows that Aquinas preferred it, and his discussions in *De Veritate* and elsewhere confirm this preference. (Medieval theologians knew better than to compromise God's universal salvific will.) But Aquinas' exposition of Damascene's distinction raises a moral issue. Let us grant that God understands things as multiply connected in states of affairs. Take the state of affairs which is Smith's being a living man who has murdered Jones. This includes as "parts" such states of affairs as Smith's being a man, his

ad (2): the act of a cognitive ability* succeeds to the extent that the object cognized is in the cognizant mind; but the act of an ability to seek[†] [succeeds to the extent it reaches the object-sought in the real, because it] is aimed at things as they are in themselves. Well, whatever has what it takes to be a being and to be true — the whole of that class — is power-wise in God; but the whole of it does not exist among created things. And so God knows every truth, but He does not will every good, except to the extent that He wills Himself, in whom every good [pre-]exists power-wise.

* *virtus cognoscitiva*
† *virtus appetitiva*

ad (3): the case where a first cause can be impeded in its effect by deficiency in a secondary cause is when that first cause is not the universally first one, under which all causes are contained: for if it were, no effect could elude its sway in any way. And so it is with the will of God, as I said.

being alive, his having killed Jones, his having intended to do so, etc. It has to be the case that, if God understands and evaluates the whole state of affairs (say, as a slice of His *idea* of Smith), He also understands the parts; and it may as well be the case that He understands the parts in logical priority to the whole, since they are logically *presupposed* by the whole. So God (a) understands and (b) evaluates as good-enough-to-obtain and so (c) wills

Smith's being alive

prior (logically, not temporally) to (a') understanding and (b') evaluating as bad and so (c') not-willing

Smith's being alive after murdering Jones.

Has God *changed His mind* about the goodness of Smith's physical life? If not (because divine changes of mind are disallowed), is human bodily life only a provisional good in God's sight, something He wills under a condition, so that when the condition fails, He (without changing His mind) does not will it? All right; that will work. But does God also will Judge Jeffreys to hang Smith? If He does, then He doesn't just not-will Smith's physical life; He counterwills it (wills it not to continue). In that case, Aquinas' exposition here stands or falls with the *rightness* of capital punishment, and some Catholic moralists no longer think capital punishment can be made consistent with the rest of a natural-law ethic against killing. If another's life can be counterwilled when he is guilty, why can't one's own be counterwilled when it is burdensome, a baby's when it is inconvenient, etc.? If Aquinas has an answer, it must lie (I think) in saying that some circumstances change the *description* under which the life at stake is willable, putting it into a different evaluatable kind (criminal?), whereas other circumstances (like burden and inconvenience) do not change that description. Then God's antecedent will values as good a kind (innocent life) upon which His consequent will does not bear in this case, because Smith's life does not fall under that kind in the further circumstances.

Cajetan's Commentary

In the title question, notice two points. (A) 'Will' is not being used here to cover wishing but just unqualified willing. (B) It is one thing to ask the question,

(1) Does God will everything that comes about? and quite another to ask,

(2) Does everything that God wills come about?

Here, question (1) is not being asked. Question (2) is being asked, since that is all the title-question poses. Question (1) will be under discussion in a.9.¹

ii. In the body of the article, there is one conclusion, answering the question with yes: necessarily, God's will is carried out. — This is supported as follows. [*Antecedent:*] The story with forms is that nothing can fail to have a universal form, although something can fail to have a particular one; so [*1st inference:*] it has to be the story with agent-causes as well that nothing can occur outside the influence of an agent-cause that is unqualifiedly universal, under which all particular causes are contained, although something can occur outside the influence of a particular agent-cause; so [*2nd inference:*] it is impossible that the divine will should not get its effect. [*Conclusion:*] It has to be the case, therefore, that it is always carried out.

The antecedent is illustrated with a chain of predicates ['man', 'living', 'being'], one falling essentially under the next, because this is how the universality among forms is seen.² — The first inference is supported on the ground that an effect is conformed to its agent cause according to its form. — The second inference is supported on the ground that God's will is a universal cause of all things.

Beyond these supporting considerations, the first inference (which is the proper foundation of the conclusion in this article) is confirmed and illustrated.

• It is confirmed by what it takes for there to be a falling-short of an intended effect, *i.e.*, the interference of another cause, not contained as such under the one [intending the effect].

• It is illustrated by the stars' effects and that of the first heaven.

The second inference, which amounts to the conclusion itself, is also illustrated, this time by the sinner's case, in which the divine will *seems* not to be carried out. All these points are clear in the text.

iii. As for the reasoning process, pay attention to four points. (a) The text's talk of "deficiency" is not meant negation-wise* but thwart-wise [*contrariē*]; for there can be negation-wise "deficiency" from even the most universal cause of either [the formal or the agent] kind. Blindness is "not" a being, but neither does it "thwart" being; it only thwarts being-such-and-such (being-sighted). And a sinner by sinning falls short of the divine will negation-wise

* *negatione*

¹ Logically, the questions are about converse conditionals. Let *e* be any event. Question (1) asks whether '*e* occurs \supset God wills *e*' is true. Question (2), the one posed here, asks whether '*e* occurs \supset God wills *e*' is true.

² Since the "beings" are one class only by analogy, the class did not count as a classifying genus. But the "forms" of things classified them. So why is "being" treated as a "form" here? Cajetan sidesteps the question by taking the linguistic turn: 'man', 'living thing', and 'being' are increasingly extensive predicates. He says (truly enough); and (he says) it is by putting together such series that we see how extensive forms are. No doubt. But there is no one-to-one correspondence between predicates and forms.

• he does "not" do what God wills — but he doesn't thwart God's will, as he will find out.

(b) The argument applies to both agent-causes and formal causes on the point stated, universal extension, and need not apply on other points. For this is the point that follows from the general principle invoked: an effect is conformed to its agent cause according to its form. This makes it obvious that the scope of an agent's influence corresponds to the spread of a form.³

(c) Significantly, the text says a sinner "seems" to elude God's will. A sinner does not act flatly against the consequent will of God, as is obvious from the fact that God wills to permit him to sin at this time, in this way, *etc.* Rather, the sinner acts against the will of God to a certain extent, *i.e.*, to the extent that

- he acts against God's antecedent will;
- he does what God does not will with consequent will;
- he acts against God's precepts and prohibitions (and the text calls this eluding "one line" of God's will);
- he perpetrates what deserves hatred from God's will.⁴

(d) What the text says about one agent-cause impeding another has to be taken formally, within the line of effective causing as such. If Aquinas had been thinking of the "impeding" that matter does, *qua* matter, he probably would have spoken differently. But these topics will be aired fully below, when we talk about God's governance of things. For now, these remarks are enough, because God's will is so universal a cause that even all of matter's conditions are subject to it.

q 115, a.6

That fact (made clear by analogous use and the right analysis of "transcendental" predicates) forces one to ask: so what if there are universal predicates (*i.e.* ones that blanket everything)? Are there any universal forms? The answer is no, so long as 'form' means structure. No one structure is common to everything. But 'form' was also used more broadly, to mean something like an act-state. This is the sense in which Aquinas called God a form (in q. 3, a. 2) and called *esse* the "most formal" of all factors (in q. 7, a. 1). In this sense, *esse* was a form and (much to the present purpose) was what God, the most universal of all agent-causes, distinctively caused in things (q. 8, a. 1).

³ A universal form is one had by everything; so "nothing can fail to have a universal form" is the tautology that nothing fails to have what everything has. The informative part of Aquinas' case is just the claim that God's will works like an efficient cause, inducing a "form" in every state of affairs. It wills consequently. This "form" (given that God's will is Existence taken as ordering things purpose-wise) is just having-being-for-a-purpose. Therefore, God's will is always carried out *just in case* every event God wills does occur and occurs for a purpose.

⁴ This extremely important paragraph can be summarized as follows. When *p* is any true proposition picking out the doing of a moral wrong, God, by hating such wrong and endorsing its prohibition, antecedently wills $\sim p$; and what God wills consequently neither includes willing *p* (for God does not will sins) nor includes willing $\sim p$; so He is said to "permit" *p*. Thus it is already clear what will be said in article 9 about the question, Does God will everything that occurs? The answer will be, No. The universal proposition saying of every event *e*, 'if *e* occurs, God wills *e*', is false.

Is God's will unchangeable?

*In I Sent. d.39, q.1, a.1; d.48, q.2, a.1 ad 2; 1 CG c.82; 3 CG cc.91, 96, 98;
De Veritate q.12, a.11 ad 3; De Potentia q.3, a.7; In Epist. ad Hebr. c.6, lectio 4*

It looks as though God's will can change.

(1) After all, God says of human beings in Genesis 6: 7, "it repenteth me that I have made them." But anyone who repents of what he did has a changeable will. Therefore, God has a will that can change.

(2) Besides, Jeremiah 18: 7-8 has the Lord saying this: "I shall speak concerning a nation and concerning a kingdom, to pluck up, and to pull down, and to destroy it. But if that nation against whom I have pronounced shall turn from their evil, I will repent of the evil that I thought to do unto them." Therefore, God has a will that can change.

(3) Moreover, God does everything He does voluntarily. But God is not always doing the same things; at one point He commands legal ceremonies to be observed, and later He prohibits them. Therefore, He has a will that can change.

a. 3 (4) Furthermore, as was said above, God does not necessarily will what He wills. So He can will and not-will the same thing. But everything that has potency to opposed states can change — as what can exist and not exist can change as to its substance, and what can be here and not be here can change as to its place. Therefore, God can change as to His will.

ON THE OTHER HAND, there is Numbers 23: 19, saying: "God is not a man that He should lie, neither the son of a man, that He should change."

ANSWER: God's will is quite unchangeable. But here one must realize that 'change one's will' is one thing, and 'will a change in things' is another. While keeping one's will quite steady, one can will *this* to be done now and the opposite later. Rather, one's will changes just in case one begins to will what one did not will before, or ceases to will what one did will before. This cannot happen without a prior change either in the content of the willer's cognition or in the state of his substance. For since to will is to will a good, a person can *start* to will an object *O* for two reasons:

- (1) because *O starts to be good* for him (which does not happen without a change in him); as, when cold weather comes, it begins to be good to sit by the fire, which previously was not beneficial;
- (2) because he *starts to know* that *O* is good for him, after having been ignorant of this; we take advice, after all, to learn what is good for us.

q 9, a.1;
q.14, a.15 Well, it was shown above that God's substance and His knowledge are both unchangeable. So, it has to be the case that His will is altogether unchangeable.

TO MEET THE OBJECTIONS — *ad* (1): this word of the Lord should be taken figuratively, as a simile likening

Him to us. For when we repent of a job, we undo it. Notice, however, that this last can be done without a change of will: sometimes one wills to make something [say, a drawing] with the intention all along of erasing it later. This is how God is said to have "repented," by similarity of activity: by a flood, He erased people from the face of the earth — people He had made.

ad (2): since God's will is a first and universal cause, it does not exclude intermediate causes that have it in their power to produce certain effects. But because the intermediate causes do not match the power of the First cause, many effects are not within the scope of the lower causes but *are* in the power-knowledge-and-will of God — like the raising of Lazarus. Thus, a person looking at the lower causes was able to say, "Lazarus won't wake up again," while a person looking at the divine First cause could say, "Lazarus will awaken." And God wills both of these, *i.e.* that an event is sometimes about-to-be because of a lower cause but not-about-to-be because of a higher cause, or *vice-versa*. The thing to say, then, is that God at times pronounces an event imminent insofar as it is predictable from lower causes (say, by how nature is disposed, or by how the merits lie), and yet this event does not come about, because it is otherwise in the divine Higher cause. Thus He foretold to Hezekiah, "Set thine house in order, for thou shalt die and not live," according to Isaiah 38: 1, and yet it did not happen so, because from eternity it was otherwise in the divine knowledge-and-will, which is unchangeable. Of cases like this, Gregory says [*Moralia XI*]. "God changes the sentence but not His plan," *i.e.* His will. — But the part of the passage that says, "I will repent ..." is taken figuratively: for when people do not carry out what they threaten, they seem to repent of it.¹

ad (3): from that argument, there is no proving that God has a changeable will, but only that He wills a change.

ad (4): although God's willing an event is not necessary in its own right, it is still necessary given a supposition [namely, that He wills it], because of the unchangeability of the divine will, as I said above.

¹ In this answer, notice the point that there are two rational standards by which to judge of an event's possibility or impossibility (or necessity): a natural standard, based on what created causes can do, and a supernatural standard, based on what God can do. The Nominalists were to take the supernatural as the real standard, threatening nature with miracles and sinking science with pious skepticism. Aquinas kept both in good repair by restricting the supernatural standard to salvation history (where theology knew special effects to turn up) and disallowing it in philosophy and the natural sciences.

Cajetan's Commentary

The title is clear. — In the body of the article, there is a single conclusion, answering the question affirmatively: God's will is entirely unchangeable.

The support is this. [*Antecedent*:] To will is to will a good; so [*1st inference*:] one can only start to will an object *O* for two reasons: because *O* starts to be good for one, or because *O* starts to be recognized as good; so [*2nd inference*:] one cannot start to will *O* without a change in one's understanding or one's substance; so [*3rd inference*:] a change of will is not possible without one or the other of these changes; ergo [*4th inference*:] God's will is entirely unchangeable.

Drawing the first inference is not further supported, but the point inferred is illustrated in both cases: from getting warm and from taking advice. — The second inference is obvious in itself. — The third inference is obvious from the difference between changing one's will and willing a change. — The fourth inference rests on the ground that both God's substance and His knowledge are altogether unchangeable.

ii. *Re* these inferences, note two points. (1) The antecedent is such a well-worn truth that it is stated in summary form. Mentally, you have to add the word 'understood' [to will is to will an understood good]. Then it becomes obvious that the first inference needs no support; for if willing is only about an understood good, it has to be the case that new volition is either from a new good or else from a new understanding. (2) The third inference is not present in the text; only its support is there. I made it explicit for greater clarity.

Doubt about the first inference

iii. As for drawing the first inference, a doubt arises about the phrase 'for him' in the point inferred. The phrase seems to falsify the point itself and to make it not follow from the antecedent. 'For him' makes it false because a person can begin to will *O* because *O* begins to be (or be recognized as) good for another. The sort of love that one has in a friendship makes this clear. That the point inferred does not follow from the antecedent emerges from the fact that the good of another is included in 'understood good'.

Solution

c.2, 1155b 23f. iv. The answer comes from *Ethics VIII*. "The good is lovable, indeed, but each man loves his own." Hence, to will is initially to will one's own good; secondarily, another's. This is why it says in the same work [*Ethics IX*] that things friendly to other people are learned from things friendly to oneself. So the inference in question, if it is taken as talking about the good that has to be willed firstly, is formally correct, optimal. But if it is taken as talking about the good universally, as the antecedent seems to say, then drawing the inference is still correct, even formally, and it rests upon the ground that change or newness of volition about others

arises from change in the love of one's own, and unchanging volition about others arises from unchanging love of one's own. This is perfectly reasonable, because love for others arises from self-esteem.¹ From this it becomes clear that love for another is included in the point inferred, if not formally, then virtually.² The bottom line is that starting to will *O* because *O* starts to be (or be seen as) good for another has no different explanation — there is no other way of starting to will — than the cases explicit in the point inferred.

So much for the objection that the point inferred is false; cases where *O* is good for others do not count as fully distinct from the cases where *O* is good for oneself, and are not excluded from it, but are virtually contained in it. Objection to drawing the inference ceases, too, because (as I said) even for 'good' taken universally, newness of volition does follow from the antecedent, though differently: *re* one's own good, it follows formally; *re* another's, it follows virtually.

Now, St. Thomas did not write as he did just for the sake of brevity, but because he was influenced by the fact that he was talking about the divine will. He had already made it clear in prior articles that God only wills other things because of willing His own good state, so that this alone is His "cause of willing." So, in the matter under investigation, it was enough to assume a universal major premise, quite true in itself, about one's own good; the minor premise — that God wills whatever He wills by willing His own good state — had already been given its support [in articles 2-3].

Understanding the answer *ad* (4)

v. In the answer *ad* (4), pay close attention to the fact that its intent is to deny potency-to-opposites in God's will. For there is no potency in it at all. Rather, God's willing is either necessary in its own right, like His willing Himself, or else necessary changelessly, like His willing other things. This is what the words in the text are driving at by going to necessary-because-changeless after denying necessary-in-its-own-right. It's as if Aquinas had said: what follows from the fact that God's willing *O* is not necessary in its own right is not that He has potency, or can will otherwise because of a potency, but that His willing *O* is necessary out of His change-

¹ I translate '*amor proprius*' with 'self-esteem' here because Aristotle's long and intriguing argument in *Ethics IX* c.4 is about persons lacking a decent level of self-integration. He says they despise themselves and so cannot form true friendships. The extent to which current empirical psychology agrees is rather remarkable.

² Love for others (*i.e.* willing the goods one understands for others) is not a form-wise component of self-esteem but an effect that flows out of self-esteem's power. This is what Cajetan means by saying that starting to will a good for another does not follow "formally" from starting to will a good for oneself but follows "virtually," or power-wise.

lessness. For when one says,

God can will this or its opposite
the 'can' does not mean possible thanks to a potency
but possible by the connexion of the terms, as you have
it in so many words in I *CG* c.82.³

Thus Scotus' flight of fancy about a potency na-

turally prior to its act in the absence of changeability,
which he dreamed up for the case of divine willing in
comments on I *Sententiarum* d.39. q.1, is arbitrary. For
all *potency* to opposites is accompanied by change-
ability, as *Metaphysics IX* says, and as the argument
made here in [the body of] the text convinces one.⁴

c. 8;
1050b 10ff

³ The "connexion of the terms," as we were told in a.3, is the logical issue of whether the *ratio* of the subject (here, 'God') does or does not contain the predicate ('wills this'). Well, the *ratio* of 'God' is the scientific definition of God, which we do not know, of course. So it makes all the difference in the world whether the "connexion of the terms" mentioned here is taken *quoad nos* (in which case Aquinas is merely saying that 'God can will this or its opposite' is true *for all we know*, because we are not in a position to see a contradiction either way) or is taken *in se* (in which case Aquinas is making the very important point that God's own self-definition (if He had one) simply would not contain His

willing this, nor His willing its opposite, so that God is *free in real terms* to will either). The latter construal, surely, is the only one that preserves the teaching given above in article 3.

⁴ Scotus wanted to secure the point that freedom is something real in God, not just an artifact of our lack of information. If I read Cajetan correctly here and in section *xxi* of his commentary on q.14, a.13, he does not fault Scotus for this. Rather, Scotus' mistake was to suppose that real freedom in God meant real contingency in Him and real potency in Him, which Scotus then tried to square with the absence of change in God (fancifully, says Cajetan). See above, footnote 19 to the commentary on q.14, a.13.

Does God's will impose necessity upon the things willed?

1 *ST* q.22, a.4; 2/1 *ST* q.10, a.4; 1 *CG* c.85; 2 *CG* cc.29-30; *De Veritate* q.23, a.5; *De Malo* q.16, a.7 ad 15, *Quodl. XI*, q.3; *XII*, q.3 ad 1; *In I Periherm.*, lectio 14; *In VI Metaphys.*, lectio 3

It seems that God's will imposes necessity on the things He wills.

c.103
PL 40, 280

(1) Augustine says [in the *Enchiridion*], "Nobody is saved but those whom God wills to be saved. The right course of action, then, is to beseech God to will it, because it *has to happen* if He wills it."

(2) Besides, any cause that cannot be impeded necessarily produces its effect, since even nature always works to the same effect, unless something impedes it, as it says in *Physics II*. Well, God's will cannot be impeded. As the Apostle Paul puts it in Romans 9: 19, "Who is he that resisteth His will?" Therefore, God's will imposes necessity upon the things willed.

(3) Also, what has necessity from a prior factor is necessary in its own right. Thus an animal's dying is necessary, from the fact that it is composed of contrasting ingredients. Well, the things created by God relate to His will as to a prior factor from which they get necessariness, because the following conditional is true, if God wills it, it happens, and every true conditional is necessary.¹ It follows that everything God wills is necessary in its own right.

ON THE OTHER HAND, God wills every good deed that in fact comes about. If His willing imposes necessity on the things willed, it follows that all these good deeds come about necessarily. And then it's goodbye to free choice, good advice, and all the like.²

ANSWER: God's will imposes necessity upon some of the things willed, but not upon all.

As to why this is so, some writers want to find the reason in the [two kinds of] intermediate causes. Their idea is that the effects God produces through necessary causes are necessary effects, but the ones He produces through contingent causes are contingent effects.³ —

¹ That a conditional might express a contingent, "material" implication, of the sort we now indicate with ' $p \supset q$ ', was little known to the Mediaevals. They thought of conditionals as necessary or "strict" implications, $\Box(p \supset q)$, because they were interested in those that expressed general truths of science, which are necessary (if not logically then physically). The objector thought of the divine willing as a necessary cause and so hoped to take advantage of a familiar principle of modal logic, known today as axiom K: $\Box(p \supset q) \supset (\Box p \supset \Box q)$. From $\Box(\text{God wills it} \supset \text{it happens})$ plus $\Box(\text{God wills it})$, the objector hoped to get $\Box(\text{it happens})$ for anything referred to by 'it'.

² This *sed contra* is a counter-argument, not an authority.

³ A necessary effect was a definite one, predictable from a cause predictably at work. A contingent effect was one that "could have gone either way." If e was such an effect, e was not necessary, nor impossible; rather, $\Box e \& \Diamond \neg e$. Thus, if e turned up, the situation was $e \& \Diamond \neg e$; and if e failed to turn up, the situation was $\neg e \& \Box e$. These two situations were opposed outcomes. Thus a "contingent cause," c , was one which bore

But this does not seem to be a sufficient explanation, on two counts. (1) When a first cause's effect is contingent because of a secondary cause, the reason is that the first cause's effect is impeded by a defect in the secondary cause, as when the sun's power is impeded [from causing fruit to form] by a defect in the plants. But no defect of a secondary cause can impede God's will from producing its effect. (2) If the distinction between contingent and necessary events is explained in such a way as to be attributed solely to secondary causes, then this [very important] distinction is foreign to God's intention and will,* which is hardly fitting.

So we need a better theory, *i.e.*, that this distinction arises out of the high effectiveness of divine willing. For when a cause is highly effective, its effect does not just follow as to *what* comes to be but also as to *how* it comes to be or *how* it is. After all, it is from weakness [lack of high effectiveness] in the active power of semen that a child comes to be born who is unlike his or her father in the accidental traits pertaining to how he is. So, since the divine will is supremely effective, what follows from it is not only that the things He wills-to-be do occur, but also that *how* they occur is how He wants them to. Well, God wants some things to occur necessarily, and some contingently, that there may be things of higher and lower rank,[†] for the sake of filling-out the universe. To some of His effects, therefore, He has fitted necessary, indefectible causes, from which effects proceed necessarily; but to others He has fitted contingent, defectible causes, from which effects turn up contingently.

So, the reason effects willed by God turn up contingently is not because their immediate causes are contingent but because God willed them to occur contingently and so prepared contingent causes for them.

TO MEET THE OBJECTIONS — *ad* (1): the point to get from that statement by Augustine is that the necessity in things willed by God is not absolute but conditional.⁴ For it is necessary that this conditional be true: if God wills this, it has to happen.⁵

the causal relation to opposed outcomes. Call them O_1 and O_2 . Then one had: because c obtains (at or earlier than a time t), either O_1 or O_2 obtains (at or later than t). So, even if the working of c was predictable, it made only the disjunction, $O_1 \vee O_2$, predictable. O_1 (that is, $e \& \Diamond \neg e$) was not predictable in its own right, nor was O_2 ($\neg e \& \Box e$).

⁴ "The necessity is conditional" meant the same as 'is necessary given this or that'. 'The necessity is absolute' would have meant the same as 'is necessary in its own right'.

⁵ The stated consequent 'it has to happen', is either a slip of the pen or an imitation of Augustine's informal way of speaking. What is necessary is just the conditional, 'if God wills this, it happens'.

* *praeter intentionem et voluntatem*

† *ordo*

ad (2): from the very fact that nothing resists the divine will, it follows that the effects God wills to come about do not just “come about” but “come about contingently” or “come about necessarily,” whichever way He willed them to.

ad (3): the way posterior traits have necessariness from prior factors is “after the fashion of the prior factors.” Hence the effects that come about through divine willing have just such necessariness as God willed them to have, *i.e.* absolute or merely conditional. And so they are not all necessary absolutely.⁶

⁶ Aquinas’ answer is correct by pure logic, given how God

wills creatures. When you have a strict implication, like

(1) $\Box(\text{God wills it} \supset \text{it happens})$,

where ‘ \Box ’ means ‘necessary absolutely’, the necessity will not move down to attach to the consequent, to yield $\Box(\text{it happens})$, unless it also attaches to the antecedent: $\Box(\text{God wills it})$. Well, this last is false for all states of affairs involving creatures, as we were told in a. 3. Hence, *from the truth of (1), no information whatever follows about the modality of any created state of affairs*. In fact, some such affairs do involve physical necessity, and some involve contingency. So to find an explanation for this difference, Aquinas had to look beyond the mere fact that God wills them. He had to look at the willed *how* of them.

Cajetan’s Commentary

In the title, notice two points. (1) The issue here is the in-its-own-right kind of necessity with which some parts of the universe are called [*de re*] necessary, like the heavenly bodies and matter-independent Intelligences, but others are called [*de re*] contingent, like fortuitous things, accidents, and free things.¹ — (2) It is one thing to ask whether all things are necessary, and quite another to ask whether all things willed by God get necessariness bestowed upon them. The former question is not currently on the table, because the topic here is not the universe or its parts, but divine willing. The latter question, however, involves whether a thing *gets* to be necessary in its own right *from* the fact that it is willed by God, and this is what is on the table here. For nothing pertains to this treatise but what willed things acquire from being divinely willed. Such, then, is the sense of the title.

Analysis of the article, I

ii. In the body of the article, Aquinas does three jobs: (1) he sets down a conclusion answering the question; (2) he deals with a certain opinion about how to explain this conclusion; (3) he gives the right explanation of it.

iii. As to job (1), the conclusion answering the question is stated clearly in the text: the divine will bestows necessity on some things willed by it, and on others it does not.

iv. As to job (2), Aquinas does two things. (a) He rehearses the opinion of certain writers, *i.e.*, they think the reason for this [difference among willed effects] is the disparity of intermediate agent-causes, *i.e.*, that God does some things through necessary intermediate causes and some through contingent such causes. (b)

¹ The necessariness of some parts of the universe was not necessariness-to-exist, but unchangeability as to substantial form and natural (deterministic) causality, as discussed above at q.9, a.2.

He then criticizes this opinion on two counts.

(i) The first goes like this. [*Antecedent:*] The divine will is a first cause that is unimpedible by the defect of any secondary cause: so [*inference:*] the divine will has no effect that is contingent just because of a secondary cause. — The inference is supported on the ground that the reason a first cause’s effect is contingent because of a secondary cause is that the first cause’s effect is impeded by a defect of the secondary cause, as one sees from the example of sunshine and a plant *re* the effect of bearing fruit.

(ii) The second count is that the opinion leads to something unfitting, as follows. [*Antecedent:*] The distinction between a necessary effect and a contingent one is attributed entirely to secondary causes: ergo [*inference:*] it is foreign to the divine will and intention — which is not fitting.

Doubts about these criticisms

v. There is doubt about count (i), because its first proposition, on which the whole thing is based [*i.e.* that the divine will is unimpedible *etc.*], seems to be faulty. It does not distinguish between *being modified* and *being impeded*. An effect *e*’s being contingent on account of a contingent secondary cause does not always come from impotence of *e*’s first cause but sometimes from a modification of *e*’s first cause in *e*’s secondary cause. And this is how the opinion in question seems to have understood the matter: God’s will is modified in a contingent cause and so has contingent effects.²

There is also doubt about count (ii) — in fact, two

² ‘Modify a cause’ meant ‘supply a how’. The first cause was not modified *qua* substance but given a how *qua* cause. The influence of the first cause actuated the secondary ones, so that their causal working was “how” the first cause attained the final effect, *e*: and if their working could go either way, “contingently” became *how* the first cause achieved *e*.

of them. For one thing, its antecedent [claiming that the distinction between necessary and contingent effects is attributed entirely to secondary causes] talks about the distinction *independently* [of the effects' being willed] and so moves away from the issue as propounded in the title-question. — For another thing, the inference is worthless. For suppose contingency is entirely due to secondary causes. This is perfectly consistent with saying that contingency is willed by God, because contingent *causes* (and hence their contingent effects) are willed by Him, for the rounding-out of the universe.

Thus both counts against this opinion seem to fall to the ground.

Moreover, doubt arises about the project of criticizing this opinion at all; it seems to be unreasonable. For suppose there is another and higher cause of contingency. It is still the case that the very nature of defectible or free secondary causes is the *distinctive cause* of contingency. There should be no room for criticizing an explanation that has given an effect its distinctive cause, even if it isn't the whole cause.

Solutions

vi. To clear these up, you need to know the following. Even though I said in discussing the title that asking about the cause of contingency is formally one question, and asking about the cause of divinely-willed contingency is another, it is nevertheless the case that these two questions coincide materially, because God wills each and every effect to happen because of its own cause, in every line of causality. And so it is not only germane but necessary to the business at hand to discuss the cause of contingency. In fact, nothing else is in dispute here but what the *first distinctive source* of contingency is — nay, its *first distinctive source in the line of efficient causality*. Also, the present discussion is not getting down into this or that *sort* of contingency, but is asking about the distinctive and first source of contingency across the board: — is this source something about secondary causes, or is it something about the divine will, the first of all causes?³

³ The reader should notice the pattern of explanation exhibited in the opinion criticized. The pattern is to give the cosmic etiology of a bad trait, ψ -ness, as coming from a secondary thing too defective to sustain the opposite good trait, φ -ness. This is best known from Gnosticism, where the bad is matter, and the good is spirit (a First Spirit emanated a second but lesser spirit, which emanated a third, and so on, until a thing emanated that was so weakly spiritual that what it emanated was matter). But the pattern is also found in an etiology of change/motion, where the bad is contingency and the good is necessity. An Immobile Necessity attracts a necessary change/motion from an outermost heavenly sphere, which communicates necessary but derivative change/motion to spheres inside it, until the sphere of the moon is so derivatively necessary that it can only communicate contingent change/motion. Thus Aquinas' faulting of this pattern of explanation had broad implications.

vii. The opinion rehearsed and criticized in the text believes that the source wanted is something about secondary causes: a defectibility or a possibility-of-going-either-way found in secondary causes. To understand this better, one needs to know that, in a work of craftsmanship, a defective instrument can play its part two ways:

- (1) in one, its defect was not chosen by the craftsman but inheres in the instrument selected by necessity of matter;
- (2) in the other, the very defect was chosen by the craftsman.

For example, a scribe can use a bad pen in two ways: (1) because he chose to use every pen; (2) because he decided to make bad lettering. In the first case, when the scribe forms bad letters, using (say) a stone pen, two points need to be noticed. The first is that neither the pen's being bad nor the letters' being bad is *what the scribe chose*;* their being bad just follows from a necessity of the matter. For he did not choose a bad pen; rather, because he chose to use every pen, the defect in it resulted from a necessity of this one's lapidary matter.⁴ So the badness of the lettering is traced back (for its first and distinctive source) to something about the pen and not to the scribe himself, who would form good letters if he were using a pen that was up to the job.

Thus [and this is the second point to notice] something about the pen *impedes* the causal power[†] of the scribe, modified by the pen. But in the second case, the letters' being deformed as well as the defect in the pen *is* what the scribe chose; indeed, he chose a bad pen out of the intent to form bad letters, because he would have an instrument suited to the bad effect intended. So the scribe's causal power is modified, indeed, in the bad pen, but not impeded. The very defect of the pen obeys him, because it was chosen for its modification of his causal power, so that he might *genly*[‡] attain the defective result intended.

viii. To apply this to the business at hand, then, the opinion under review holds that contingency has arisen because our glorious God decided to use *every kind of cause*, and there are defective ones (or ones that go either way) under that umbrella. So understood, this

* *cauti sub electione*

† *virtus*

‡ *suaviter*

⁴ Cajetan is not using 'choose' here in the behavioral sense, in which we are said to choose whatever we pick up, but in the strict and formal sense in which "to choose" is to do an interior action of adopting a proposal. In this formal sense, what *cauti sub electione* is what is contained in the proposal adopted by choice. A proposal is an intentional structure. It contains what it says, not the unmentioned effects of executing it.

Needless to say, "to use every pen" is a very odd proposal to adopt. But Cajetan framed it carefully to meet the precise demands of the opinion under criticism, which has God intending to round-out the contents of the universe (lest the great chain of being have any gaps, no doubt), and for this reason choosing to throw into the universe's furniture every kind of cause He can think of, and for this reason choosing "to use every cause."

opinion is very rightly criticized. It deserves criticism because it "does not seem to be sufficient" (as Aquinas says, in his deferential way) for explaining contingency. For when it makes something about secondary causes *the distinctive source*, it leaves no room for the First Cause, in Whom the real source lies, as you can see from the example I have given. — So much for solving the third doubt [the one about offering criticism at all].⁵

x. Aquinas' criticism was also reasonable on both its counts. Granted, a first cause's active power gets its how in a secondary cause in two ways, with and without impedence to it. (This is quite clear in the example I gave, where in both cases the scribe's active power is given a how by the bad pen.) Nevertheless, it has to be the case that, every time a *defect* in the effect is traced back — for its first source — to something about the secondary cause, that "something" is impeding and not just how-ifying the first cause. So, since the opinion holds the causal trace to go this way, Aquinas' first count is effective against it. — So much for clearing up the first doubt.

As for the points brought up in the second doubt, my answer is obvious on the same basis. Count (ii) did not move away from the issue at hand, because the two questions coincide materially, as I said. And [if this opinion were true], contingency would not be what God directly willed,* but would have been around in the universe from a necessity of matter, *i.e.* from a necessity of the natures of the secondary causes, as becomes apparent in the example I gave. Well, this is very unfitting. For the [division into necessary and] contingent is one of the first partitions of being; contin-

* *neque sub directa
voluntate divina
cadere*

⁵ This whole passage is one of Cajetan's finest moments. What he is saying (in his restrained way) is that the opinion under review is a half-baked compromise with paganism. It posits a creator-God but fails to think through the implications. If God creates, the universe is the product of His craftsmanship, and everything in it is there by design. In that case, His design must be the first and distinctive reason why there are contingent causes and hence contingent effects. To try to stall the explanation of contingent effects at the natures of contingent causes is to treat those natures as if they were just "there." It is to picture God as confronting a universe whose causal furniture is just "there," independent of His design. Cajetan saw that if the defenders of this opinion tried to elude such criticism by admitting a divine design *consistent with the rest of their view*, they would be attributing to God the comic choice to just "use every cause," like a hair-brained calligrapher who made it his life's ambition "to use every pen."

Fine, the reader might say, but don't Aquinas and Cajetan have some pagan cobwebs of their own? If God *wills* contingency, it can't be just "bad," like garbled script. The Thomists saw enough of this to value freedom, and to admit freedom even in God, but weren't they still wedded to the pagan evaluation of necessity as better than contingency? Isn't this why they tried to make God's freedom an aspect of His necessity, instead of what it obviously is, divine contingency? Let the reader stay tuned. Scotus proposed this, and Cajetan is about to reply.

gency is found in the natures of purely sensible things, and in the natures of purely intellectual things, and in a nature between these extremes, such as ours.

Analysis of the article, II

x. As to job (3), Aquinas does three things.

(a) He gives the genuine reason for the conclusion set down, saying it is the high effectiveness of the divine willing.

(b) He makes this clear, as follows. [*Antecedent:*] An effect follows from a highly effective cause not only in *what* comes about but also in *how* it is or *how* it comes about; hence [*1st inference:*] the things which God wills to come about acquire from His willing them not only the fact that they come about but also the manner in which He willed them to be and come about; hence [*2nd inference:*] some things have it from His will that they should come about necessarily, and some [have it that they should come about] contingently; and so [*3rd inference:*] His will therefore fitted necessary causes to certain effects and contingent causes to certain others. Therefore [*4th inference:*] the divine will does not bestow necessity upon all the things it wills, because it is so highly efficacious that things come to be even in the manner it wills. — The antecedent is made obvious in the text by the case of begetting a child similar to oneself in its accidents. — The first inference is supported on the ground that God's will is a supremely effective cause. — The second rests on the ground that God wills contingency and necessariness, and this in turn is supported by its purpose-wise reason, namely, to round out the universe. — The third inference is made obvious by the fact that contingent effects require contingent causes as the proximate ones suited to them, and necessary effects require necessary causes in the same way; otherwise, it would not be the case that all things are arranged gently [*suaviter*]. — The last inference is obvious from the whole chain.

(c) From the determination just reached, he turns back to dismiss the opinion already criticized, by saying the complete opposite of what it had said. For it follows from Aquinas' position that the reason God willed contingent causes is *because He willed contingency in the universe* — and not *vice-versa* (that causes of contingency were willed and just resulted in the effect itself). These points have already been exhibited in the examples I gave above. — But for a fuller understanding of this determination, beginners should know that it is one thing to will something and another to do it, as we experience in our own affairs. Hence, in that unique Will which is not just a will but also an effective cause, we admit a "going" from the willing to the doing (even though, from the point of view of the thing causable, the willing and the doing are the same). Thus, from the fact that God *wills* things and the manners of their being and coming to be, the text moves to the *doing* of them, *i.e.*, from the fact that this Will is supremely effective, both the willed things and the willed manners are made to be.

Disputation over a new opinion from Scotus

xi. Concerning this material (and so this is the right place to bring it up), you need to know once more that, after St. Thomas' time, a new opinion arose on the first source of contingency. It was proposed by Scotus in his comments on *I Sententiarum* d.2, q.1, and d.8, q.5, and d.39, q.1. Scotus thinks the first source of contingency is indeed something about the divine will, and here he agrees with us. But we say the "something" is the high effectiveness of God's will, and he says it is its contingency. For present purposes, what he means by the "contingency" in God's will is its freedom. He imagines that there is contingency in the universe *because God wills and causes freely*. And so thoroughly does he adhere to this opinion that he says: nothing could happen contingently, if Almighty God did not cause freely.⁶ He has said that Aristotle and other philosophers, when they admitted something happened contingently and yet thought God acted of necessity, contradicted themselves. Well, Scotus offers many, many arguments both to support his position and to defend it. Since a lot of them deal with the contingency of just such-and-such things (*i.e.* those subject to the heavenly bodies), and the talk will turn to these below, when we deal with the governance of things, I have decided to bring forward here just those arguments of his that pertain to contingency across the board. So I shall first present these arguments; then I shall give my assessment of Scotus' opinion; and thirdly I shall answer his arguments.

q 115. a.6

Scotus' arguments

xii. Of all the arguments that move Scotus, the first and strongest is this. [*Major:*] If a cause that induces change because it is undergoing it, necessarily undergoes it, it necessarily induces it. [*Minor:*] Every secondary cause is one that induces change because it is undergoing it at the hands of the First Cause. [*Lemma:*] So, if a secondary cause undergoes change necessarily, it induces change necessarily. [*Conclusion:*] If the First Cause does not cause contingently, nothing in the universe happens contingently. Thus, the contingency in the universe comes from the fact that God wills and causes contingently. — And the minor premise is supported on the ground that no secondary cause does anything unless it be in virtue of [*i.e.* through the causal power of] the First Cause.⁷

⁶ In Scotus, freedom was flatly a *species* of contingency, and it was made the mode of God's *velle* not just in connexion with such-and-such objects, but intrinsically, as an operation; so the *velle* was contingent. God's *esse* was still necessary, of course. So Scotus was not able to identify the *esse* with the *velle* in God as Aquinas had; he needed a "formal distinction" between them.

⁷ This argument was stated and handled more fully above, in §§ xx-xxiii of the commentary on q.14, a.13.

Scotus has a second argument as well. [*Antecedent:*] In order of natural priority, the First Cause bears upon an effect "earlier" than any other cause; [*1st inference:*] so if the First Cause causes necessarily, every effect has a necessary relation to it "earlier" than it has a relation to any other cause; ergo [*2nd inference:*] no effect happens contingently. Drawing this second inference is supported on the ground that it is impossible for one and the same effect to have the relation of a contingent effect *and* of a necessary effect either to the same cause or to diverse causes.⁸

Cajetan's assessment

xiii. Now, it seems to me that this opinion is false both in itself and in its foundations. I think so *first* because it follows from it that this part of the universe is not from God as an agent acting on purpose — which is against the theologians as well as the philosophers. Drawing this consequence is supported as follows. An effect of an agent acting on purpose, *as so acting*, has to be chosen by him, as one sees in *Metaphysics IX*, where it says a rational power is determined to act by a choice. But if contingency arises from God's *mode* of willing, it is just a consequence of *how* He chooses, and not an item chosen; therefore contingency is not an effect of God as an agent acting on purpose.

c. 5.
1048a 10f

I think Scotus' opinion is wrong for a *second* reason also. Suppose the divine will did not will-and-cause the present universe freely, but by natural necessity, and yet still had the high effectiveness of its causal power. Then contingency would still be here. For there would still be defectible causes, and there would still be free agents, such as human beings.⁹ — We see this even

⁸ Let C_1 , C_2 , and E be states of affairs. If C_1 necessarily causes E , E bears back to it the converse relation of being a necessary effect; likewise, if C_2 contingently causes E , the latter bears back to it the converse, which is being a contingent effect. Scotus' argument is that, since these converses involve incompatible properties (nothing can be at once a necessary effect and a contingent effect), they are incompatible relations. So, E can neither bear them both to C_1 , nor bear one to C_1 and the other to C_2 . This argument was also given more fully above, in §.xxiii of the commentary on q.14, a.13.

⁹ Suppose the First Cause's causing, C_1 , necessarily puts a secondary cause into operation, C_2 , so that we have $\Box(C_1 \supset C_2)$, and the First Cause causes by necessity of its nature, so that we have $\Box(C_1)$; then we have $\Box(C_2)$. But if this C_2 is in its own nature a defectible or free cause, it bears the causal relation to a disjunction of outcomes, $O_1 \vee O_2$. So even if this second causal relation is correctly expressed by a strict implication, $\Box(C_2 \supset (O_1 \vee O_2))$, and we have $\Box(C_2)$, all we have in the end is $\Box(O_1 \vee O_2)$. We do not have $\Box(O_1)$, nor $\Box(O_2)$, for the simple reason that necessity does not distribute over disjunction. Thus both outcomes remain contingent, and contingency would still exist in a universe brought into being necessarily.

more clearly, if we imagine that the world did not come from God but “from itself,” as it were. Then, from the very fact that not every effect has a *per se* cause, it would be obvious that something happens contingently, as is made clear in *Metaphysics VI*.¹⁰

c.3;
1027b 11-15

Answers to Scotus’ arguments

xiv. Scotus’ first argument can be answered in several ways. I shall do so first by distinguishing the phrase ‘undergoing change’ [which appears in both of Scotus’ premises]. For there are two senses in which a secondary cause can be “undergoing change” at the hands of a first cause:

- (1) by undergoing a change *previous* to its own action, as when a stick moves a stone after having “undergone” motion from a hand;
- (2) by a change *intrinsically cooperating* with its own action.

Now, whatever may be the case with Scotus’ major taken in sense (1), it is false when taken in sense (2), and yet (2) is the only sense in which Scotus’ minor is true. When somebody wills something, or the sun shines, it does not have to be the case that the First Cause is cooperating by a previous act of change-inducing; all that is necessary (and it suffices) is that the First Cause be cooperating intrinsically with that choice or shining. And because the cooperation with each is according to the nature of each, this is how God disposes all things gently. Thus, whether God cooperates necessarily or freely, it is no less the case that the created will *freely* uses that cooperation.¹¹

¹⁰ This thought experiment is not entertaining atheism but the possibility that the divine will might have been producing an effect to which the visible universe was entirely incidental, like a particular soap bubble in a tub where the laundry is being done. For then the bubble itself would have no *per se* cause, and every causal chain explaining an event inside the bubble would go back to an initial contingency.

¹¹ If the fact that the First Cause *x* induces a change *c* in a created thing *y* counts as one event, and the fact that this *y* induces a change *c*’ in another thing *z* counts as a second, distinct event, then perhaps if the first happens necessarily, so does the second. But typically, says Cajetan, the First Cause’s influence upon a creature’s acting is not a distinct, prior event. God’s sustaining the sun in being is not a first event, thanks to which the sun, in a second event, shines; rather, the sun’s being is part of what-it-is for the sun to shine. (Being is “caused by God” all right, but the sun’s being is not a separate event, because it is not a physical change in which God “alters” the sun from not-being to being. The implications for a philosophy of existence are obvious.) Likewise, God’s “applying” a created will “to its act” is not a first event, thanks to which that will, in a second event, chooses; rather, the will’s being applied to its act is part of what-it-is for the will to choose. Since the will chooses freely, the influence on it from God is just part of what-it-is to choose freely. So if the influence were “there” necessarily, the choice to pray (or not to) would still be free. (The implications for a theology of “promotion” and efficacious grace are obvious.)

Secondly, I shall answer Scotus’ first argument by distinguishing the phrase, ‘because it is undergoing change’ [in his two premises]. For this can indicate

- an exclusive cause [*causa praecisa*],

and it can indicate

- a contributing cause [*concausa*].

If it means an exclusive cause, Scotus’ minor is false. For it is not the case that a secondary cause induces a change *exclusively* because it is undergoing one; it induces change also out of its own causal power [*virtus*]. But if the phrase means a contributing cause, then Scotus’ major premise is false. For a secondary cause’s undergoing change necessarily from the First Cause is consistent with the undergone change’s being modified by the nature of the secondary cause. Thus a secondary cause’s change-inducing does not arise exclusively from its undergoing change but from that *plus* its own manner of behaving. Out of this manner there can arise the result that the secondary cause does not induce change necessarily, as is clear in the case of defectible causes.¹²

The [famous] proposition that Scotus added in support, ‘no secondary cause does anything unless it be in virtue of the First Cause’, does not help his case. For the sense of it is not

a secondary cause has no causal power but that of the First

but

a secondary cause produces no effect without the First Cause’s power concurring and joining the secondary cause’s power to its effect.

For the sense in which the First Cause attains the [secondary cause’s] effect “immediately” is the sense of immediacy of power, as was discussed in Inquiry 8 [a. 1, at § iv in the commentary].

xv. The answer to Scotus’ second argument is that his first inference is worthless. For the First Cause does not “in itself” attain the secondary cause’s effect but attains it “modified” by its cooperation — modified after the manner of the secondary cause itself. Hence, the secondary cause’s effect would not have a necessary relation to the First Cause on any “earlier” basis; it would just have the relation of having arisen contingently from it. For the proposition assumed [as the second argument’s antecedent, namely:

in order of natural priority, the First Cause bears upon an effect “earlier” than any other cause]

is not to be understood as saying that the order of natural priority is a duration, in whose first instant the First Cause bears on the effect, and in whose second instant the secondary cause does so. Such a construal is peculiar. Yet it does seem to be the one from which Scotus’

¹² For Scotus’ major to be true, it had to say: if a cause that induces change *exclusively* because it is undergoing change necessarily undergoes it, it necessarily induces it. But for his minor to be true, it had to say: every secondary cause induces change *partly* because it is undergoing it from the First Cause. So when the two premises are true, they do not meet.

Proposition I alleged consequences follow. Rather, the proposition assumed is to be construed in terms of independence and intimacy: the First Cause attains the secondary cause's effect more independently and more intimately than the secondary cause does, as you see at the beginning of the *Liber de Causis*. This is why the First Cause is said to bear on the effect "prior" [or "earlier"]. But from this [correct] construal, it is obvious that nothing validly follows.¹³

¹³ Cajetan criticized this argument in similar terms in § *xxii* of his commentary on q.14, a.13. His point is easy to grasp today, if one has a concept invented since his time: the concept of a product of relations. An example is "wife's mother." I have Alyce as my wife's mother by a product of relations. It is not as though I first had a blood relation to

Alyce and consequently had a marriage relation to my wife; nor is it (*vice-versa*) as though I first had a marriage-relation and consequently had a blood relation. Rather, I relate to Alyce solely through my relation to my wife, and that is why I have to Alyce only the non-blood relation of son-in-law to mother-in-law. In just the same way, the effect E of a secondary cause C₂ relates to the first cause actuating C₂, namely, C₁, by a product of relations. Hence E relates to C₁ solely through its relation to C₂. Thus, says Cajetan, if C₁ acted necessarily, it would not be as though E first had a necessary relation to C₁ and subsequently or consequently tried to have a contingent relation to C₂. Not at all; rather, because E's relation to C₂ is "contingent effect of," and E relates to C₁ solely through this relation, E's relation to C₁ would also be that of a contingent effect. Scotus, we may say, tried to treat a product of relations as though it were a pair of relations borne by the same subject.

Does God will evils?

1 *ST* q.48, a.6; *In I Sent.* d.46, a.4; 1 *CG* c.95, *De Potentia* q.1, a.6; *De Malo* q.2, a.2 ad 16

It looks as if God's willing is a willing of evils.

(1) After all, God wills every good that arises.

But it is a good thing that evils occur. For Augustine says in the *Enchiridion*, "Although bad things are not good insofar as they are bad, it is still a good thing that not only good things occur but also bad ones." Therefore, God wills evils.

(2) Besides, Denis says in c.4 of *De divinis nominibus*. "There will be evil contributing to the completeness of the whole." And Augustine says in the *Enchiridion*, "The wonderful beauty of the universe arises from everything, in that even what is called bad, when it is well ordered and put in its place, adds more luster to the good, so that good things may please the more and be worthy of praise all the more when compared to the bad." Well, God wills everything that pertains to the completeness and beauty of the whole, because the latter is what God wants most of all in creatures. Therefore, God wills evils.

(3) Also, 'evils occur' and 'no evils occur' are contradictories. [So God wills one or the other.] God does not will that *no* evils occur, because, if He did, then (since some do occur) His will would not be always carried out. Ergo, He wills that evils occur.

ON THE OTHER HAND, there is what Augustine says in his *Book of 83 Questions*: "A person is not made worse by any wise man's doing; God is far above any wise man; far less, then, is anyone made worse by God's doing. And when we say, 'by his doing', we are saying 'by his willing'." So, a person is not made worse by God's willing it. But clearly a thing is made worse by any evil. Hence, God does not will evils.

I ANSWER: what it takes for an item to be "good" is what it takes for that item to be *sought*, and evil is opposite to good; so it is impossible for anything evil to be sought *qua* an evil — whether by natural tendency, or by animal appetite, or by the intellectual seeking which is willing. Rather, an evil is sought incidentally, as attaching to some good, and this is seen in any kind of seeking. After all, no natural agent seeks loss or corruption; but it may seek a form to which the loss of another form attaches, and it may be after the generation of something which is the corruption of something else. A lion killing an antelope is after food, to which the killing of the prey attaches. A fornicator intends a form of enjoyment, to which the deformity of moral fault attaches.

Now, an evil that attaches to a good [say, to *g*] is the privation of another good [say, *g'*]. Thus no evil is ever sought, not even incidentally, unless the good [*g*] to which the evil is connected is *preferred* over the good [*g'*] which is lost through it. Well, there is no good which God prefers over His own good state.

But He may prefer one limited* good over another limited* good. God in no way wills moral evil [*malum culpae*], because it takes away a creature's relation to the divine Good; but He can will a physical evil[†] or a penal evil[‡] by willing the good to which such an evil attaches. By willing justice, he wills a punishment; and by willing the order of nature to be preserved, He wills some things to be corrupted in the natural way.

TO MEET THE OBJECTIONS — *ad* (1): certain writers have said that, although God does not will evils, He still wills that bad things be or occur, because, while the bad things are not good ones, it is still "a good thing" that the bad ones exist or occur. Their reason for saying this is that things bad in themselves are ordered to some good, and they think this ordering relation is implied in the clause, 'that bad things be or occur'.¹ But this is incorrect. A bad thing is not in-and-of itself ordered to a good thing; it is incidentally so ordered. After all, it is foreign to a sinner's intention[§] that a good should come out of his sin (as it was foreign to the intention of pagan tyrants that, out of their persecutions, the martyrs' endurance should become famous). So one cannot say that this sort of ordering-to-a-good is *implied* in the claim, 'it is a good thing that an evil exist or come about'. Good theory about a topic is not based on what pertains to it incidentally, after all, but on what pertains to it in-and-of itself.

ad (2): an evil is not done for the completeness and beauty of the universe, unless it be done incidentally, as I said. The passage in which Denis says evil is contributing to the completeness of everything concludes by inferring that this is untenable.

ad (3): 'evils occur' and 'no evils occur' are contradictories, but 'one wills that they occur' and 'one wills that they not occur' are not contradictories, because they are both affirmative. [Hence they can both be false.] God, then, does not will that evils occur, and He does not will that they not occur. Rather, He wills to "permit" them to occur, and this is good.²

¹ Such was the position of the important 12th Century theologian and educator, Hugh of St. Victor (*PL* 176, 239).

² Start with knowing: either God knows that *p* or else God knows that $\sim p$. Why is this sound? Because of a logical truth about contradictories? The objector seems to have thought so, but in fact it is sound only because God is omniscient. Well, God is not omnivolent (if I may be allowed such a word), and so there is no parallel principle to the effect that either God wills that *p* or else God wills that $\sim p$. This is what Aquinas is pointing out. And notice an entailment. [If the objector were right, then 'if *p* is true, God wills that *p*' would be a sound implication. It would be the converse of the claim detested in a.6, and Aquinas is rejecting it.]

* *particulare*

† *malum naturalis defectus*
‡ *malum poenae*

§ *praeter intentionem*

c. 96;
PL 40, 276

PG 3, 717

c. 10,
PL 40, 236

q. 3;
PL 40, 11

Cajetan's Commentary

In the title question, note two points. (1) The verb 'will' here is not taken so broadly as to cover both willing and not willing, as 'see' extends to cover both seeing and not seeing when we visually perceive darkness; for it is clear that good and evil are opposed and bear upon willing *via* 'will' and 'not will'. Nor is 'will' being used here to cover both willing and counter-willing [*velle et nolle*]; for it is clear that God does counter-will many evils, such as all the ones He does not permit to befall His elect. Rather, 'will' here is used properly for a *positive act in the mode of accepting* (while 'counter-will' means a positive act in the mode of repelling). That 'will' is so taken here is obvious from the argument advanced to support the conclusion answering the question; the argument only supports it in this sense. — (2) An "evil" is the privation of a due good; the negation [of a trait] has to meet all these conditions, if it is to meet the definition of an evil.¹ Beyond this, a "penal evil" includes what it takes to be involuntary, while a "moral evil" includes what it takes to be voluntary. The question here is about evil in general, but the answer descends into the different kinds.

Analysis of the article

ii. In the body of the article, one conclusion answers the question, but it has several parts: God does not will moral evil in any way, but He wills a physical or penal evil incidentally. The support goes thus. [*Antecedent:*] An evil is opposed to a good; so [*1st inference: 1st part:*] it is impossible for an evil to be sought, [*2nd part:*] unless it is attached to a good that is preferred to the good lost through the evil; so [*2nd inference: 1st part:*] it is impossible for moral evil to be willed by God, but [*2nd part:*] it is possible for a physical or penal evil to be willed by Him.

Drawing the first inference is supported on the ground that what it takes to be "good" is what it takes to be "sought." The first part of the point inferred is illustrated and made clear for every kind of seeking (*i.e.* natural tendency, animal appetite, and intellectual seeking) by the examples of natural action, a lion's appetite, and a fornicator's volition. The second part of the point inferred rests on the ground that any evil attaching to a good [g] is the privation of another good [g']. — The second inference is supported in its first part on the ground that God prefers nothing to His own good, to which moral evil is opposed. The second part is illustrated by the fact that God prefers one [limited] good over another. In the case of penal evils, He prefers [the good of] justice over the good taken away by the punishment; in the

¹ Take the negation 'x is not φ'. If it is to pick out an evil, the negation must be privative (so a normal case of what x is would be φ), the negated trait must be a good (*i.e.* being-φ is a complicative trait, a good way to be), and the good must be "due" (*i.e.* a thing of x's kind ought to be φ). Otherwise, 'x is not φ' does not pick out an evil

case of physical evils, He prefers the order of nature as a whole over the life of this lamb eaten by a wolf.

A doubt about moral evil

iii. In the support for the second inference, notice that the text does not say, "moral evil takes away the divine good," but just "takes away a creature's relation [*ordo*] to that good. Hence a doubt arises. The argument seems worthless. Every evil takes away some relation to the divine good state, after all, because every [creature] is related to that Good State as to the [creature's] ultimate end and first Source, *etc.* So, from the mere fact that moral evil takes away an ordering relation to the divine good, it does not follow that moral evil cannot be willed by God, even incidentally. If it did follow, the like would follow for every other kind of evil as well.

Response

iv. The SHORT ANSWER is that a moral evil differs from others in that, for its own part,* it would take away God's good state as it is in itself,[†] if that were possible, just as friendship-love for God would bring His good state into being (as it is in itself), if that were possible. Other evils bear rather upon God's good state just [as reflected] in some particular effect [and not as it is in itself]. The text is very carefully worded to suggest both of two points: (a) that moral evil would take away the divine good as it is in itself, by saying that there is nothing God prefers to His own good state, and (b) that moral evil does not in fact take this away but rather a relation to it (understand 'to it' to mean 'to it as it is in itself', so as to have the difference between moral evil and other evils). Thus the answer to the doubt is clear. An order-relation to God's good state as limitedly par-ticipated does not meet the same definition as an order-relation to God's good state as it is in itself.²

* *quantum est ex se*
† *secundum se*

² Every time a morally evil choice is made, a person is treated in some way in which genuine friendship-love (*amor amicitiae*) would not treat him or her. For the love involved in friendship seeks the integral good state of the person loved, and a morally evil choice is always damaging to some person's good state. Thus it is easy to see why Cajetan takes friendship-love and moral evil as opposites that throw light on each other. Friendship-love towards God was given the name *caritas*. It was not a longing for God as an enjoyable object (that would be *amor concupiscentiae*) but a longing to make one's life a benefit to God, by giving Him one's entire service. Thus it is easy to see why Cajetan says that friendship-love would bring into being (if that were possible) God's good state. Also, *caritas* is the longing to make one's life count for God because He is supremely good. A moral evil is a choice to pursue one's own wants, regardless of damage to oneself or others, because one's own interests are taken as supremely good. Thus moral evil is a choice to dethrone God (if that were possible), by setting up a rival center-of-all-attraction within oneself, rather than above oneself. Augustine had made this doctrine famous in *The City of God XIV*, c.23.

Understanding the answer *ad* (1)

v. In the answer *ad* (1), notice two points. The first is that, in the text, what to say about moral evil in itself is taken from the sinner's intention, because moral evil is not an effect that can be traced back to higher causes; it has for its distinctive cause, rather, the sinner himself *qua* sinner. Good theorizing about anything is to be done according to its distinctive cause.³

³ What is foreign to the intention of the chooser of a moral evil is incidental to the moral evil itself, because a moral evil *is* a choice or execution of a choice. As Cajetan said in his remarks on the title question, the defining ingredients of "moral evil" include what it takes to be voluntary.

Secondly, nothing in the text answers the authoritative quotation from Augustine brought forward by the objector; and (unless the manuscript is defective), this does not seem to have been an omission. For from the points stated in this article, the gloss on those words of Augustine becomes apparent: they are to be understood as saying "incidentally" — it is not "a good thing" in and of itself for it to be brought about that evils exist, but it is good incidentally.⁴

See below, § 11 of the commentary on q 22, a.2

⁴ Augustine never said that God *wills* evils to occur. Like Aquinas, he said that God *permits* some. If God were a consequentialist, He would not be permitting but willing the evils for the sake of a "greater good." And their occurrence could not be "incidental," because they would have been chosen.

 article 10

Does God have free choice?

In II Sent. d.25, q 1, a. 1; I CG c.88; De Veritate q.24, a.3; De Malo q.16, a.5

It seems that God does not have free choice.

PL 22, 393 (1) Jerome says in a homily on the prodigal son [in his Epistle 21 *Ad Damasum*], “God is the only one in whom sin does not and cannot arise; others, since they have free choice, can turn either way.”

in a.9 (2) Free choice is the faculty of reason-and-will whereby good or evil is chosen. But God does not will evil, as was just maintained. Hence there is no free choice in God.

c 6; PL 16, 592 ON THE OTHER HAND, there is what Ambrose says in his book *On Faith*: “The Holy Spirit distributes to each as He wills, that is, by the choice of His free will, not by bending to necessity.”

* *natural instinctu* ANSWER: we have free choice among things we do not will necessarily or by natural instinct.* Our willing to be happy is not a matter of free choice but one

of natural instinct. Other animals that are moved to something by natural instinct also are not said to be moved to it “by free choice.” So, since God wills His own good state by necessity but does not will other things by necessity (as shown above), He has free choice among the things He does not will necessarily. q 19, a.3

TO MEET THE OBJECTIONS — *ad* (1): Jerome does not seem to be excluding free choice from God across the board, but only as far as turning to sin is concerned.

ad (2): a “moral” evil is so called thanks to being a turning away from the divine good state, and God wills everything through willing that good state, as shown above; so it is obviously impossible for Him to will a moral evil. But He still relates to opposed things insofar as He can will a thing to exist or not exist. We, too, without sinning, can will to sit or will not to. q 19, a.2

 Cajetan’s Commentary

As far as the verbal sense of ‘free choice’ is concerned (which is all that is needed here), it is made clear in the body of the article and by usage.

In the body of the article, a single conclusion answers the question: Yes, God has free choice. The support goes thus. [*Antecedent:*] God does not necessarily will things other than Himself; ergo [*infer-*

ence:] He has free choice among them.

Drawing the inference is supported on the ground that free choice bears on things that are not willed necessarily or by natural instinct. This is made clear both in our case (*vis-à-vis* happiness) and in the case of other animals (*vis-à-vis* what they seek by natural instinct).

Should "symbolized volition" be distinguished in God?

In I Sent. d.45, a.4; De Veritate q.23, a.3

It seems that symbolized volition [*voluntas signi*] should not be distinguished in God.

(1) After all, God's willing is a cause of things the same way as His knowing is. No "symbolized knowing" is assigned to God. Neither should any symbolized volition be assigned.

(2) Besides, any symbol that does not correspond to what it is a symbol of, is false. So, if the symbols set up to mark God's willing do not correspond to His willing, they are false; and if they do correspond, they are superfluous. Ergo no such symbols should be set up.

ON THE OTHER HAND, God's willing is one act, since it is His essence. But sometimes it is signified in the plural, as when Psalm 111:2 says, "great are the works of the Lord, sought out according to all His wills."¹ It must therefore be the case that a symbolized will is sometimes taken for His will.

ANSWER: in speech about God, some terms are applied to Him literally, and some figuratively, as came out above. When certain human emotions are affirmed figuratively of God, it is done on the basis of a similarity of effect, in such a way that a sign of this emotion in us is attributed to God by taking the name of that emotion figuratively. For example, in human affairs, it is usually angry persons who deal out punishment; so the punishment itself is a sign of anger, and so, when an act of punishing is attributed to God, it is described by the word 'anger' [or 'wrath', used as a symbol of the will with which God punishes].

¹ So reads the Vulgate; the LXX is no better: "sought out unto all His wishes." The difficulty of the verse goes back to the Hebrew, *דְּרִישׁוּם לְכָל-חַפְצֵיהֶם*, in which the last word is ambiguous. Either it is a form of *דָּרַשׁ*, in which case the right translation is that God's works are "notable to all who take delight in them," or else it is a form of *דָּרַשׁ*, in which case *לְכָל* should be *בְּכָל*, and the sense should be that His works are "worthy of inquiry into all the desires behind them."

Similarly, what is commonly a sign of willing in us is sometimes figuratively called "a will" in God. Thus, when one commands something, it is a sign that one wills it to be done, and so a divine commandment is sometimes figuratively called a "will of God," as in Matthew 6:10. "Thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven."² However, there is the following difference between the terms 'will' and 'anger': 'anger' is never used of God literally, since it includes an emotion in its focal sense,* whereas the term 'will' is used literally. This is why we distinguish in God's case 'will' taken literally from 'will' taken figuratively. For God's will literally taken is called His "will of good pleasure," while His will figuratively taken is called a "symbolized volition," in that a sign of willing is being called a will.

* *in suo principali intellectu*

TO MEET THE OBJECTIONS — *ad* (1): of the things that come to pass, knowing is only a cause through willing; in other words, we do not bring about what we know unless we want to. Hence knowing is not given a symbolized case, as willing is.

ad (2): the reason talk of "symbolized volitions" arises is not because these are signs that God wills, but because items which are usually signs of willing in us are called "wills" in God. Similarly, punishment is not a sign that there is wrath in God; wrath is spoken of in God because punishment is a sign of wrath in us.

² Verses like this are the more important source of the problem posed in this article. They use 'the will of God' in a curious sense. For what is literally the will of God is always carried out (said a.6). But God's commandments are not always carried out; they are not always followed, and when we pray that God's will be done, we are praying that His commandments and other forms of guidance be followed. In what sense, then, are the commandments "God's will"? Not in the literal sense, says Aquinas. Rather, he says, we draw an anthropomorphic inference from the commandment to a will behind it — a will that it be issued and followed. Since the commandment symbolizes a will-behind-it, the word 'will' is sometimes applied to the commandment itself, which is thus a "symbolized volition."

Cajetan's Commentary

The term 'symbolized volition' in the title will be explained in the body of the article. The talk of distinguishing is not about dividing up "symbolized volition" into many but about dividing it off from God's will of good pleasure, which has been the topic under discussion until now. So the sense of the title question is this: should one distinguish "symbolized" voli-

tion in God from what is unqualifiedly His will (or "will of good pleasure")?

ii. In the body of the article, one conclusion answers the question with a yes: in God, symbolized volition should be distinguished from what is unqualifiedly His "will." — This is made clear as follows. [*Antecedent.*] In the talk of God, a sign of willing is called His will:

so [1st inference:] it is figuratively called a will in God: and so [2nd inference:] the symbolized will should be distinguished from His will of good pleasure. — That the antecedent is true is shown by an authoritative text from Matthew 6. — The rightness of drawing the first inference is made clear by the parallel* between a sign of emotion and a sign of willing, as you see from the example of anger and punishment. — The rightness of drawing the second inference is shown by the contrast between anger and willing, in that the latter, willing, is found literally in God as well as figuratively. The rightness of drawing the second inference is also seen from the terms being

* *proportionalitas*

used: the phrase 'symbolized volition' is nothing but a figurative use of the word 'volition', whereas 'will of good pleasure' is a literal use of the word 'will'. Thus it is clear enough that the division of "God's will" into His will of good pleasure and His symbolized volition is not a division in the real but a division among the meanings of [the occurrences of] the words for willing.

¹ An issue was left untouched in this article and its commentary. It was the relation between the "symbolized" volition in a commandment, which is that everyone keep it, and the "antecedent" volition in 1 Timothy 2:4, that everyone be saved (a.6). Resolution of this issue is coming in the next article.

Are five kinds of "symbolized volition" suitably listed?

In I.Sent. d.45, a.4, De Veritate q.23, a.3

It seems unsuitable to posit five symbolized volitions for God, namely: prohibiting, commanding, advising [*consilium*], working or accomplishing [*operatio*], and permitting.¹

(1) After all, the very things God commands or advises for us He sometimes "works" in us, and the things He prohibits He sometimes permits. So, these symbolized wills should not be contrasted with one another.

(2) Besides, God does not "work" anything without [literally] willing to do so [*i.e.* with His "will of good pleasure"], as it says in Wisdom 11: 25-26. But symbolized volition is distinguished from the will of good pleasure. Hence working should not be listed as a symbolized volition.

(3) Moreover, working and permitting apply to all creatures, because God accomplishes something in all of them and permits something to occur in all of them. But commanding, advising, and prohibiting apply only to rational creatures. They do not all fit suitably under one classification, therefore, because they are not of the same order.

(4) Also, the bad happens in more ways than the good. After all, the good happens in just one way [*i.e.* by hitting on the just mean], while evil is multifarious, as you see from Aristotle in *Ethics II* and from Denis in *De divinis nominibus*, c.4. It does not seem suitable, therefore, that only one symbolized volition should be assigned to the bad (prohibiting), while two are assigned to the good (advising and commanding).

ANSWER: the items called symbolized volitions are things by which we customarily show that we will something. Well, one can show that one wills a thing to be done either by oneself or by another.

One shows that one wills a thing to be done by oneself insofar as one *does* it, either in a direct rôle or in an indirect, incidental rôle. One does a thing in a direct rôle when one brings it about by one's own doing [*per se*], and this is how working is called a sign [of willing]. One does a thing indirectly/incidentally by not impeding an operation [that will produce it]; for [not-posing or] removing an obstacle is called inducing a thing incidentally, as it says in *Physics VIII*. This is how permitting is called a sign [of willing].

One shows that one wills a thing to be done by another insofar as one prompts* the other to do it, either by a cue that obliges¹ (commanding what one wants or prohibiting the contrary) or by a cue that persuades (which is a case of advising).

* *ordina*
† *inducto necessaria*

Since these are the ways in which it is made known that one wills something, each of the five is at times called a divine "will," as being a sign of willing. That commanding, advising, and prohibiting are called "a will of God" is clear from Matthew 6: 10, "Thy will be done, on earth as it is in Heaven." That permitting or accomplishing is called "a will of God" is clear from Augustine in the *Enchiridion*: "Nothing comes to pass unless the Almighty wills it to, either by permitting it to be done or by bringing it about."

One may also add that permitting and accomplishing are brought to bear on the present — permitting, on present evil; accomplishing, on present good. Prohibiting is brought to bear on future evil; commanding bears on future good that is needed; advising, on future good that goes beyond what is needed.

TO MEET THE OBJECTIONS — *ad* (1): take a given item, *x*; nothing prevents one from showing in *different ways* that one wills something about *x* — just as nothing prevents many different terms from being found that describe *x*. So nothing prevents the same *x* from coming under commandment and advice and accomplishment; and nothing prevents a self-same item, *y*, from coming under prohibition or permission.

ad (2): just as God can be represented figuratively as willing what He does not will with what is literally "His will," so also God can be represented figuratively as willing what He *does* will literally. So nothing prevents there being good-pleasure willing and symbolized willing of the same thing. But accomplishing is always the same as good-pleasure willing, while commanding and advising are not the same as it, (a) because the good-pleasure willing is about the present, while the commanding or advising is about the future, and (b) because accomplishing is an effect of willing by one's own doing, while the latter are through another's doing, as I said.

ad (3): a rational creature is in control of his or her own actions, and so special symbols of divine willing are assigned to that case, insofar as God prompts a rational creature to act freely and on his own. But other creatures do not act unless moved to do so as a result of divine accomplishment; so in their case, there is no room for anything but "working" and permitting.

ad (4): any moral evil can occur in many ways, but one trait is constant: it conflicts* with God's will. So a single symbolic will is assigned to such evils (prohibiting).² But goods relate in diverse ways to God's

c 96;
Pl. 40, 276

* *discordat*

¹ After four criticisms of this traditional list, the implicit *sed contra* will be: if this were not a suitable list, it would not have the backing of authoritative writers.

² How do all moral evils conflict with God's will? Don't say: they conflict with His commandments. Commanding and prohibiting, we have been told, are symbols of willing, and the symbolism will only work if such evils conflict *some-how* with what God literally wills. What God literally wills,

good state. Some are such that, without them, we cannot come to enjoy God's goodness, and commanding bears upon these; others are such that, with them, we come to enjoy it more completely,

and advising bears upon these. — Another response is that advice is not just about gaining better goods but also about avoiding lesser evils.

said a.6, is always carried out. So I rephrase the question: how do all moral evils conflict with the will of God which is always carried out? Don't say: they conflict with His will to reveal the commandments and prohibitions. For this will is always carried out, and no moral evil would conflict with it (unless some prophet refused to communicate what God told him). And don't say: all moral evils conflict with God's will that justice be done. For this will is carried out flawlessly, said a. 6, as God punishes the doers of such evils. The evils themselves do not conflict [*discordare*] with the fact that they are punished. So I repeat: what does God literally will with which any and all moral evils are "out of line"? So far as the present translator can see, there are just two solutions.

The first picks up the distinction between what God wills *secundum quid* (antecedently) and what He wills *simpliciter* (consequently). God antecedently wills integral well-being, which includes moral rectitude, for all His rational creatures; and this is a real (though logically preliminary) aspect of what God literally wills. Then the commandments and prohibitions symbolize this antecedent will, and all the moral evils conflict with it. The talk

of God's *willing* sinners' rectitude and salvation is literally true up to a point.

The problem with this answer is that the points willed symbolically and those willed antecedently can hardly be the same. For one thing, there is no "consequent" volition that a commandment be broken. For another thing, there is no second good [g'] that God could be willing and to which the evil of the commandment's being broken would attach.

More satisfying, therefore, is the other solution. It picks up the answer here *ad* (4). JUST AS the morally good acts commanded bear a definite relation to God's good state (*viz.*, that without doing them a human adult cannot enjoy it), SO ALSO morally evil acts bear a definite relation to the same good state (doing them precludes enjoying it), and that good state is what God necessarily wills (said a.2) for Himself and contingently wills rational creatures to share. This is the real and literal will in God which the commandments symbolize and which we pray to be done.

Now one picks up Cajetan's happy distinction between 'conflict' negation-wise and 'conflict' thwart-wise (from section *iii* of the commentary on q.19, a.6). Moral evils do not thwart anything God literally wills *except our happiness*, and that is why their occurrence is something He literally *does not* will.



Inquiry Twenty: Into God's love

The inquiry turns next to the items that pertain to God's will independently [of His understanding]. In the human case, in the part of us with which we strive for things [*pars appetitiva*], we find both "passions of the soul" (joy, love, and the like) and habits of moral virtue (fairness, fortitude, and the like). So we shall look first into God's love, then into His justice and mercy. About His love, four questions are asked:

- | | |
|------------------------------|---|
| (1) is there love in God? | (3) does He love one thing more than another? |
| (2) does He love everything? | (4) does He love the better things more? |

article 1

Is there love in God?

1 ST q.82, a.5 ad 1; In III Sent. d.32, a.1 ad 1; 1 CG c.91, 4 CG c.19, In De div. nom. c.4, lectio 9

It seems that there is no love [*amor*] in God.

(1) There is no passion in God [*i.e.* no emotion]. Love is a passion. So there is no love in God.

(2) Loving something is an alternative to being angry at it, annoyed with it, and the like. Annoyance and anger are not attributed to God, unless it is done figuratively. So love should be merely figurative, too.

PG 3, 713

(3) Moreover, Denis says in chapter 4 of *De divinis nominibus*, "Love is the power that unites and gathers." This has no place in God, since He is simple [*i.e.* has no parts to unite]. Hence there is no love in God.

ON THE OTHER HAND, there is what John 4:16 says, "God is love [*caritas*]."

ANSWER: it is necessary to posit that love [*amor*] is present in God. For the first movement in a will, or in any power-to-seek, is a case of loving.¹ Acts of the will (or of any power-to-seek) deal with their distinctive objects, and these are "good" and "bad"; but good is the object willed or sought more basically and of itself,* while bad is only an object sought secondarily and because of something else [*per aliud*], *i.e.* thanks to a good to which it is opposed. As a result, the acts of willing and seeking that deal with good must be naturally prior to those that deal with bad (as joy is naturally prior to annoyance, and love is naturally prior to hate). For what is thus-or-such "of itself" is always prior to what is thus-or-such through something else.²

* *principalis et per se*

¹ The first movement in a will is its being-attracted, and this is already a positive attitude of seeking, *i.e.*, *amor*. The purpose of this paragraph is to show that negative attitudes like avoidance presuppose positive ones. For an organism only seeks to avoid what it evaluates as bad, and it only evaluates as bad the items which it perceives as opposed to what has attracted it as good. So positive evaluation and seeking come first. (Evaluation, of course, can be instinctive as well as rational.)

² Here, the value of 'thus-or-such' is 'object sought'. What is of itself an object sought is prior to what is only sought because of (or thanks to) something else.

Also, a more general* [object] is naturally prior [to those less so]. Thus the intellect bears upon "the true in general" prior to bearing upon these or those particular truths. With willing or seeking, there are acts that deal with "good" under a limiting condition:

* joy and delight deal with good as present and in hand;
* desire and hope deal with good as not yet in hand.
But love deals with good in *full generality*, whether it is in hand or not. Thus, love is naturally the primordial act of willing and seeking.³

Hence all other motions of seeking presuppose love as their first root. No one desires anything, after all, but a good which is loved; no one rejoices in anything but a good which is loved. Hatred has no object but what opposes a good which is loved. Annoyance and other such attitudes clearly depend on love as on their first well-spring. As a result, there has to be love in any being in which willing or seeking is present (for if the primordial act of that kind is taken away, so are the others). Well, it was shown above that there is will in God. Hence, it is necessary to posit love in Him.

TO MEET THE OBJECTIONS — *ad* (1): a power to cognize does not induce change except *via* a power-to-seek. In our case, a general reason induces us to change *via* a particular reason (as *De Anima III* says); so the intellectual desiring called willing [which bears on general reasons] moves us to change *via* a sense appetite [which bears on particulars]. Thus what *proximately* induces change in our bodies is a sense appetite. This is why an act of sense appetition is always accompanied by a change in our body (especially around the heart, which Aristotle says is the first source of change in an animal).

³ The premise that the more general is naturally prior sounds more sweeping than it was meant to be. It only concerns the objects of faculties and their acts. The intellect would not pick up particular truths if it were not a faculty bearing on "the real" (or "the true"). An organism would not desire this that particular good, if it did not seek *plain good* (which is all that is meant here by 'good in general').

* *communius*

q.19, a.1

c.11,
434a 16ff

De partibus animalium II, c.1;
647a 30.

Thus our acts of sensory appetite, because they have bodily change connected to them, are called "passions" [or "emotions"]. But this is not the case with acts of willing. Insofar, then, as words like 'love', 'joy' and 'delight' indicate acts of sensory appetite, they are "passions," but not insofar as they indicate acts of intellectual appetite. Well, it is in this latter sense that they are posited in God. This is why Aristotle says in *Ethics VIII* [c. 14], "God rejoices with a single, simple operation." For the same reason, He loves without physical passion.

c.14,
1154b 26

ad (2): in the passions of sensory appetite, there is a quasi-material element to look at (the bodily change) and a quasi-formal element (from the appetite itself). In the case of anger, as it says in *De Anima I*, the material element is the heating up of the blood around the heart, or something like that, while the formal element is the seeking to return pain for pain.* Now, within the formal part itself, in some cases of seeking, a state of incompleteness is indicated:

c.1,
403a 30

* *appetitus vincit*

- a good *not had*, in the case of desiring,
- an evil *had*, in the case of being annoyed or sad.

(The same goes for anger, which presupposes annoyance). But other cases of seeking, like loving and enjoying, indicate no incompleteness. Well, none of these attitudes suit God as far as the material element is con-

cerned, as I said already; those that involve an incompleteness even in their formal element cannot suit Him literally but only figuratively, on account of a similarity of effects, as I said above. Those that involve no incompleteness, like love and joy, can be attributed to God literally, but without physical passion, as I said.

in *ad* (1)

q.19, a.2

ad (3): an act of love is always dealing with two items:

- a good that one wants for a beneficiary, and
- the beneficiary for whom one wants it.

For this is what it is to literally love someone: to will *him* good. In the case where one loves oneself, one wills a good for oneself. One seeks to unite that good to oneself, to the extent possible. Hence love is called "a power that unites" even in God's case, but without composition, because the good that He wills for Himself is not a thing other than Himself, since He is good through His own essence, as was shown above. In the case where one loves another, one wills a good for that other. Thus one treats the other as oneself, referring the good to him or her as to oneself. This is why love is called "a power that gathers," because it joins another to oneself, making one behave towards the other as towards oneself. Thus divine love is also a force that gathers, without there being any composition in God, insofar as He wills good for others.

q.6, a.3

Cajetan's Commentary

The title is clear, because it is asking if love is in God *form-wise*. (It was already settled [in q.4, a.2] that everything is in God *power-wise*.)

ii. In the body of the article, a single conclusion answers the question with a yes: there is love in God. — The support goes thus. [*Antecedent:*] A movement of the will (or of any faculty-for-seeking) goes after* the good directly [*per se*] but goes after the bad through something else. [*1st inference:*] Ergo, a first motion of the will (or of any faculty-for-seeking) is after the good in general; hence [*2nd inference:*] the first act of willing or seeking is love; so [*3rd inference:*] there has to be love wherever there is a will or faculty-for-seeking; so [*4th inference:*] one must posit love in God.

* *tendit ad*

The antecedent is clear because the bad does not come under pursuit except by being opposed to a good. — The first part of the first inference (*i.e.* that a first act goes for the good) rests on the ground that what is ϕ of itself is prior to what is ϕ through another. The second part of it (that it deals with the good *in general*) is supported on the ground that the more general is naturally prior. A sign of this, relevant to present purposes, is the fact that the intellect bears upon "the true" in general prior to bearing upon particular truths. — The second inference is supported by how the object of love differs

from the objects of other acts of willing and seeking: love bears upon the good in general, whereas desire, hope and enjoyment bear upon the good in a special condition, such as present or future. This is confirmed by the fact that all other motions of seeking are born out of love, as is shown inductively for acts of desiring, rejoicing, hating, being annoyed, *etc.* — The third inference rests on the ground that if the first [of such acts] is taken away, so are the others. — The last rests on the fact that there is a will in God.

Two points to note

iii. On the above, two points need noticing. The first is that, when the text says love bears on the good in general, "in general" does not mean 'universal'; it means 'without further addition'.* All love is for "good" without further addition, whereas enjoyment is of "good" *in hand*, *etc.* I say this because the text, up until the last inference, is talking about the love in a sense appetite, too, which does not attain "good" as a universal, of course, but without further addition. The supporting premise (the more general is naturally prior) is not thereby weakened, because "good without further addition" stands to "good with an addition" analogously[†] to how "general" stands to "unique" or "less general."

* *absolutè*

† *proportionaliter*

The second point to notice is that, when the text says love is the first act of willing and seeking, the word 'seeking' means [to say that love comes first] across the whole range of the faculties-for-seeking in any nature; it does not mean [that love is the first act] in *each* such faculty. Thus there is no room for an objection to be

raised about the first act of one's faculty for getting angry* [*i.e.* one's temper]. For while the first act of that faculty is not love, but hope [since anger arises out of disappointed hope], it is still the case that the first act of one's *entire* sensory power-to-seek (which is divided into the desirous part and the irascible part) is love.

* *irascibilis*

Does God love everything?

1 ST q.23, a.3 ad 1; 2/1 ST q.110, a.1; in II Sent. d.26, a.1; in III Sent. d.32, aa.1-2; 1 CG c.91; 3 CG c.50; De Veritate q.27, a.1; De Virtutibus in communi q.2, a.7 ad 2; In Joan. c.5, lectio 10; In De div. nom. c.4, lectio 9

It looks as though God does not love everything.

(1) After all, according to Denis, in c.4 of *De divinis nominibus*, love puts the lover outside himself and transports him, so to speak, to the beloved. Well, it is hardly fitting to say that God is put outside Himself and transported to other things. Therefore, it is not fitting to say that God loves anything but Himself.

(2) Besides, God's love is eternal. Other things are not there from eternity except [as known objects] in Him. So He only loves them "in Himself." But as being in Himself, they are not something other than Himself. So God does not love things other than Himself.

(3) Also, there are two kinds of love: desire-love and friendship-love. Take sub-rational creatures: God does not love them with desire-love, because He does not need anything outside of Himself; nor does He love them with friendship-love, because that cannot exist towards sub-rational things, as Aristotle makes clear in *Ethics VIII*. Ergo, God does not love everything.

c.2,
1155b 27ff
1^og. Ps 5 7

(4) Moreover, Psalm 5: 5 says, "Thou hatest all workers of iniquity." Nothing is hated and loved at the same time. Therefore, God does not love everything.

ON THE OTHER HAND, there is what Wisdom 11:24 says: "Thou lovest all the things that are, and abhorrest nothing which thou hast made."

ANSWER: God loves all existing things. Each thing's very existing is some sort of good (as is any other complete trait it has); so all existing things are good insofar as they exist. It was shown above that God's will is a cause of all things. So it must be the case that the extent to which an item has some being (or some good of any kind) is an extent to which it is willed by God. So God wills some good to each existing thing. Since 'love' is nothing but 'will good to something', it is obvious that God loves everything there is.

q.19, a.6

But the "how" of His love is different from ours. Our will is not a cause of things' goodness; their goodness moves our will as the object willed; thus the love with which we will good for someone is not a cause of goodness itself; quite the contrary, the beneficiary's goodness (real or supposed) calls forth the love with which we will that he keep a good he has, or gain one he has not, and to this aim we devote our activity. But God's will creates goodness and pours it into things.

TO MEET THE OBJECTIONS — *ad* (1): the lover is "put outside himself and transported" insofar as he wills the beloved a good and works for it through his own foresight, as he would for himself. Denis also says in the same c.4 of *De divinis nominibus*, "One must dare to say even this: through overflow of loving goodness, even the Cause of all is put outside Himself towards all existing things by provident thoughts."

PG 3, 712

ad (2): granted, creatures have not existed from all eternity except in God; still, because they have been in God eternally, He has eternally known things in their distinctive natures and loved them on that basis — as we know things existing in themselves through likenesses of them present in us.¹

ad (3): friendship (like "good will" in the literal sense) can only exist toward rational creatures, in whom there can be a return of affection and a sharing in living deeds, and for whom things can turn out well or badly, thanks to luck and happiness. Irrational creatures cannot reach the level of loving God, nor can they share in the life of understanding and bliss with which God is alive. Strictly speaking, then, God does not love irrational creatures with friendship-love but with a quasi-desire-love, in that He arranges that they exist for rational creatures and also for Himself — not because of any need for them that He Himself would have, but because of His goodness and our advantage. We, after all, do desire some of them, both for ourselves and for others.²

ad (4): nothing prevents the same thing from being loved in one respect and hated in another. God loves sinners *qua* having such-and-such natures, which are how they "are" and come from Him. But *qua* sinners, they "are not" but fall short of being [as they were intended], and this failure in them is not from God. So in this respect He holds them in hatred.

¹ This objection would work if His love, like ours, presupposed the existence of its beneficiary. But it does not. The beneficiary of divine love is a known object, a nature-plus-individuating details, to which God wills the good of having existence at a time *t*.

² There is an apparent tension between this answer *ad* (3) and the body of the article. In the *corpus*, every creature was viewed as a beneficiary of God's love. In the *ad* (3), only the rational creatures seem to be beneficiaries; the irrational ones are just goods willed for them. To go by Aquinas' hints, the solution is that the *corpus* uses 'love' in a loose sense, while the *ad* (3) uses it strictly. Any case of love at all is a 3-place affair: *x* wills a good *g* for a beneficiary *y*. In desire-love, $y = x$. In friendship-love loosely taken (such as can exist between an animal and its mate, a gardener and his plants, God and His products) *y* is anything other than *x*. But "friendship-love" strictly so-called requires *x* and *y* to be not only distinct but both fully rational. Thus Aquinas got a loose sense of love to salvage Wisdom 11: 24, without losing Aristotle's distinction in strict usage. His motives were theological. He wanted to keep God's *strict* friendship-love a supernatural affair. In the natural order, he wanted only an analogy to it: we are beneficiaries for whom irrational things are made, as slaves can be the ones for whom certain crops are raised. (Material things are thus "for us," but that does not mean that we may trash them at will. As gifts of the Master, they deserve proper stewardship.) But in the supernatural order, we are the beneficiaries for whom grace and glory are made, and these enable a true friendship with God, beyond all natural expectation.

 Cajetan's Commentary

The title is clear. — In the body of the article, there is just one conclusion: [*1st part:*] God loves all existing things, but [*2nd part:*] not in the manner of our love.

The first part of this conclusion is supported as follows. [*Antecedent: 1st part:*] All existing things are good insofar as they are; and [*2nd part:*] they are because they have being insofar as they are willed by God; hence [*1st inference:*] God wills some good to each existent thing; hence [*2nd inference:*] God loves everything there is. — The antecedent's first part rests on

the ground that existing itself as well as any complete trait a thing has counts as a certain good. The second part is supported on the ground that God's will is a cause of things. Drawing the first inference needs no support. Drawing the second one is supported by the fact that loving is nothing but willing a good for something.

The conclusion's second part is made clear by the fact that we love as a result of having been moved by the goodness of the thing loved, whereas God loves by creating and pouring on the goodness that He loves.

 article 3

Does God love everything equally?

In II Sent. d.26, a.1 ad 2, In III Sent. d.19, a.5, q^a1; d.32, a.4; 1 CG c.91

It seems that God loves all things equally.

(1) Wisdom 6:8 says, "He careth for all alike." God's provident care for things comes from the love with which He loves them. So He loves all equally.

(2) God's love is His essence. His essence admits no "more and less." So neither does His love. Ergo He does not love some things more and others less.

(3) Moreover, God's love extends to created things in the same way as His knowledge and will do. But God is not said to know some things more than others, nor to will some more than others. Neither, therefore, does He love some more than others.

ON THE OTHER HAND, Augustine says in *Super Joannem* [tr. 110, on Jn 17:23]: "God loves everything He has made; and among them, He loves rational creatures more; and of these, He loves more fully the ones who are members of His Only Begotten Son; and far more does He love the Only Begotten Son Himself."

ANSWER: since loving a thing, *y*, is *willing good* for *y*, there are two bases on which *y* can be more or less loved.

• One is in the act of willing, which can be more or less intense. On this basis, God does not love some things more than others, because He loves all things with a single act of willing which is simple and ever invariant in its status.

• The other basis is in the good that one wills for *y*.

On this basis, we are said to love "more than *y*" the one for whom we will more good, even if it is not done with a more intense willing. On this basis, one must say that God loves some things more than others. For since God's will is a *cause* of things' goodness (as I said), nothing would *be* better than another, if God did not will more good to one thing than to another.

TO MEET THE OBJECTIONS — *ad* (1): the reason an equal care of all things is attributed to God is not because He dispenses equal goods to all by His care, but because He administers all things with equal wisdom and goodness.

ad (2): that argument appeals to intensity of love on the part of the will's act, which is the divine essence. But the good that God wills for a creature is not the divine essence. So nothing prevents this good from being greater or less.

ad (3): the verbs 'understand' and 'will' just mean acts; they do not include in their meaning any objects thanks to whose diversity God might be said to know or will them "more," or "less" — unlike the situation with 'love', as I said already.¹

¹ The other verbs do not carry an indirect object (beneficiary); 'x understands *y*' may look the same as 'x loves *y*', but the latter is really the 3-place 'x wills *g* for *y*'.

 Cajetan's Commentary

The title is clear. — In the body of the article, Aquinas does two jobs. (1) He distinguishes the two bases on which unequal love can turn up and supports the distinction with the fact that love is willing good for a thing. (2) He answers the question with two conclusions, in line with the distinction just mentioned.

The first conclusion is: on the part of His act of loving, God loves all things equally. — The support is this. God loves with one, simple, and ever-invariant act of willing; ergo, He loves equally.

The second conclusion is: on the part of the good willed for a beneficiary, God loves some things more than others. — The support goes thus. [*Conditional:*] If God does not will more good to one thing than to another, there exists nothing better than anything else; [*falsification of the consequent:*] this latter is obviously false; ergo [by *modus tollens* the antecedent of the conditional is false]. — The inference [expressed in the conditional] is supported on the ground that God's loving is the cause of things' being good.

Does God always love the better things more?

*In III Sent. d.31, q.2, a.3, qu3; d.32, a.5, qu*1-4*

It seems that God does not always love the better things more.

(1) Christ is obviously better than the whole human race, since He is God as well as man. But God loved the human race more; Romans 8:32 says, He "spared not His own Son but gave Him up for us all." Thus God does not always love the better things more.

(2) An angel is better than a man, which is why *1/2 Ps 8 6* Psalm 8: 5 says, "Thou hast made him a little lower than the angels." Yet God has loved man more than the angels; Hebrews 2:16 says, "He took not on Him the nature of angels; but He took on Him the seed of Abraham." So God does not always love the better things more.

(3) Also, Peter was better than John, since he loved Christ more. This is why the Lord, knowing it to be true, questioned Peter by saying, "Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me more than these?" But even so, Christ loved John more than Peter; for as Augustine says in commenting on the question ("lovest thou me?") in John 21, "By this very sign, John is distinguished from the other disciples: not that Christ loved him alone, but that He loved him more than the others." So God does not always love the better things more.

(4) An innocent person is better than a repentant one, since repentance is "a second plank after shipwreck," as Jerome says [in commenting on Isaiah 3:8]. But God loves the repentant person more than the innocent, because He rejoices more over him; Luke 15:7 says, "joy shall be in heaven over one sinner that repenteth. more than over ninety and nine just persons, which need no repentance." Therefore, God does not always love the better things more.

(5) A person foreknown to be righteous is better than a sinner who is predestined [to repent]. But God loves the predestined sinner more, because He wills him a greater good, *i.e.* eternal life. Therefore, God does not always love the better things more.

ON THE OTHER HAND, everything loves what is like itself, as is clear from Sirach 13:15, "Every beast loveth his like." But the better something is, the more it is like God. Therefore, God loves the better things more.

ANSWER: given the statements already made, it is necessary to say that God loves the better things more. For it was already stated that 'God loves *x* more' is nothing but 'God wills more good for *x*', since God's will is the cause in things of their being good. Thus the reason some things are better is because God wills more good to them. It follows that He loves the better things more.

TO MEET THE OBJECTIONS — *ad* (1): God loves Christ not only more than the whole human race but more than the whole universe of creatures, for He willed

more good to Him: "He gave Him the name which is above every name," so as to be true God. The fact that God gave Him up to death for the salvation of the human race took nothing away from His excellence; for He became thereby the glorious Victor; "the government" came to be "upon His shoulder" (Isaiah 9:6).

ad (2): by what I just said, God loved the human nature assumed by the Word in the Person of Christ more than all the angels; and it is better than they are, firstly because of the Union. But if we are talking about human nature in general and comparing it to the angels' nature for purposes of being ordered to grace and glory, then what we find is equality between them, since "the measure of man" is the same as that "of the angel," as it says in Revelation 21:17, although the situation is such that some angels are mightier in this regard than some humans, and some humans are mightier than some angels. Now, when it comes to the pure condition of their nature, an angel is better than a human; but the reason God took on human nature is not because He just loved it more, but because man was more in need. In much the same way, a good head of the household gives something very expensive to an ailing servant, which he does not give to his own healthy son [*i.e.* a costly medical treatment].

ad (3): the difficulty about Peter and John is given many solutions. Augustine ties it to an allegory, saying that the active life (symbolized by Peter) loves God more than the contemplative life (symbolized by John), because [a person in] an active life feels the anxieties of the present life more keenly and desires more ardently to be free of them, to get to God. At the same time, God loves the contemplative life more, since He preserves it longer; for it does not end with our bodily existence, as the active life does.

Other writers say that Peter loved Christ more in His members [the Church] and on that basis was also loved more by Christ, who therefore put the Church into Peter's keeping. John, however, loved Christ more in His own Person and on that basis was also more loved, which is why Christ put His mother into John's keeping.

Others again say that it is uncertain which of them loved Christ more with the true love of *caritas*, and likewise uncertain which one God loved more for purposes of greater glory in eternal life. But Peter is said to have "loved" Christ more in the sense of a certain impetuous fervor, and John is said to have "been loved" more in the sense of certain signs of intimacy, in which Christ was more demonstrative towards him, because of his youth and purity.

Still others say that Christ loved Peter more for his more excellent gift of *caritas* but loved John more for his gift of understanding. Thus, in unqualified terms, Peter was better and more loved, but John was better in

Philippians 2:9

Super Iohannem.
Pl. 35, 1974

Albert, *In III Sent.* d.31, q.12

Cf. Bernard, Sermo 29; PL 183, 622

a certain respect.

But it seems to me presumptuous to try to sort out the matter; it is the Lord who “weigheth the spirits” (Proverbs 16:2), and no one else.

ad (4): both classes, the repentant and the innocent, include those who surpass and those who are surpassed. Be they innocent or repentant, the better and more loved ones are those who have more grace. Other things being equal, of course, innocence is more worthy and better loved. But God is said to rejoice more over the repentant because, quite often, repentant persons get up again more cautious, more humble, and more fervent. Thus Gregory says in comments on this Gospel [Homily 34], that a “commander in battle has more love for the soldier who, after fleeing, has come

PL 76, 1248

back and is pressing the foe valiantly than for one who never fled and never did anything valiant either.” — An alternative solution is to say that equal grace is a bigger gift to a penitent, who deserved punishment, than to an innocent person, who did not. In much the same way, a hundred marks [say, \$1,000] is a bigger gift if given to a poor person than if given to a king.

ad (5): since God’s will is the cause of goodness in things, the good state of one who is loved by God is to be assessed by the time as of which (out of God’s goodness) a good is to be given to him. As of the time when a predestinated sinner is to be given (by God’s will) a greater good, he is better, even if, as of another time, he is worse; and as of some time, after all, he is neither good nor bad.

Cajetan’s Commentary

The title is clear. — In the body of the article, one conclusion answers the question affirmatively: God loves the better things more. This is supported as follows. [*Antecedent:*] God’s will is the cause in things of their being good; so [*1st inference:*] God’s loving something “more” is nothing but His willing more good to it; so [*2nd inference:*] the reason some things are better is because God wills [them] more good; ergo [*3rd inference:*] He loves the better things more.

Doubt about the answer *ad* (5)

ii. In the answer *ad* (5), the words at the very end of it cause doubt, *i.e.* where he says that a predestinated sinner “as of some time ... is neither good nor bad.” This seems false and also in conflict with Aquinas’ own doctrine. For according to him, the angels and the humans were both created in grace [1 *ST* q.62, a.3 and q.95, a.1], and each human being contracts original sin [2/1 *ST* q.81, a.3]. Granted, if they had not been created in grace, then they would have been neither good nor bad [but they would have been neutral] for an instant only, and not for any stretch of time. So, these words at the end of the answer seem to be entirely false.¹

There are three ways to answer this. (1) One can say that these words are true in the sense of “true of a possibility,” whatever be the case in actuality, and that ‘a time’ here means any measure of duration, even the

instantaneous. For “as of some time,” namely, in the first instant of their existing, the angels and humans could have been “neither good nor bad” morally.²

(2) One can say that these words are true of being morally good and bad in the personal sense, *i.e.* by one’s own doing. For an infant, though bad by the sin of nature [*i.e.* by original sin], is “neither good nor bad” by its own doing.³

(3) One can say that these words are true unqualifiedly, and that the relevant terms are to be taken as applying across the board, with no restriction. Granted, after a predestinated sinner has acquired existence, he or she will always have been good or bad. Yet “as of some time,” *i.e.* the boundless time during which he or she did not exist, the person was “neither good nor bad.” — This last construal is more formal, relevant to the business at hand, and trouble free. For the text intends to teach that there is nothing surprising about the fact that a sinner predestined to be saved is, for a certain stretch of time, “less loved,” because he or she was “not loved”

² In other words, the angels and the human race could have been created in their natural traits alone, in a condition understood not as a permanent “state of pure nature” but as a transient “test” state, preliminary to their first morally significant decision; thanks to this decision, they would have been either elevated to grace (if it was a morally good one) or regarded by God as fallen (if it was a bad one). This first solution assumes that in an angel so created this decision would have been made without lapse of time but in the logically “second” instant of the angel’s existence (logically, the angel had to exist “first” before making it) and that even in Adam so created this decision would have been made almost at once.

³ This second solution makes Aquinas’ remark true under a restricted sense of “good or evil”. Its merit is that it brings the issue back to the actual world, where even the angels were not “foreknown to be righteous” apart from grace.

¹ The objection is taking “a time” as an interval or stretch of time (however short) in the real world; it is taking “good” to mean morally good or pleasing to God, by having a will rightly oriented by sanctifying grace; and it is taking “evil” to mean the opposite, so that a fallen angel or a human being in original sin would be evil in God’s sight. With these interpretations in place, the objector cannot think of a time in a human being’s life when he or she would be “neither good nor evil.”

in any way for a certain stretch of time, namely, when he or she did not exist, since at that time, obviously, the person was neither good nor bad in any sense of 'good' or 'bad' [*universaliter loquendo de bono et malo*].⁴

⁴ This third solution, surely correct and preferred by Cajetan, turns upon three key points. The first is that 'God loves x ' is true as a tensed sentence only when the thing for which x stands exists. These days in model theory, ' $V(x)$ ' is what we call this thing. 'Loves' means 'wills good to', and existence is the first good willed to any creatable item. So 'God loves x ' cannot be true until $V(x)$ exists. The second key point is that

what does not have even this first good is not evaluated at all. For evil is not a mere negation but a *privation* of good, so that where there is no being at all (and hence no good), neither is there any evil. Only an existing thing can be evaluated as good or evil, as Aquinas will make explicit a long way ahead. at 2/1 q.18, a.1. Thus ' x is good or evil' can only be true as of a time when the thing which is $V(x)$ exists. The third key point is that meaningful reference to $V(x)$ is *not* similarly time-dependent. Thus ' x is neither good nor evil' can be meaningful as of a time when $V(x)$ does not exist. Kripke-style models for modal or temporal logic meet all the requirements for these points to come out right.

Inquiry Twenty-One: Into God's justice and mercy

After considering the divine love, we must deal with His justice and mercy. About this topic, four questions are asked:

- (1) is there a trait of "being just" in God? (3) is there mercy in God?
(2) can His justness be called a trueness? (4) are justice and mercy in everything God does?

article 1

Is there a trait of "being just" in God?

In IV Sent. d.46, q.1, a.1, qu¹, 1 CG c.93, In De div. nom. c.8, lectio 4

* *iustitia* It looks as though being just* is not a trait in God.¹

(1) The trait of being just or fair, after all, is [classified in a common genus with and] contrasted with the trait of being temperate. But there is no temperance in God. Ergo there is no justness either.

(2) Besides, an agent who does everything at the whim of his own will is not acting according to justice. But as the Apostle says in Ephesians 1:11, God "worketh all things after the counsel of His own will." Therefore, justness should not be attributed to Him.

(3) Also, the action that serves as the hallmark of being just is rendering what is due.² But God is not in debt to anyone. So being "just" does not apply to God.

(4) Moreover, whatever there is in God is identified with His essence. But this situation does not suit the trait of being just, for a reason brought out by Boethius in *De Hebdomadibus*: " 'good' describes a thing's essence, while 'just' describes its act." Thus the trait of being just does not apply to God.

¹g. Ps 10: 8 ON THE OTHER HAND, there is Psalm 11:7, "The Lord is just and hath loved justice."

ANSWER: there are two kinds of justice. The one is found in mutual giving and receiving, such as occurs in buying and selling and in other such transactions and

¹ The noun '*iustitia*' was doubly ambiguous. First, it meant both a character trait and the situation created by exercising it (justice). Second, it meant both one specific character trait (fairness) and the whole spectrum of upright character traits (righteousness), especially in the Latin Bible. What Aquinas is asking in this article is whether the specific trait of fairness is found in God. At first sight, this looks like the wrong question. Shouldn't one ask first whether righteousness is found in God? But when one looks at the content of righteousness, one sees that most of it is inapplicable. God has no problems of self-control, no passions to manage. But He does create *other things*, to treat well or ill. Thus the narrower sense of justness turns out to be the right one.

² The phrase '*reddere debitum*' was used broadly for 'treat others as befits them' but also more narrowly for 'pay back what is owed'. The object is pushing the narrow sense.

exchanges. Aristotle calls this kind "commutative justice" in *Ethics V*, or justice that "rectifies" exchanges and transactions. This kind does not apply to God because, as the Apostle asks in Romans 11:35, "who hath first given to Him and it shall be recompensed unto him again?"

The other kind is found in making allotments and is called "distributive justice." By this, a ruler or dispenser of benefits gives to each according to the recipient's worthiness. Thus the right sort of order in a family, or in any other governed multitude, is proof that justness of this sort is present in the one who governs it. Similarly, the order in the universe, which appears both in natural things and in those endowed with volition, is proof of God's justness.³ This is why, in c. 8 of *De divinis nominibus*, Denis says, "One should see a genuine divine 'justice' at work in the fact that God gives all things their own traits, according to the worthiness of each thing there is, and He preserves the nature of each in its own rank and power."

TO MEET THE OBJECTIONS — *ad* (1): some of the moral virtues deal with emotional states; thus temperance deals with feeling desirous; fortitude, with feeling afraid and feeling bold; mildness deals with anger. Such virtues can only be attributed to God figuratively, since in God there are no emotional states (as I said above), nor are there any sense appetites, which (according to Aristotle in *Ethics III*) is where such virtues reside. But other moral virtues deal with activities, such as givings and takings; being just, generous, and munificent deal with these and do not reside in a sense faculty, but in the will. So nothing prevents positing such virtues in God, provided they are dealing with activities appropriate to God, not citizens. It would be ridiculous to praise God for political virtues, as Aristotle notes in *Ethics X*.

³ 'Order of the universe' did not mean the aesthetic sort of order, whereby a garden looks different from untended weeds, and so a famous atheistic argument is off target. Rather, order meant the "regularity" by which, despite indeterminacies, natural processes have predictable outcomes, and even voluntary agents can be counted on to pursue some ends.

c.4,
1131b 25

PG 3, 896

q.20, a.2 ad 1

c.10,
1117b 24

c.8;
1178b 10

ad (2): since an object of volition is an *understood* good, it is impossible for God to will anything but what a reason in His wisdom covers.* This [reason] is like a law of justice, by accord with which His will is upright and just. What He does by His own will, then, He does *justly*, just as we do *justly* what we do in keeping with a *law*. But we keep the law of a superior, of course, whereas God is a law unto Himself.⁴

* *quod ratio suae sapientiae habet*

ad (3): each thing is “due” what is its own. What is called “its own” is what is subordinated to it, as a servant is his “master’s own” and not *vice-versa*: for what is free is a cause unto itself.⁵ So ‘due’ carries in its meaning an ordering relation of need or dependency upon a thing to which the “due” is subordinated. Two such relations need to be taken into account among things. One is the relation by which one created item is subordinated to another such item (as parts are subordinated to a whole, and accidents to substances, and each thing to its purpose). The other relation is the one whereby all created items are subordinated to God. So when one looks for what is “due” in connection with a divine action, both relations are relevant: either something is due to God, or something is due to a created thing. Either way, God renders what is due.

- What is due to God, after all, is that the content of his wisdom and volition be fulfilled in things, and that He manifest His goodness; in this respect, God’s “justness” bears upon what befits Him [*decencia*], inasmuch as He renders to Himself what is due to Himself.
- What is due to a created thing is that it have what is subordinated to it; thus it is “due” to a man that

⁴ In order to be willed, an object *O* has to have been evaluated as *good*. If this was not done impulsively but wisely, *O* must have satisfied a sound judgment stating the conditions under which an object of *O*’s kind counts as good in the relevant respects. The decision to will *O* would thus have been a decision to follow this judgment as a law or norm of action. Thus *optimal* willing (such as God’s) will be self-legislation.

⁵ This is an allusion to *Metaphysics I*, c.2 (982 b 25), where Aristotle said a free thing lived for its own sake. The idea was that a free person was not subordinate to another for whose benefit he worked; he could act for himself as the beneficiary or *fins cui*. Cf. q.20, a.1 ad 3.

he have hands and that the other animals serve him. In this way, too, God brings about “justice” when He gives to each creature what is due to it by the defining makeup of its nature and condition. But this case of the “due” depends upon the first, because what is due to each creature is what is subordinated to it according to the relation established by divine wisdom. And while God thus gives a thing what is due to it, it is still not the case that He is a debtor [to it], because He is not subordinate to other things, but they to Him.⁶

And so sometimes the justness in God is called “befitting” His own goodness, and sometimes it is called “requiting” for merits. Anselm touches on both when he says [to God, in the *Proslogion*, c. 10], “When you punish the wicked, it is just, because it suits their merits; and when you spare the wicked, it is just, because it befits your goodness.”

ad (4): although ‘just’ applies to an act, justness is not thereby excluded from being God’s essence, because even what belongs to a thing’s essence can be a source of its action. A thing is called good, meanwhile, not only because of what it does but also because it is complete in what it is.⁷ So ‘good’ does not always apply to an action. This is why Boethius says in the same passage that ‘good’ compares to ‘just’ as a general term compares to a specialized one.

⁶ What was “subordinate” to a thing of the kind *K*, and hence willed by God as “due” to a *K*-thing, fell into two divisions. Into the first went everything without which a *K*-thing could not exist (its essential and physical parts); this was discussed by Aquinas in *De Veritate* q.6, a.2. Into the second division went such things as God decided to put at the service of *K*-things, in working out His plan for the universe. In Aquinas’ example, the *K*-things are human beings, having hands is in the first division, and being served by the lower animals is in the second. Notice that a supernatural vocation or destiny (the Beatific Vision) falls into neither division. Supernatural gifts are in no way “due.” If they are given, they are not subordinated to man, but man to them.

⁷ A thing’s being complete in what it is, *i.e.* being fully produced or generated, counted as the first reason to call it good, its operating or acting properly was a second and further reason. These uses of ‘good’ were discussed in q.5, a.1 *ad* 1 and in q.6, a.3.

Cajetan’s Commentary

As came out in my earlier remarks [on the title of q.20, a.1], the title question is asking whether a trait of being just is present in God form-wise.

In the body of the article, Aquinas does two jobs.

- (1) He breaks justice down into two kinds: commutative and distributive. (2) He answers the question with two conclusions, corresponding to the kinds of justice.
- ii.* The first conclusion is negative: in God there is

no commutative justice. — This is supported by the authority of the Apostle, “who hath first ...” *etc.*

The second conclusion is affirmative: there is in God distributive justice. — This, too, is supported. [*Antecedent:*] Distributive justice is that whereby each recipient is given what accords with its worthiness: so [*1st inference:*] the order of the universe shows God’s justness; so there is justness in Him. — Drawing the infer-

ence is supported by analogy [*ex proportionali*]: as suitable order in a family shows the justness of the one governing it, so the order in the universe shows ... *etc.* This is confirmed by the authority of Denis.

Is the first conclusion too sweeping?

iii. Doubt arises about the first conclusion.

- For one thing, it seems false to say that there is no commutative justice in God. The Last Judgment will take the form of commutative justice, as God repays merits with rewards and repays sins with sufferings; Aquinas himself says so in *2/2 ST* q.61, a.4 *ad* 1.

- For another thing, the support does not seem sufficient. Commutative justice does not cover just the repaying but also the initial loan; it regulates not only the buying but also the prior act of putting-up-for-sale. So negating just one of these acts in God does not seem sufficient to eliminate this kind of justice, because it also covers a prior act.

Solution

iv. To answer these in reverse order, [I begin with the point that] neither act of commutative justice has any place in God; for just as He cannot *pay back* for gotten gains, so also He cannot *offer* for prospective gains, because nothing coming to Him from creatures can in-

crease His holdings. The fact that no one can first give God anything excludes both acts [of commutative justice] from God; for if no one can give anything to Him in the first place, it follows that no one can give Him a fair return, and hence God cannot offer anything in prospect of a fair return. And thus commutative justice, which brings about equity between the given and the received, can have no place in God.

To go back now to the first objection: it does not prove any more than that a certain level of commutative justice is satisfied in God's distribution, as He hands out sufferings for demerits and rewards for merits. What is maintained in this article is just that commutative justice itself is not found in God.¹

On the answer *ad* (3)

v. With the answer *ad* (3), look over the teaching given in *2 CG*, chapters 28 and 29. You will better understand the remarks here, when you see that the discussion is not so much a matter of what is "just" in the strict sense as it is a matter of what is "right" in the sense of "fitting," where God is concerned.

¹ The doctrine here is important. The merits of believers, the good works they manifest as fruits of the Spirit, do not *benefit* God; so they cannot be viewed as a pay-out to Him, nor can Heaven be viewed as a pay-back.

article 2

Is God's being "just" a way of being "true"?

In IV Sent. d.46, q. 1, a. 1, q^u3

It seems that God's being "just" is not a case of His being "true."

(1) Justness, after all, is in the will; it is "uprightness of willing," as Anselm says [in his dialogue *De Veritate*]. Trueness, on the other hand, is in the understanding, according to Aristotle in *Metaphysics VI* and *Ethics VI*. Therefore, being just does not meet the definition of being true.

(2) Besides, Aristotle says in *Ethics IV* that trueness is a different virtue from justness. Therefore, being true does not meet the definition of being just.

ON THE OTHER HAND, there is Psalm 85: 10 [*Vg.* 84: 11]: "Mercy and truth are met together," where 'truth' is used for justice.¹

I ANSWER: truth lies in a correspondence of understanding and thing understood, as I said above. But an understanding that causes a reality stands to that reality as the rule and measure of it, while the reverse is the case with an understanding that gets its knowledge from the realities. So, when the realities are the rule and measure of the understanding, truth is found in the understanding's coming into line with them, as happens in our experience (the basis on which our thinking and speaking are true or false is the *thing's* being such

¹ The second half of the verse reads: "justice and peace have kissed." The parallelism of Hebrew poetry suggests that 'truth' (*emet*) and 'justice' (*sedeq*) are being used as rough synonyms, as are 'mercy' and 'peace'. Most English versions translate '*sedeq*' with the more generic 'righteousness'.

or not being such). But when the understanding is the rule or measure of the realities, truth is found in their coming into line with it (thus an artisan is said to make a "true" product, when the work accords with the art). Well, as artifacts stand to the art of making them, so just deeds stand to the norm* with which they accord. Hence, God's justness, which sets up order in things conforming to a reason rooted in His wisdom (which is His norm), is suitably called a trueness. Thus, even in our affairs one speaks of a "trueness" of justice.²

TO MEET THE OBJECTIONS — *ad* (1): insofar as justice is the norm regulating [action], it is in the reason or understanding: insofar as it is the self-command to keep deeds in line with the norm, it is in the will.³

ad (2): the "trueness" that Aristotle is talking about there is a virtue [of truthfulness or authenticity] whereby how one shows oneself to be in words or deeds is how one really is. So, this virtue is found in a conformity of [behavioral] sign to signified [character], rather than in a conformity of effects to a cause-and-rule, as I said was the case with the "trueness" of justice.

² In short, divine *practical* understanding is "true" when the created arrangements produced by divine action conform to the norms set by His understanding. Current English speaks of "justice" as *realized* when what is arranged is nominatively "correct." See the discussion of the \mathfrak{R} relation in footnote 2 to the commentary on 1 *ST* q.16, a. 1.

³ As will come out in the treatise on the virtues in 2/*I ST*, a virtue often resides partly in one faculty, partly in another.

Cajetan's Commentary

The title is clear from remarks already made. — In the body of the article, a single conclusion answers the question with a yes: God's justice is suitably called a trueness.

The support goes as follows. [*Antecedent: 1st part:*] The trueness of an understanding that regulates and measures realities lies in the conformity of the realities to that understanding; and [*2nd part:*] justice lies in the conformity of deeds to the norm with which they accord; ergo [*inference:*] God's justice is suitably called a trueness.

For its first part, the antecedent is supported by how the trueness in an intellect that receives from things compares and contrasts with the trueness in an

intellect that causes things: they are alike in that trueness always lies in a correspondence of understanding with reality; they differ in that trueness in a caused intellect is an understanding's coming into line with the realities, whereas trueness in a causative intellect lies in the realities' coming into line with an understanding. As for its second part, the antecedent rests on the ground that fair deeds stand to a norm as artifacts stand to an art. Drawing the inference is supported by the fact that God's justness produces an order in things that conforms to His wisdom, which is the norm of all things.

The exposition is confirmed by the fact that a trueness of justice is found this way even in human affairs.

Is mercy something God can have?

2/2 ST q.30, a.4, In IV Sent. d.46, q.2, a.1, qu¹; 1 CG c.91; In Psalm. 124

It seems that mercy is not possible for God.

PG 94, 932 (1) Mercy is a kind of sadness, after all, as Damascene remarks [in *De fide orthodoxa* II, c. 14]. There is no sadness in God; hence, no mercy either.

PL 192, 370 (2) Also, mercy is a relaxation of justice. But God cannot omit what pertains to His justice. For 2 Timothy 2:13 says, "If we believe not, yet He abideth faithful; He cannot deny Himself." As the [interlinear] gloss says, He would "deny Himself" if He denied His own statements [e.g. His statements about the wages of sin. etc.]. Therefore, mercy is not possible for God.

f.g. Ps 110. 4 ON THE OTHER HAND, there is what Psalm 111:4 says: "the Lord is gracious and full of compassion."

ANSWER: mercy should be attributed most especially to God, provided the attribution is taken in terms of mercy's effect, not in terms of an emotional state. To see this, one must bear in mind that one is called merciful [*misericos*] as if having misery at heart [*miserum cor*] because one is affected by the misery of another, through sadness, as if the trouble were one's own. Out of this comes one's acting to remove the other's misery, as one would act to remove one's own. This activity is the effect of mercy. To be saddened, then, by the misery of another is not possible for God; but to wipe away another's misery is eminently possible for Him. We may take 'misery' to mean any defect. Defects are only removed by making whole a good, and God is the first fount of goodness, as shown above.

q. 6, a.4

Also bear in mind, however, that bestowing forms of wholeness on things pertains to God's goodness *and* to His justice *and* to His generosity *and* to His mercy — but for a different reason in each case. Independently of further considerations, the communication of complete traits [the ones that make things whole] belongs to goodness (as shown above). Insofar as God

q. 6, aa. 1 & 4

gives complete traits to things according to their fair share [*proportio*], it belongs to His justice (as I said above). Insofar as God gives forms of completeness to things not for His own advantage, but purely on account of His goodness, it belongs to His generosity [*liberalitas*]. But insofar as the forms of wholeness given to things by God remove any defect, the giving of them belongs to His mercy.

q. 21, a. 1

TO MEET THE OBJECTIONS — *ad* (1): that objection arises from taking 'mercy' as an emotional state.

ad (2): God acts mercifully not by doing something against His justice but by doing something beyond it [*i.e.* not mandated by it]. For example, if one fellow owes another \$100 but gives him \$200 out of his own pocket, he is not acting against justice but doing a generous or merciful thing. Ditto if a person forgives an offense committed against himself. For a person who forgives something "makes a gift" of it, so to speak. Thus the Apostle calls forgiving "giving" [*donatio*] in Ephesians 4:32, "forgiving one another [*V.g.: donantes invicem*] as Christ has forgiven you [*V.g.: donavit vobis*]." From cases like these it becomes clear that mercy does not take away justice but is a certain overflow of it. This is why James 2: 13 says that mercy "exalteth itself above judgment."¹

¹ In fact, James 2:13 is saying that showing mercy heads off judgment, in the spirit in Mt 18:35; so it does not confirm Aquinas' point. His point is good nevertheless. Mercy does not conflict with justice. What makes it seem to conflict is the fact that, when confronted with a debt owed to me, or an offense done to me, I often have a choice whether to exercise justice or to exercise mercy. If I do the latter, I do not collect, or I do not retaliate. But I am obliged by justice to pay my debts and repair my offenses, I am not obliged by justice to hold those of others against them.

Cajetan's Commentary

The title question is already clear from previous remarks [*i.e.* it is asking whether mercy is in God form-wise]. — In the body of the article, Aquinas does two jobs: (1) he answers the question, and (2) he gives a clarification of his answer.

The conclusion that answers the question is this: mercy is most especially in God, not as an emotional state, but as to its effect. — The support is this. [*Antecedent: 1st part:*] Being saddened by the misery of another does not benefit God; but [*2nd part:*] removing the misery benefits Him most of all. [*Inference:*] Ergo mercy benefits God most of all, not as to the emotion but as to the effect.

In the antecedent, 'a misery' is explicated: it means any sort of defect. The second part of the antecedent is supported as follows. Defects are only removed by the making whole of some good; so, removing them belongs to God most of all, because He is the first origin of goodness. — Drawing the inference is supported by the fact that the emotional component of mercy is sadness, but its effect is wiping away the woe of another.

The clarification of the answer is found in the different relations in which a complete trait diffused by God stands to His goodness, to His justice, to His generosity, and to His mercy. The matter is clear enough in the text.

article 4

Are mercy and justice in all of God's works?

*In IV Sent. d.46, q.2, a.2, qu^a2; 2 CG c.28; De Veritate q.28, a.1 ad 8;
In Psalm. 24, In Ep. ad Romanos c.15, lectio 1*

It seems that mercy and justice are not in all of God's works.

(1) After all, some of His works are ascribed to His mercy, like the justification of sinners, and others to His justice, like the damnation of sinners. This is why James 2:13 says, "he shall have judgment without mercy, that hath showed no mercy." Thus, justice *and* mercy do not appear in every work of God.

(2) In Romans 15:8-9, St. Paul ascribes conversion of the Jews to God's justice and trueness; but the conversion of the gentiles, to His mercy. So justice and mercy are not both present in each work of God.

(3) Moreover, many of the righteous in this world are afflicted. This is unjust. Ergo justice and mercy are not in every work of God.

(4) Furthermore, justice is about rendering what is due, and mercy is about relieving misery; and so a work of either presupposes something. Well, creation presupposes nothing. In the work of creation, therefore, there is neither mercy nor justice.

Vg. Ps. 24:10 ON THE OTHER HAND, there is what Psalm 25:10 says: "All the paths of the Lord are mercy and truth."

I ANSWER: it has to be the case that mercy and truth are found in each and every work of God, provided that mercy be taken as removal of any defect (though not every defect can *strictly* be called a misery, but only a defect of a rational nature, which is open to happiness; for misery is the opposite of happiness).

The reason this has to be the case is as follows: since the "due" which is rendered by divine justice is *either due to God or due to a creature*, neither can be omitted in any work of God.* For He cannot do anything which is not in agreement with His wisdom and goodness; and it was thanks to this agreement that we said a thing was "due to God." Likewise, whatever He does in [or among] created things is done by Him with the suitable order and "fair share" [*proportio*] that define being just. Thus, it has to be the case that there is justness in every work of God.

But a work of divine justice always presupposes a work of mercy and is based on it. For nothing is "due" to a creature unless it is due because of something pre-existing in the creature or something pre-planned for it; and if this in turn is "due" to the creature, it will be because of something prior still. And since there is no regressing to infinity, we must come in the end to something that depends on the sheer goodness which God wills, which is the ultimate purpose. For exam-

ple, suppose we say that having hands is "due" to man because of the rational soul, and that having a rational soul is "due" to man [because it is necessary] in order for there to be humans at all; but there being any humans [is not due but] is solely because of God's goodness. Thus in every work of God, as the root source of it, mercy appears, and that character of mercy is preserved in all the consequences: indeed, it is more strongly at work in them [than any "dueness"], as the First Cause [of an effect] influences it more strongly than a secondary cause. Hence, even those traits or parts that are "due" to a creature [are such that] God dispenses them out of the abundance of His goodness more generously than the creature's fair share requires. For what would suffice to satisfy the order of justice is *less* than what divine goodness — surpassing a creature's fair share in every respect — confers.

TO MEET THE OBJECTIONS — *ad* (1): the reason some works are ascribed to justice and some to mercy is that justice is more salient in some of them; mercy, in others. But even in the damnation of the reprobate, mercy does appear; it does not remove the punishment entirely but alleviates it somewhat, as God punishes the sinner *short of* what he or she deserves. And in the justification of a sinner, justice appears, as God removes the sinner's guilt on account of the sinner's love (which God mercifully infused in the first place), as we read about Mary Magdalene in Luke 7:47. "Her sins, which are many, are forgiven; for she loved much."

ad (2): justice and mercy appear in both conversions (of Jews and Gentiles); but a reason to speak of justice that is missing from the conversion of the Gentiles appears in the conversion of the Jews: they are saved because of promises made to their ancestors.

ad (3): justice and mercy appear even in the fact that the upright are punished in this world: through such afflictions, some slight faults in them are purged; they are aroused from the love of earthly things and lifted up more towards God. Gregory [in *Moralia XVI*] puts it this way: "the ills that oppress us in this world are pressing us to head for God."

ad (4): although creation presupposes nothing in the real, it still presupposes something in God's knowledge. Thanks to this, creation meets the definition of justness insofar as an item is produced-in-being according to what suits divine wisdom and goodness. Creation also meets the definition of mercy in a way, inasmuch as an item is switched from not-being to being.

* *neurum potest
praetermitti*

c.13;
Pl. 76, 360

 Cajetan's Commentary

The title is clear. — In the body of the article, one conclusion answers the question with a yes: in any work of God, justice and mercy have to be found.

ii. To get this conclusion, Aquinas does three things. First he extends the term 'mercy' by stretching the word 'misery' to cover any defect. And he says why this is a stretch: misery is the opposite of happiness, and so "misery" properly so called is only found in a rational creature, the kind open to happiness.

iii. Second, he supports the part of the conclusion about justice, as follows. [*Antecedent: 1st part:*] In terms of divine justice, a thing can be "due" in two ways, *i. e.* due to God or due to a creature, and [*2nd part:*] neither can be omitted in any work of God. [*Inference:*] So there has to be justice in every work of God. — The first part of the antecedent is taken from what was said in a.1 of this inquiry, in the answer *ad* 3. The second part of it is shown by the fact that God cannot do anything which does not accord with His wisdom and goodness, and likewise by the fact that He disposes in suitable order and fair-share whatever effect He produces among created things.

Notice here that a proposition stated in the text, neither can be omitted in any work of God, was not meant the way it sounds. For in the work of creating, no creature is being given what is "due" to it in any proper sense of 'due'; creating them is "due" only to the divine wisdom and will, as you are told here in the answer *ad* 4. Rather, the proposition is to be taken as applying to God's works of providence and governance; to indicate this meaning, after he stated the point just quoted, he very pointedly said "whatever He does in [or among] created things." It is as if he worded it to say: whatever He does *given the fact of creation*.¹

¹ If Aquinas really meant to say that *neither* direction of

iv. Next, Aquinas supports the part of the conclusion about mercy, as follows. [*Antecedent:*] A work of divine justice always presupposes a work of mercy and is based on it; [*inference:*] so mercy appears in any work of God as the first root of it. — The antecedent is supported on the ground that the "due" goes back to something prior, given out of sheer divine goodness. This in turn is supported on the ground that, otherwise, there would be an infinite regress. The point is also illustrated by an example.

v. Thirdly, Aquinas clarifies the conclusion. Because the supporting grounds made it seem as though mercy figured in God's works as a remote cause, he makes it clear that mercy figures in these works more eminently than justice. This he says on two grounds: (1) because a first cause influences [the effect] more strongly than a secondary cause; and so the force of mercy is preserved in, and acts more vehemently in, all the consequences [of God's initial merciful decision]. (2) From the effect: because God dispenses to each creature even the things "due" to it more richly than the thing's fair share requires, and He does this out of the abundance of His goodness. It is clear that this is the case because *less* than what divine goodness in fact confers would be enough to satisfy the order of justice.

"dueness" (to God and to the creature) can be missing from any work of God, then Cajetan's solution is surely correct; the answer *ad* (4) will compel the work of creation to be an exception; and so 'any work' will have to be restricted to any work on things already created. But the present translator's conjecture is that Aquinas did not mean to say *neither*. He meant to say *not both*. The two directions of "dueness" *cannot both* be missing from any work of God, at least one must be present. On that reading, Aquinas has a coherent argument in the body of the article, and the work of creation is not an exception

Inquiry Twenty-Two: Into God's Providence

After looking into the topics that pertain to God's will taken just in itself, one must look into those that pertain to His understanding and willing taken together. One such topic is His providence [*i.e.* His advanced planning] regarding all things; another is predestination and reprobation, along with the consequences of these, especially for human beings in relation to their eternal salvation. For in studying ethics, too, after one has looked into the moral virtues, one investigates practical wisdom [*prudentialia*], to which advanced planning seems to belong.

Concerning God's providence, four questions are raised:

- | | |
|---|--|
| (1) is providence something that suits God? | (3) does it bear upon them all without intermediary? |
| (2) are all things subject to His providence? | (4) does it impose necessity on the things preplanned? |

article 1

Is providence something that suits God?

In I Sent. d.39, q.2, a.1; *De Veritate* q.5, aa.1-2

It seems that advanced planning would not benefit God.

*De inventione
oratoria II, 53*
c.5,
1140a.25ff

(1) To go by Cicero, advanced planning is a part of practical wisdom [prudence]. And to go by Aristotle in *Ethics VI*, practical wisdom is what helps one deliberate well. This cannot apply to God, because He has no doubts or hesitations that would make Him need to deliberate. So, providence does not suit God.

c.9;
PG 94, 964

(2) Besides, whatever is in God is eternal. But providence is not something eternal: it deals with "existing things that are not eternal," according to Damascene [in *De fide orthodoxa II*]. Therefore providence is not present in God.

(3) Moreover, no composed thing is in God. Advanced planning seems to be something composed, because it includes in itself both willing and understanding. Therefore, providence is not present in God.

ON THE OTHER HAND, there is what Wisdom 14:3 says: "Thy providence, O Father, governeth all."

q.6, a.4

I ANSWER: it is necessary to posit providence in God. Everything *good* about things has been created by God, as shown above. What is found to be good about things is not limited to their substances but also includes their being arranged to achieve a purpose, especially an ultimate purpose (*i.e.* God's good state, as said above). So this good of arrangement [order] that exists among things has been created by God. Well, God is a cause of things through His understanding, and so any effect of His has to have behind it a plan* already existing in God's understanding (as made clear above): so a plan for arranging things to achieve a purpose already exists in the divine mind.¹ But thinking out how things are to

* *ratio*
q.15, a.2;
q.19, a.4

be arranged for a purpose is precisely advanced planning [providence]. This is the chief part of practical wisdom, the part for whose sake its other two parts (namely, recall of how things have gone in the past, and understanding of how things stand at present) are cultivated: for it is out of past things remembered and present things understood that we estimate the future things to plan for. Now, the distinctive element in practical wisdom, says Aristotle in *Ethics VI*, is arranging *other things* for a purpose,

c.12,
1144a

- either in oneself, and thus a man who does a good job of ordering his own actions to the purpose of his life is called a man "of practical wisdom" [*prudens*],
- or among others subject to oneself, in a family, city, or kingdom, and this is how 'wise' is used in Matthew 24:45, "a faithful and wise servant, whom his lord hath made ruler over his household."

Nothing in God Himself can be ordered to a purpose (since He *is* the ultimate purpose), but practical wisdom or advanced planning can apply to God in this latter way. Hence the plan for purposive order among [other] things is called "advanced planning" [*providentialia*] in God. This is why Boethius, in *The Consolation of Philosophy II*, says, "Providence is the divine reason itself, set up as the highest source of all things, which disposes all things." (The word 'dispose' applies both to a plan arranging parts for a whole and to a plan arranging things for a purpose.)

Prosa 6;
Pl. 63, 814

TO MEET THE OBJECTIONS — *ad* (1): according to Aristotle in *Ethics VI* [c. 10], practical wisdom is properly that which *decides* the things that *euboulia* well deliberates and *synesis* rightly judges. So, while "deliberating" does not apply to God insofar as it is puzzling out doubtful matters, making a decision about things to be arranged

c.10,
1143a.10

¹ This is a new use of '*ratio*'. Hitherto, a *ratio* of *x* has been what explains *x* in a scientific account. That sort of *ratio* pertains to the order that reason discovers in things. But the

present topic concerns an order that rational willing introduces into things. Such order is explained by the thinking behind it, by the plan or "rational" at which deliberation terminates.

Ps. 148: 6

for a purpose — things of which He has a correct account — still applies to God, as it says in the Psalm, “He hath made a decree, and it shall not pass away.” This, then, is how the definitions of ‘practical wisdom’ and ‘advanced planning’ apply to God. — One could also say, however, that the plan of things to be done is called “deliberation” in God, not because He does any puzzling out, but because He has the sureness of knowledge at which those who do engage in deliberative inquiry arrive. It is on this basis that Ephesians 1:11 says, “Who worketh all things after the counsel [*i.e.* deliberation] of His will.”

ad (2): taking care of things involves two elements: (a) planning their arrangement, which is called advanced

planning or disposing, and (b) implementing the arrangement, which is called governing. Of these, (a) is eternal, while (b) is temporal.

ad (3): advanced planning is in the intellect, but it presupposes the willing of a purpose; no one makes decisions about what is to be done for a purpose unless he wills a purpose. This is also the reason why practical wisdom presupposes the moral virtues: it is through them that our striving is oriented to the good [*i.e.* to a good purpose], as it says in *Ethics VI* [c.13]. — And even if God’s providence belonged equally to His will and to His intellect, there would be no damage to His simplicity; for intellect and will are the same thing in God, as I said before.

1144b 32

q.19, a.4 *ad* 2

Cajetan’s Commentary

The title question is clear. — In the body of the article, a single conclusion answers it affirmatively: There has to be providence in God.

The support goes thus. [*Antecedent:*] Everything good about things has been created by God; so [*1st inference:*] the good which is things’ being arranged to achieve a purpose, especially an ultimate purpose, has been created by God; so [*2nd inference:*] planning for things to be arranged for a purpose pre-exists in God’s mind; so [*3rd inference:*] there is providence in God.

The antecedent is obvious. — Drawing the first inference is supported on the ground that the goodness found in created things is not just thanks to their substances but also thanks to their arrangement for a purpose, especially an ultimate purpose. — Drawing the second inference is supported on the ground that God is a cause of things through His understanding. — Drawing the third inference is supported by the mere definition of providence, namely: “planning the arrangement of things to achieve a purpose.”

Also, each part of this definition is expounded: (1) providence is *planning*, because it is the chief part of practical wisdom; (2) it is *planning arrangement for a purpose*, because the distinctive element in practical wisdom [*i.e.* in prudence] is ordering to a purpose; (3) it is *planning the arrangement of things*, because of the difference between purely individual prudence and familial or political prudence, the former being planning how to arrange one’s own actions to achieve the purpose of one’s own life, while the latter is planning how to arrange things subject to oneself to achieve purposes, as is clear from Matthew 24. It follows from this difference that divine providence is not part of private prudence, the latter being impossible in God as He has nothing “arrangeable” to a purpose; divine providence is rather a part of quasi-political (indeed, monarchical) prudence. So it has to be ordering things subject to God to achieve their purposes. — The definition is also

confirmed by the authority of Boethius, *etc.*, and from the difference between planning an arrangement [*providentia*] and setting things up for it [*dispositio*].

What is the definition?

ii. As to this definition of ‘providence’, a serious difficulty arises. When he says “arrangement of things to achieve a purpose,” does Aquinas mean both the plan ordering things to a purpose *and* their reaching it, or does he just mean the plan alone? The reason this is a difficulty is because, in the disputed questions *De Veritate*, q.6, a.1, he is explicit that divine providence is the plan of arrangement-to-a-purpose and not the actual outcome, *i.e.* not the achieving of the purpose. But we frequently find the opposite in what we are about to read below in the answer *ad* 1 in the next article, and very clearly in articles 4 and 6 of the next Inquiry. So there is no denying the conflict.

iii. To the best of my judgment, the short answer is that Aquinas changed his view, and changed it for the better. His considered view should be taken as what he says here and in 3 *CG* c.94, namely: providence is planning an arrangement to a purpose *in both respects*, the plan and the actual outcome. This is the more reasonable view. For providence pertains to God’s consequent will and extends as a direct* cause to every entity of any sort (as will come out in the next article). It clashes with these points to say that providence covers the plan alone; for if that were so, many things would happen outside of it, as do in fact happen outside the plan, but not outside the plan and the outcome.¹

* *per se*

¹ The things that happen “outside the plan” are failures of contingent causes. Suppose such a cause *c* is arranged for the sake of outcome *O*₁ but will actually produce *O*₂. In logical order, God first plans what to literally will (things for good ends); then He foresees certain failures; then He plans around the foreseen, permitted failures. Cajetan returns to this topic in §§ *iii-iv* of the commentary on 1 *ST* q.23, a.6.

Is everything subject to divine providence?

1 ST q. 103, a.5; *In I Sent.* d. 39, q. 2, a. 2; 3 CG cc 64, 75, 79, 94; *De Veritate* q. 5, aa. 2-7; *Comp. Theol.* cc 123, 130, 132; *Opusc. De Angelis* cc 13-15; *In Dionysii De div. nom.* c. 3, lectio 1

Not everything, it seems, is subject to the divine advanced planning.

(1) After all, nothing planned ahead is fortuitous. So if everything is planned ahead by God, no event is fortuitous, and then it's goodbye to chance and luck. This is contrary to our ordinary view of the matter.

(2) Also, a *wise* planner excludes defect and evil, as much as he can, from what he takes care of. But we see that many evils turn up in things. So either God cannot forestall them (and so is not omnipotent), or else He does not take care of *everything*.

(3) Besides, events that come about of necessity do not need advanced planning or practical wisdom; this is why Aristotle says in *Ethics VI* that practical wisdom is right reasoning about *contingent* matters, on which there is deliberation and choice. So since many events come about necessarily among things, not *everything* is subject to providence.

c.5;
1140a.32

(4) Moreover, anyone left to his own devices is not under the plan of any governor. But human beings have been left to their own devices by God, according to Sirach 15:14, "He Himself made man from the beginning and left him in the hand of his own counsel." This is especially true of bad people, according to another verse: "So I gave them up unto their own hearts' lust; and they walked in their own counsels." Not everything, therefore, is subject to divine planning.

Ps. 81, 12,
Vg. Ps. 80, 13

(5) Furthermore, the Apostle himself asks in I Corinthians 9:9, "Doth God take care for oxen?" [implying that He does not]. The same argument would apply to other irrational creatures. Not everything, therefore, is under divine providence.

ON THE OTHER HAND, there is what Wisdom 8:1 says about the divine wisdom: it "reacheth from pole to pole mightily, and sweetly [gently] doth order all things."

I ANSWER: some have denied providence altogether, like Democritus and the Epicureans, who thought the world arose by chance. Some have thought only imperishable things were subject to providence, which meant that perishables were not subject to it as individuals but only as species (as which they are imperishable).¹ An opinion like this is heard in Job 22:14, "Thick clouds are a covering to Him; He walketh in the circuit of the heaven, and seeth [us] not." Rabbi Moses made an exception for human beings, on account of the splendor of understanding in which we share; but as far as other perishable individuals are concerned, he followed the opinion of the others.

Guide for the
Perplexed III, c.7

¹ The Ancients and Medievals were unaware that *species* had ever gone extinct. They thought natural kinds, even here below, were as everlasting as the heavens.

One must say, on the contrary, that all things are subject to divine providence, not only in their general kinds but also in particular. The reason for this emerges as follows. Since every agent acts for a purpose, the arrangement of effects to achieve the purpose extends as far as the causality of the First Agent extends. The reason anything *unarranged* to the purpose crops up in the work of an agent is because it is the effect of some other cause, outside the agent's intention. But the causality of God, the First Agent, extends to all entities, perishable and imperishable, furnishing not only what puts them into kinds but also what makes them individuals. Hence it has to be the case that all items having being in any way have been arranged by God to achieve a purpose, in keeping with the words of Paul in Romans 13:1, "the things that be are ordained of God." So, since God's "providence" is nothing but His plan for the arrangement of things to achieve a purpose, as I said, all things have to be subject to divine providence to the extent they share in being at all.

Similarly, it was also shown above that God knows all things, both kinds and particulars. Since His cognition stands to things as art-knowledge stands to works of art (as I said above), it has to be the case that all things are under His arranging, as all products of an art are subject to being arranged according to that art.

TO MEET THE OBJECTIONS — *ad* (1): things go differently with a cause of universal scope than with one of narrower scope. Something can escape the arrangement introduced by a cause of narrow scope, but not one introduced by a cause of universal scope. For the way a thing is subtracted from the influence of a narrow cause, *c*, is through another narrow cause *c'* impeding *c*, as wood is impeded from burning by the action of water. Since all narrower causes are included under a universal cause, it is impossible for an effect to escape an arrangement introduced by a universal cause. Now, insofar as an effect escapes the arrangement introduced by a cause of narrow scope, the effect is called "fortuitous" or "a matter of chance" *in relation to that narrow cause*; but in relation to the universal cause from whose influence it cannot be subtracted, it is called "planned." For example, suppose two servants run into each other; their meeting may have been by chance as far as they were concerned, and yet planned by their master. Suppose he knowingly sent them to the same place in such a way that neither knew of the other.

ad (2): a person in charge of a narrow area acts one way, and a person whose charge is universal acts another. One who plans for a narrow area does exclude defect, as much as he can, from what he is in charge of. But a person who plans for *everything* permits the odd defect to arise in one or another particular, so as not to interfere with the good of the whole. Thus break-downs,

a.1

q.14, a.11

q.14, a.8

deaths, and defects in natural things are said to be against a particular nature but to lie within the aim of nature as a whole, inasmuch as the failure of one yields the good of another or of the world as a whole; for the corruption of one thing is the generation of something else, whereby a species is continued. So, since God is the universal planner of all being, it is the rôle of His providence to permit certain defects in some particular things, so as not to impede the full good of the universe. For if all evils were suppressed, the world would lack many goods; there would be no life of a lion, if there were no killing of animals; and there would be no martyrs' endurance, if there were no tyrants' persecution. Hence Augustine says in the *Enchiridion*, "In no wise would almighty God allow anything bad to arise in His works, if He were not so almighty and good as to *make good* even out of evil." — The two objections just resolved seem to have motivated those who removed perishable things from divine providence; for these are the ones among which chance events and bad outcomes are found.

c 11:
PL 40, 236

ad (3): man did not set up the system of nature but just puts natural things to his own uses in works of skill and deeds of virtue. This is why human providence does not extend to the inevitable or unalterable features that nature furnishes. But God's providence does extend to them, because He is the Author of nature. — This objection seems to have motivated those who subtracted the overall course of natural events from divine providence, attributing it to material necessity, like Democritus and other ancient physicalists.

ad (4): the talk of God "abandoning man to his own devices" does not exclude man from divine providence; it just means that God did not equip us (as He did natu-

ral substances, with an operative power predetermined to one outcome; the natural substances are merely acted upon, as if directed to their purpose by another; they do not act on their own, as if directing themselves to their purpose the way rational creatures do, by the free choice with which they deliberate and choose. Thus the Sirach text meaningfully says, "in the hand of his own counsel." But since even an act of free choice is traced back to God as its [first] cause, the things brought about by free choice must be under the divine plan; for a human being's planning is included within the divine plan, as a narrow cause within the scope of the universal cause. — Still, God pre-plans for the righteous in a more excellent manner than for the wicked, in that He does not allow anything to happen against them that would impede their salvation in the end; for "all things work together for good to them that love God," as it says in Romans 8:28. Rather, from the very fact that He does not hold back the wicked from moral evil, He is said to "abandon" them, but not in such a way as to exclude them wholly from His providence. They would fall into utter nothingness, if they were not conserved by His providence. — This objection seems to have been the one that motivated Cicero, who subtracted from divine providence the human affairs about which we deliberate.

De divinatione
II, 5

ad (5): since a rational creature through free choice has control over his own acts, as I said, he is subject to divine providence in a particular and special way, such that something is imputed to him for guilt or merit, and something is rendered to him as punishment or reward. It is in this sense that the Apostle removes oxen from God's care. But it is not the case that the individuals of irrational [kinds of] creatures do not pertain to divine providence at all, as Rabbi Moses supposed.

Cajetan's Commentary

The title question needs no exposition; after all, one who says "everything" excludes nothing.

In the body of the article, Aquinas does two jobs.

(1) The first is to cite three opinions on the question. The first is that of Democritus and the Epicureans, who say nothing is subject to divine providence. The second is that of Averroes, in comments 37 and 52 on *Metaphysics XII*, saying that only things incorruptible are subject to divine providence. The third is that of Rabbi Moses, who says divine providence covers incorruptible things plus [some] particulars, but only those of the human species. The reasons motivating such opinions are adduced in the text in arguing against them.

ii. The second job is answering the question aright, with one conclusion supported on two grounds. The conclusion itself is this: Everything is subject to divine providence, not only in general but also in particular.

The first line of support

The first support is this. [*Antecedent:*] Every agent acts on account of a purpose; so [*1st inference:*] every

thing subject to the causality of a First Agent is also subject to the arrangement He makes for His purpose; so [*2nd inference:*] all the items that have being in any way are arranged by God for His purpose; so [*3rd inference:*] all items are subject to divine providence to the same extent as they have being in any way.

The first inference is seen to be sound from the opposite case: in the works of a given agent, c_1 , the only reason something turns up not subject to c_1 's arrangement is because the effect is not subject to c_1 's causality but comes from another cause, c_2 , outside the scope of c_1 's intention. — The second inference rests on the fact that God's causality extends to absolutely everything, even individuals, *etc.* — The third inference rests on the sheer definition of providence, *i.e.* plan for the arrangement of things to achieve a purpose.

Understanding this support

iii. Concerning this argument, notice three points. (1) Drawing the first inference is supported *a posteriori*, because it holds thanks directly to the force of the ante-

cedent. For when I say, "Every agent acts for a purpose," what I indicate in saying "acts" is the agent's causality, and what I indicate by saying "for a purpose" is the ordering of effect to purpose. The causality, then, is no broader than the ordering, unless the agent acts but not for a purpose. Hence it follows perfectly well (and without any other middle term) that, if an action is for a purpose, the arrangement it introduces to get the purpose extends just as far as its causality does, because the [prepositional phrase] 'for [a purpose]' has the same scope as the [verb] 'acts'.

(2) The second point to notice is that the use of the term 'causality' in the text is to be considered in the sense relevant to the present topic and is to be taken quite strictly.* It is not being used for producing some effect just any old way but for producing it *in such a way that the agent does through his very action what is directly called the effect*, so that the effect really has the state into which it has been put *from that causality*. A sign that this is the intended use of 'causality' is the fact that, in the text, a purely accidental effect of a cause *c* is said to arise through the causality of another cause *c'*, and not through that of the cause [*c* itself] which would be said to have the effect accidentally. So understood, 'causality' is nothing but 'direct causality'. The word 'direct' [*per se*] did not need to be expressed in the text, because, in scientific discussions, all statements are taken as holding *good per se*.

(3) The third point is that, when the text here says that God's causality extends to everything, *etc.*, the claim is to be interpreted in the sense expounded in q.8 [a.3], *i.e.* "by essence and power." Otherwise, the reasoning would have no validity, as can be seen easily by anyone who thinks the matter through.

The second line of support

iv. The second argument for the conclusion is as follows. [*Antecedent:*] God knows all things, even down to the particulars, as the designer[†] of them; hence [*inference:*] in has to be the case that all things are put under His arranging. — The point inferred is supported on the ground that all the products of an art are subject to being arranged according to that art.

Make a note here that the intention of the text is not to identify art and providence. The difference between them is obvious, in that an art bears upon the very substance of the art-works, whereas providence bears upon their relation to a purpose. Rather, the intention is to bring out the fact that art and providence relate [to their objects] analogously;[‡] and therefore ... *etc.* A sign of this is the fact that, when the text supports the inference, it uses the word 'as' [*sicut*], which is not an indicator of identity but of similarity — here, analogical similarity, no doubt.

On chance

v. In the answer to the first objection, notice that 'fortuitous' and 'by chance' are relational predicates; so there is no need to say that what is "in itself and unqualifiedly fortuitous" occurs by chance in relation to every

agent-cause. Here is the difference, after all, between absolute predicates and relational ones:

- when something is "in itself and unqualifiedly ϕ ," for an absolute predicate ϕ , it does not cease to be (or be called) ϕ when related to anything; but
- when something is "in itself and unqualifiedly R," for a relational predicate R, it is R in relation to another relatum and to it alone.¹

Indeed, it can have an opposite relational predicate to a different relatum. Take a white thing; even though it is absolutely [white and as such] "similar" to another white thing, it is "dissimilar" when compared to a black thing. Therefore, since things are called "fortuitous" or "chance events" in relation to nature and creaturely intention, there is no difficulty about their being (and being called) "not fortuitous" and "directly intended" in relation to the divine intention. And yet when taken in themselves, these events are "fortuitous" or "by chance" (and are called so unqualifiedly), for the simple reason that each thing *is* and *is described* according to its *distinctive and proximate* causes.

Thus it becomes clear that the doctrine of divine providence given here does not contradict the doctrine taught in the philosophy of nature [e.g. in *Physics II*, c.5] and in *Metaphysics VI* [c.3]. For in both doctrines, things are examined and described in terms of how they depend upon proximate (or at least narrow) causes; and all created causes are of this kind. *How* effects are caused (necessarily or contingently) is not subject to the intentions or causal influences of proximate or narrow causes. For this matter belongs to the First Cause, which bears upon being *qua* a being.²

Moral evil and "the good of the whole"

vi. The answer *ad* (2) raises a doubt: how can moral evils be permitted by God for the "overall good" of the universe? Take the angels and humans who fell: if divine grace had so worked in them as to achieve permanent perseverance in the good (as was possible), the world would have been vastly better. There would have been no gaps in the relation of things to God's will in itself, which is the supreme relation in the universe (moral evil lies in a lack of just that relation, as was said a-

¹ In a natural language, the difference between absolute and relational predicates is not reliably marked by grammar; one has to resort to semantic analysis, as Cajetan is doing. The adjective 'chance' in 'chance event' sounds absolute grammatically, but it is in fact relational.

² I think the point can be put in a global way and a local way. Globally, no physical system *makes itself* a deterministic system. It just is or isn't one, if it exists. But whether it exists is in the hands of the Cause that bears upon beings *qua* beings.

Locally, take a specific effect *e* for which one can specify a set of conditions *C* such that, if every member of *C* is satisfied at once, *e* occurs with probability 1, and if less than every member of *C* is satisfied at once, *e* has a probability less than 1. Suppose no broader physical theory predicts how many members of *C* will be satisfied in time for *e*. Then whether *e* occurs, and occurs for sure or probably, is in the hands of the Cause that bears upon beings *qua* beings.

q 19, a.9 bove). Also, the virtues occasioned by moral evil (the martyrs' patience, readiness to repent, *etc.*) would not have been missing from the world; they would have existed in the form of spiritual preparedness.

* *integritas* vii. IN RESPONSE: the wholeness* of the universe is a greater good than any created particular good, as is clear from Genesis 1:31. The universe's wholeness requires that virtues (and anything else) occasioned by evil be present not only inchoately but also in complete form.

c 5, 1095b 30ff Well, the complete state of a virtue lies not in the habit
c 9, 1065b 5ff *Metaphysics XI*. Thus many perfections would be missing from a universe without moral evil, such as punitive justice, the patience of the martyrs, and the like. — More importantly, there would be missing from the universe that sacrifice of a Divine Referent that was offered on the Cross, which was and is so good as to exceed in goodness all the moral evil ever done, by humans or by angels. So even though the relation to God's good state in itself is injured by moral evil, God still brought out of such evil so tremendous a good, bearing precisely on this same relation, that, when God permitted moral evil, we and the whole world could cry out, "Happily done!" after Gregory's text: "O happy fault!"

Liturgy of
Easter Vigil

viii. But underlying these theological points, there is also a natural reason why moral evil would have been permitted, namely, the "sweet" or "gentle" management of things. Potentiality for sinning could not have been eliminated from the universe without maximal loss to it, namely, the loss of all intellectual creatures. (This will be made clear below.) But *acts* of sinning [are different: they] could have been prohibited from emerging from

this potentiality (I mean: not permitted); but what the gentle management of created free will required was not this but rather that created free will should act by its own strength. Since it pertains to divine providence to manage all things gently, God very wisely chose to permit moral evils.³

ix. However, when you read in the text [of the answer *ad* (2)] that evils belong to the aim of nature as a whole, do not leap to the conclusion that moral evils therefore belong to the intention of the First and most Universal Agent. The words in the text are not to be understood as meaning that the evils themselves are willed or intended, either directly or incidentally; for in the case of moral evil, it was shown above that this is impossible. The text only means that (a) the evils are not *counter-willed* or excluded by the intention/volition of the First Cause, and (b) *permission* of moral evils is intended on account of the full good and completeness of the universe. Thanks to this permission, an analogical likeness holds between the aim of nature-as-a-whole *vis-à-vis* physical evils and the intent of our glorious God *vis-à-vis* moral ones.

q 19, a.9

³ For an extensive discussion of "possible worlds" in which no moral evil ever becomes actual, see John Mackie, "Evil and Omnipotence" in Basil Mitchell, ed., *Philosophy of Religion* (Oxford, 1971). Mackie's argument is answered by Alvin Plantinga, *God, Freedom, and Evil* (Eerdmans, 1974). But Cajetan's argument is still good. God's "gentle management" of us is His willing us to do the right things but of our own free will. If He blocked all actual bad choices, we could not experience moral failures nor the resulting attractiveness of ideals. We could not then will to make ourselves better people or the world a better place. In Barry Smith's sense, we could not lead "meaningful lives."

Does God plan for all things without intermediary?

1 ST q. 103, a.6; In II Sent. d.11, q. 1, a.1; 3 CG cc 76-77, 83, 94; Comp. Theologiae cc 130-131; Opusc. de angelis, c.14

It seems that God does not plan for all things without an intermediary.

(1) Any point of dignity, after all, is to be attributed to God. It is a point of any king's dignity that he have ministers as intermediaries, through whom he plans for his subjects. *A fortiori*, God does not plan for everything without intermediaries.

(2) The job of advanced planning is to arrange things to a purpose. The purpose of anything is its completion and good. Moving an effect along to its good is what any cause does. So any agent cause is a cause of advanced planning's effect. So if God plans for all without intermediary, all secondary causes are removed.

(3) As Augustine says in the *Enchiridion*, "there are things it is better not to know," such as vile matters; and Aristotle says the same in *Metaphysics XII*. One should only attribute to God what is better. Ergo God does not make in advance, without intermediary, plans for certain vile and evil matters.

ON THE OTHER HAND, there is Job 34: 13 [in the Vulgate]: "What other hath He appointed over the earth? or whom hath He set over the world which He made?" Gregory comments on this passage with the remark: "The world that He made by Himself He rules by Himself."

I ANSWER: providence has two aspects to it, namely,

- (1) the plan arranging foreseen things to their purpose, and
- (2) the putting of this arrangement into effect, which is called governance.

In the first of these aspects, God plans for all things without intermediaries. He has the plan for all things, even the least, in His own understanding; and to whatever causes He assigns for any effects, He gives the power to produce those effects. It has to be the case, then, that He pre-possesses the plan for those effects in His reason. — But in the second aspect, there are mediations of divine providence. He governs lower things

through higher ones, not out of any defect in His own power, but out of the abundance of His goodness, to let creatures share in the dignity of being causes.

By these points, one rules out Plato's opinion, known to us through Gregory of Nyssa.¹ Plato posited three levels of providence. The first is that of the all-highest god, who first and originally provides for spiritual things and then, as a consequence, for the whole world as far as genera, species, and universal causes are concerned. A second providence covers the particulars that come to be and pass away, and this he attributed to the gods that go around the heavens, *i.e.* the separate substances that move the heavenly bodies in circles. The third providence covers human affairs, and this he attributed to *daemones*, which the Platonists posited as intermediate between us and the gods, as Augustine reports in *The City of God IX*.

TO MEET THE OBJECTIONS — *ad* (1): having ministers to put his plans into effect pertains to a king's dignity; but having no plan covering what they are to effectuate is a defect on the king's part. In any case of action-oriented knowledge, after all, the more complete the knowledge is, the more it considers the particulars in which it is actualized.

ad (2): the fact that God has direct, unmediated providence over all things does not exclude secondary causes, because what they do is put the plan into effect, as I said.

ad (3): it is better for us not to know bad and vile matters: they impede us from considering better matters, because we cannot grasp many things at once; and thinking of evils sometimes perverts the will to evil. But these reasons have no place in God, who sees all things together in a single grasp, and whose will cannot be twisted to evil.

¹ Actually, the source is Nemesius of Emessa, *Peri physeos anthropou* (in PG 40, 794). The Medievals had a Latin version, *De natura hominis*, which they mistakenly attributed to St. Gregory of Nyssa.

Cajetan's Commentary

In the title question, 'without intermediary' means to deny a mediate planner to fill in the divine planning. The sense is: does the act suitable to God of planning for everything require, or even admit as concurrent with itself, any mediate planner acting as a planner?
ii. In the body of the article, Aquinas does three jobs.
(1) He distinguishes the actuality of providence into

two acts: planning and putting into effect the plan decided upon. The first is properly called "providing," and the second is called "governing."

iii. (2) He answers the question with two conclusions, one for each of these acts. The first is: without intermediary, God "provides" for all things as far as the plan of arrangement is concerned. — But the second conclu-

c 17;
Pl. 40, 239
c 9;
1074b 32

Monalia XXIV,
c 20, PL 76

c.1; Pl. 41, 257

sion says: God "provides" through certain mediations as far as the putting-into-effect is concerned.

The first conclusion is supported thus. [*Antecedent:*] God has the plan of all things, even the least, in His own understanding; and He has given to the causes pre-assigned to certain effects the power to produce those effects; so [*1st inference:*] He pre-possesses in His reason the plan ordering those effects to their purpose; hence [*2nd inference:*] He "provides" for all things by Himself as far as the plan of arrangement is concerned.

The second conclusion is supported on the ground that God governs lower things through higher ones. — A tacit objection is headed off by saying that governing through intermediaries suits God, not because of a defect of His power, etc., as is clear in the text.

rv. Let the novice note the difference between planning in advance [*providere*] and governing: planning is an immanent operation, while governing is transitive. This is why not doing one's own planning posits an

imperfection in a planner: it implies that he does not set up in his own mind the whole arrangement of everything to achieve every purpose, but only a part. But to govern through intermediaries posits no imperfection in a governor (unless it is due to a lack on his part) but posits that his transitive action is fulfilled by many parties acting as his instruments (which befits God quite well).
v. (3) He rules out Plato's opinion by these remarks, as is clear. If you want to see how that opinion is attacked at length, read 3 *CG* c.76. There, too, you will see that the present intent is not to exclude mediating agents as executors of a divine plan covering even the least things (for that would take away human prudence) but to exclude mediating agents as pure planners, *i.e.* not as executors of *His plan* but as makers of *a further plan* not otherwise included in the divine act. And if you want a fuller view of the conclusions drawn here, read 3 *CG* c.94; the plan/govern distinction and the same conclusions are set out more fully at the start of the solution.

Does God's providence impose necessariness upon the items planned?

*In I Sent. d.39, q.2, a.2; 3 CG cc.72, 94; De Malo q.16, a.7 ad 15; Opusc. contra Graecos, et al. c.10
Comp. Theol. cc.139f, Opusc. De Angelis c.13; In I Periherm., lectio 14, In VI Metaphys., lectio 3*

It looks as though divine advanced planning imposes necessariness upon the items planned.

** per se* (1) After all, every effect that has a direct* cause in place now or in the past, from which it follows necessarily, comes about necessarily, as Aristotle showed in *Metaphysics VI*. But God's plan is already in place, since it is eternal, and its effect follows from it necessarily, since divine advanced planning cannot be frustrated. Therefore, divine providence puts necessariness on the items planned.

(2) Besides, every planner makes his plan as sure a thing as he can, lest it fail. But God is supremely powerful. Therefore, He makes the items planned by Him so sure that they cannot be otherwise.

Prosa 6; PL 63, 817 (3) Also, in book IV of *The Consolation of Philosophy*, Boethius writes of fate: "taking its rise from the sources of unalterable providence, it binds the acts and fortunes of men in a web of causes unbreachable." It seems, therefore, that providence imposes necessariness upon the items planned.

PG 3, 733 ON THE OTHER HAND, there is what Denis says in chapter 4 of *De divinis nominibus*: "it is not the work of providence to corrupt the natures of things." Well, certain things have it in their nature to be contingent. Ergo, divine providence does not impose necessity upon things by excluding their contingency.

I ANSWER: divine providence puts necessariness on some things but not on all, despite what some have believed. For the work of divine providence is to arrange things for a purpose. After God's own Good State, which is a purpose separate from things, the main good realized in things themselves is the completeness of the universe. The universe would not be complete, if all levels[†] of being were not found among things.¹ Thus

¹ Many Ancients and Medievals believed in a doctrine which Lovejoy has called "the great chain of being." It held that the universe, in order to be as complete as it ought to be, must exhibit every possible *kind* (species and genus) of thing. Aquinas has not asserted this. He has said that a complete universe exhibits all levels (*gradus*) of being. These are just a few broad classes, like the intelligent, the living, the inanimate, the necessary, and the contingent.

it belongs to divine providence to produce all levels of beings. And so Providence has prepared
— for some effects necessary causes, so that these effects might come about necessarily, and
— for some effects, contingent causes, so that these might come about contingently,
thanks to the condition of the proximate causes.

TO MEET THE OBJECTIONS — *ad* (1): the effect of divine providence is not just that something should happen regardless of how, but that it should *happen contingently* or *happen necessarily*. And so what divine providence arranges to come about infallibly and necessarily does come about infallibly and necessarily; and what the plan of divine providence has coming about contingently does come about contingently.

ad (2): what is changeless and sure [*certus*] in divine providence's arrangement is this: the events planned thereby all come about with the modality planned, be that modality "necessarily" or "contingently."

ad (3): the unbreachability and unalterability to which Boethius alludes belong to the sureness [*certitudo*] of providence, which does not fail either of its effect or of the manner in which its effect is planned to come about; they do not belong to any necessity of the effects.² And one needs to bear in mind that, properly speaking, being-necessary and being-contingent are consequences of being-a-being-at-all.* This is why the modality that is contingency or necessariness falls under the providence of God, who is the universal advanced planner of *being as a whole*, but does not fall under the providence of any narrower planners.

* *consequentur
ens in quantum
huiusmodi*

² Capturing this important distinction between the *certitudo* of the plan and the modality of the events in the plan requires nesting an alethic modality within the scope of an epistemic modality. Here the epistemic modality (\blacksquare) is 'God has planned that', and what He has planned is that a given event comes about with an alethic modality (\square or \diamond). He has planned that *p* come true necessarily — $\blacksquare(\square p)$ — or that *q* come true contingently — $\blacksquare(q \ \& \ \blacksquare\diamond\sim q)$ — which is equivalent to $\blacksquare q \ \& \ \diamond\sim q$. One cannot preserve Aquinas' distinction with alethic modalities alone (even if one is working in a system like D or T, in which iterated modalities do not reduce to simpler ones) for a reason to emerge below.

Cajetan's Commentary

The title-question is clear, thanks to the remarks already made on Inquiry 19, article 8. The issue now is whether God's pre-planning, by being as already described [in articles 1-3], carries the consequence that

all the items pre-planned are necessary.

Analysis of the article

ii. In the body of the article, Aquinas does two jobs:

(1) he posits a conclusion answering the question, with a mention of the opposite opinion; (2) he supports his conclusion. — The conclusion is: Divine providence puts necessariness on some items, but not on all.

The support goes thus. [*Antecedent:*] The work of divine providence is to arrange things to achieve a purpose; so [*1st inference:*] its work is to arrange things to achieve the completeness of the universe; so [*2nd inference:*] its work is to produce all levels of being; hence [*3rd inference:*] its work is to prepare necessary causes for some effects and contingent causes for some effects. Therefore, it is no business of divine providence to impose necessariness upon everything.

Drawing the first inference is supported on the ground that the universe's completeness is the main good immanent in the universe itself. (The divine Good State is a far greater good but is separate from the universe and serves as its outside purpose, as is clear from *Metaphysics XII*.) — Drawing the second inference is supported on the ground that the universe's completeness would not exist, if not all the levels of being were found among things. — The third inference rests on the ground that, for events to come about necessarily or contingently, their proximate causes have to be necessary or contingent.

There is no need at this point to revisit the dispute about contingency. Points already made above [in the commentaries on q.14, a.13, and q.19, a.8] are sufficient for this article, too.

Can an unavoidably successful plan admit of free events?

iii. In connection with the answer *ad* (1), a difficulty comes up which is very severe, perhaps even insoluble for human intelligence. To see exactly what the difficulty is, one needs to get before one's mind the difference between the following three claims:

- (1) *A* comes about contingently;
- (2) *A* comes about necessarily;
- (3) *A* comes about infallibly or unavoidably.

Both (1) and (2) involve an effect's relation to a cause already in place; (1) says that *A*'s cause has potential to yield both effects [*A* and *not-A*], while (2) says that *A*'s cause cannot fail to yield *A*. By contrast, (3) is common to both situations: contingent items as well as necessary ones follow *infallibly* or *unavoidably* upon the divine plan actually in place; with it in place, the former follow as contingently occurring events, the latter as necessarily occurring events.

iv. Although these points give peace to one's mind when it is occupied with the answer in the text, salvaging contingency, one is still disturbed about the impact of this infallibility upon free choice — or, to be more exact, upon the free *outcome* of the operations we call free [e.g. choices] — and also upon the unsettled outcomes of other contingent processes. For in a free operation, we have to consider (a) the willing itself, (b) its cause, and (c) its execution or outcome (now such

as not to be the opposite outcome). It is not difficult to reconcile the *nature* of such a cause, a free cause, with the aforesaid infallibility, because the infallibility of providence neither gives to a cause nor removes from a cause its potency to go two ways; rather, providence is consistent with the cause's having indifferent potency to the outcome infallibly known and to the opposite outcome; and so divine providence does not squeeze the contingency out of things. But to reconcile this infallibility with the indifference or freedom of the *execution* or *outcome* — that is a job and a half! That is hard work! For suppose it is infallibly the case that I shall be writing at the crack of dawn tomorrow, even though I have the potency to go both ways, *i.e.* to be writing at that hour or not to be writing then. This potency and freedom of mine still does not flow out into an *act other-than-writing but into that of doing so*, in such wise that it is "unavoidable" that my writing eventuates. If this is the case, since a divine advanced plan (a plan that covers every detail and is immutable and is failure-proof) has been in place since eternity, it follows that *de facto* all events come about unavoidably, even though some of them come to pass contingently, and some necessarily.¹

v. I made a point of saying "*de facto*" just now, because, from the standpoint of absolute possibility, God

¹ To see Cajetan's point in current style, one combines time, alethic modalities, and an epistemic modality in the same model. Set aside the technicalities, which are formidable. Just suppose that the present hour is t_0 , and that a cause now at work is naturally contingent, such as the esteemed reader. The reader can choose to be writing tomorrow at dawn or doing something else. Call the time of tomorrow's dawn t_1 , and let q be the proposition that will be true if the reader is writing at t_1 , false if not. Then the reader's decision-making power at t_0 yields two future possibilities, *i.e.* two futuribles. $\Diamond q$ -at- t_0 and $\Diamond \neg q$ -at- t_0 , each preventing the other from being inevitable. (Each ' \Diamond ' marks an alethic possibility following the axioms of a system called D.) If it is settled in the plan of God that the reader faces at t_0 these options, then both future possibilities are in the plan, a fact marked by the epistemic modality \blacksquare , and we have $\blacksquare(\Diamond q$ -at- t_1 & $\Diamond \neg q$ -at- t_1), so that the reader's contingency as a cause is preserved. Cajetan called this the easy part. When dawn breaks, the time is t_1 , and just one of the futuribles becomes the new actual fact. Suppose it is q -at- t_1 . This is an outcome. It counts as contingent because the reader could have been doing something else: $\Diamond \neg q$ -at- t_1 (where ' \Diamond ' marks alethic possibility in a system called T. Never mind why we have to switch from D- to T-modalities; it has to do with switching from can-be to could-have-been.) In any case, it is settled in the divine plan what goes on at t_1 ; so we have $\blacksquare(q$ -at- t_1 & $\Diamond \neg q$ -at- t_1), which distributes to $\blacksquare q$ -at- t_1 & $\blacksquare \Diamond \neg q$ -at- t_1 . God's plan is set from eternity, and now suppose that what is true at eternity is true at any point in time. In that case, ' $\blacksquare q$ -at- t_1 ' is already true at t_0 . That the reader will be writing at dawn is thus settled in the plan guaranteed to succeed. It seems, then, that the plan's fixity and sure success imply a new modality, 'it is unavoidable that', which attaches to q -at- t_1 and overrides its contingency. My freedom seems in jeopardy, not as a source of possibilities, but as the shaper of my actual future.

"could have" not determined His plan to these or those future events. But since the determination has already been made, any "avoidability" of what comes about conflicts with the immutability, effectiveness, universality, and sureness of His plan. And if all outcomes *de facto* come about unavoidably, what good is our deliberating? What good is our striving to pursue (or escape) these outcomes rather than those? The whole moral part of our life, and all the effort of the Church, and every exhortation to the good, seems to be destroyed by this, no less than it is destroyed by denying contingency. For even though the denial of avoidability and the denial of contingency are not equivalent, as is already clear from what I said above [in §§ iii-iv], they seem for present purposes to yield the same quandary. No one deliberates about the unavoidable. No one tries hard, or encourages others, or says prayers about what is unavoidable.

vi. I have not found anything written in St. Thomas pertinent to this difficulty; I don't find that he brought it up anywhere; his effort, rather, was always to save contingency. For even though the denial of avoidability and the denial of contingency are not equivalent, as is already clear from what I said above [in §§ iii-iv], they seem for present purposes to yield the same quandary. No one tries hard, or encourages others, or says prayers about what is unavoidable.

vii. But as is clear already, these general remarks do not bring peace of mind. The question, after all, as I have said, is not about God as considered in Himself, but about God as He is by *de facto* decision.⁴ Like-

² The 'composed sense' meant a possible conjunction, $\Diamond(p \& q)$; the 'divided sense' meant conjunction of possibilities, $\Diamond p \& \Diamond q$. To see that they are different, let $p = 'I \text{ eat now}'$ and $q = 'I \text{ fast now}'$. See next note.

³ Let $p = 'God \text{ has planned that } e, \text{ and } q = 'e \text{ fails to happen}'$. The necessary conditional, $\Box(p \supset \sim q)$, excludes a conjunction of p , with a negation of the consequent, $\sim q$. Removing the double negation gives us $\Diamond(p \& q)$ as the excluded conjunction. Hence the truth of ' \Box (if $p \supset \sim q$)' does not make q impossible unless p is necessarily true.

⁴ The relevance of this remark is as follows. Where the necessity marker (\Box) means something like "necessary in its nature," we have a true and necessary conditional,

$$\Box(\text{God plans that } q\text{-at-}t_1 \supset q\text{-at-}t_1),$$

expressing the efficacy of the divine will. The doctors of theology had long insisted that the truth of this conditional plus the truth of its antecedent implied nothing against the possibility of $\sim q\text{-at-}t_1$, because God, considered in Himself, is under no necessity to adopt any particular plan about things in time. If He plans $q\text{-at-}t_1$, He does so *freely*, and hence neither His decision nor the consequent fact of $q\text{-at-}t_1$ is "necessary in its nature." Cajetan accepts all this and says it is not the issue.

What, then, is the issue? The answer is the immutability of a divine decision *once made*, which gives ' $q\text{-at-}t_1$ ' a settled truth-value at eternity, even if it is not yet physically settled in time. The scholastics called this fixity of truth-value "necessariness in status." With the issue now clear, the reader is advised to go back to q.14, a.13: review the second objection, Aquinas' extensive answer to it, and Cajetan's defense of this

wise, the question is not about the very natures of things or causes, and it is not about necessariness or contingency. Rather, it is about the *reconcilability** of *unavoidable outcomes with the contingency and freeness of those same outcomes*.

* *compossibilitas*

• The question is not laid to rest by saying that an occurring outcome is both unavoidable and unavoidable: avoidable *qua* what it is in itself,[†] but unavoidable *qua* planned. For while this may be true, it does not undo the knot. The outcome occurring *de facto* has already been planned from eternity, and the outcome's status as planned trumps its conditions in itself;[‡] hence the occurring outcome is unqualifiedly — *i.e.* all things considered — unavoidable, and only in a certain respect — *i.e.* taken in isolation from the plan — is it avoidable. In much the same way, when cargo is jettisoned under the threat of shipwreck, the loss of it is unqualifiedly *willed*, because it is willed "all things considered"; and only in a certain respect it is *not-willed*, because the loss is displeasing "qua what it is in itself."[‡]

† *secundum se*

‡ *secundum se*

CF. 3 CG. 6.6

• It does no good to say that 'is planned' posits nothing in the occurring outcome. For as emerges very clearly in the example I just gave, it does not matter whether 'is planned' posits anything or not. The predicate 'is willed' posits nothing in the cargo dumping,

answer. The reader will see that the objection there and Cajetan's problem here are very similar. But there is a crucial difference. In medieval understanding, necessity and contingency, unless otherwise qualified, were modes of physical realization. In q.14, a.13, the objector wanted to establish that everything God has known is necessary in its physical realization. This Aquinas parried by taking the ' \Box ' in

$$\Box(\text{God knew that } q\text{-at-}t_1 \supset q\text{-at-}t_1),$$

as a non-physical marker of truth-status, conceding only the same status to 'God knew that $q\text{-at-}t_1$ ', so as to concede to ' $q\text{-at-}t_1$ ' nothing more than the same status again, that is, nothing more than having a definite truth-value. Then Aquinas made the move without which even these concessions would have been fatal: he distinguished the *being* with which ' $q\text{-at-}t_1$ ' is verified at eternity (and so is known by God) from the *being* with which ' $q\text{-at-}t_1$ ' will be verified physically in time (if it will be). Thus its settled status in the former being did not compromise its still unsettled (still future and contingent) status in the latter being. If I read Cajetan correctly, the commentator is retaining all of this and applying it faithfully to the case of providence/planning. He said above that *providentia* is immanent action (not transitive like governing). The formed plan, therefore, is an immanent action's object, an intentional entity "actual" in God, not a world actual in time. The determinateness of truth-values in the plan is thus *timeless being*, not temporal, physical being. So, again, physical contingency is salvaged. But what Cajetan fears may baffle all human understanding is how the timeless truth of ' $q\text{-at-}t_1$ ' can "be there" in God without generating a new modality, 'unavoidably', which attaches to ' q ' will come true at t_1 and renders futile any effort to avoid that prediction. Don't say: our efforts bear on physical/temporal being. Of course they do. Perhaps they are *therefore* futile.

⁵ The state of things in time at t_0 does not yet settle whether q will be true at t_1 . But this is only avoidability *secundum quid*. Cajetan is saying. All things considered, *i.e.* taking the divine plan into account as well as the state of things in time, $q\text{-at-}t_1$ is settled; so *simpliciter* it is unavoidable.

and yet [it is a true description of the event, trumping its description as 'unwanted'] etc.

And one does not escape the difficulty by saying the following:

the occurring outcome was planned by God, and its unavoidability is a consequence of its being a planned thing *vis-à-vis* God; so the occurring outcome is *de facto* unavoidable relative to God, but not relative to us.

For this comes to nothing. After all, if it is *de facto* unavoidable by God, it is *de facto* unavoidable unqualifiedly and by us; what God cannot *de facto* avoid, nothing else can avoid, given God's supreme efficacy.

Suspicion of a solution

viii. So if the truth about this matter is to quiet our minds, we must say one or the other of two things:

- either we have to say that being planned [by God] does not imply being unavoidable,
- or else we have to say that the unavoidability of the outcomes planned does not detract from the avoidability of the same outcomes.

For the reason adduced above [in § vii], I do not understand how this second option can be true; for it seems clear that no avoidability survives but avoidability "in a certain respect." The first option, however, [deserves consideration]. For while it is commonly knocked to pieces by the doctors, who say that being planned or willed or predestined (all of which I treat the same for present purposes) carries the consequence of being unavoidable, I *suspect* — not that I mean to stand against the opposing torrent, and not that I am prepared to assert, but keeping my mind ever captive in obedience to Christ — I *suspect* that

- JUST AS being-planned puts neither contingency nor necessity into the event planned (as the text here says)

because God is a transcendent cause, pre-possessing the perfections of necessariness and contingency in a *higher manner* (for this is how St. Thomas evades the argument adduced here from *Metaphysics VI*; he means to say that Aristotle's propositions are verified by narrow causes, some of which are necessary causes, and some contingent, some direct,* and some indirect,† but are not verified by the utterly universal Cause, who transcends the difference between necessary and contingent, direct and indirect, because His rôle is to produce as chosen effects not only *things* but also all the *modalities* of things and events),

- SO ALSO (raising higher the eyes of the mind) God, out of an Excellence too high for us to conceive, plans for things and events in such a way that being-planned by Him carries a consequence *higher than* avoidability or unavoidability; and thus, from an event's passive being-planned, neither combination's other member has to follow.⁶

⁶ Perhaps the combinations meant are iterated modalities, like 'unavoidably necessarily', 'unavoidably contingently',

And if this is how the matter stands, the mind rests at peace, not from the evidentness of a truth grasped with insight, but from the loftiness of an inaccessible truth hidden from us. And to my little brain, this seems reasonable enough, thanks to the reason just given, but thanks also to that saying of Gregory's [in *Moralia XXVII*]: "A man whose only belief about God is that his own human intelligence can take the measure of Him, thinks of too puny a god."

ix. I also suspect that this will not require us to deny anything that we know or hold by faith about God's immutability, actualness, sureness, universality, and so forth. Rather, I think that there is a mystery lying hidden, either in the relation between God and the planned event, or else in the "glue" between the event itself and its being planned. Thus, thinking as I do of our soul's intellect as a bat's eye, I find peace in its ignorance alone. Since what puts the mind at peace is evidentness, it is better for the Catholic faith, and for philosophy, too, to admit our blindness than to assert as "evident" claims that do not put our minds at peace.⁷

c 23; PL 76

etc. The point is that, if *q* picks out a physically contingent event, then from that event's being planned by God for t_1 , neither 'it is avoidable that (q -at- t_1 & $\sim q$ -at- t_1)' nor 'it is unavoidable that (q -at- t_1 & $\sim q$ -at- t_1)' follows.

⁷ Contemporary modal logic has nothing to say that would invalidate Cajetan's appeal here to the divine transcendence. Quite the contrary: it says things that would have strengthened his hand. He appealed to God's transcendence in order to head off what otherwise seems like an "evident" inference: if a plan is settled and sure to succeed, then what is planned in it is unavoidable. But this plan is in eternity; it is not a cause in time. To see what a difference this makes, notice that a premise implicit in Cajetan's exposition of the difficulty,

what is true in eternity is true at every point in time, is ambiguous. Does the second occurrence of 'true' mean true in time, or true in eternity? We have to know, because the two sorts of truth are radically different. Truth in time is tensed. It is the truth of a tensed sentence. Truth in eternity is tenseless. It is the truth-at- t of a tenseless proposition. In light of this difference, the sound thing to say is this:

what is true in eternity is true-in-eternity at every point in time.

The following, by contrast, is false:

what is true in eternity is true-in-time at every point in time.

For no contingency is true-in-time *until its time*. It is flatly false to say that, because ' q -at- t_1 ' is true in the eternal plan, ' q -at- t_1 ' is already true now, in time, at t_0 . In short, it is flatly false that the divine plan of any contingent matter verifies any future-tense sentence such as ' q will be true'. It is precisely this falsehood which fosters the illusion that truth-in-eternity implies a modality like 'unavoidably' or 'inevitably'. We use these modal adverbs rightly only when causes at work in time *verify a future-tense sentence already*. For if such a sentence is not just possible as of t_0 but already true at t_0 , what it says comes true in every possible future open from t_0 , and that is what makes it "unavoidable." We have already seen that q -at- t_1 is not unavoidable in this sense, because there is another possible future open from t_0 and including $\sim q$ -at- t_1 .

We have also seen that the divine plan was not "unavoidable" at eternity. For while we can stretch the meaning of

And in saying this, I am not accusing all the past doctors of presumption: stammering as best they could [like me], they all intended to convey, through the failure-proof relation between divine choice and every event, the supreme and eternal unchangeability and efficacy of God's intellect, will, and power; my above-spoken suspicion that something deeper lies hidden in these matters goes against none of them. And if the topic were preached this way, probably no Christian would go wrong about predestination, just as nobody goes wrong about the Trinity just because it is said and written (and is true) that the topic is hidden from human understanding and that faith alone must suffice us.

q.4, a.1 ad 1

'avoidably' and 'unavoidably' to give them a non-temporal sense, in which possible futures are replaced by eligible plans, the adverb 'unavoidably' is still inapplicable unless every plan God could have adopted included q -at- t_1 . But such was not the case, as Cajetan says; God understood other plans, perfectly eligible, in which what was to be actual at t_1 falsified q . Neither in time nor in eternity, then, does contemporary modal logic find anything in Cajetan's problem to justify a genuine modality with a meaning like 'unavoidably'. The talk of it has no basis beyond the *illusion* that settlement in eternity is pre-settlement in time. As a result, the Christian

Still, the best and soundest advice in this matter is the following:

- start out from what we know by experience in our own lives, namely, that all the matters covered by our free choice are *avoidable by us*: this is why we deserve punishment or reward; and with this intact,
- as to how divine providence and predestination are kept intact as well: believe as holy Mother Church believes.

After all, the Scripture says, "Seek not the things that are too high for thee . . . for many things are shown to thee above the understanding of men." And this is one of them.

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community is still very much in Cajetan's debt. It may indeed have been this illusion that was robbing him of his "peace of mind," but he did have the wits to see that the talk of unavailability *needed to be purged* from this part of theology, and he reached in the end for the right purgative: God's transcendence of time itself and of all our modalities. It is no illusion, but a genuine and still-lively problem, to say how the settled truth of tenseless sentences is consistent with the unsettled truth of tensed sentences. Hidden somewhere in the eternal God's transcendence is the source of that consistency.



Inquiry Twenty-Three: Into predestination

After looking into divine providence, one should deal with predestination and then with the Book of Life. Concerning predestination, eight questions are asked:

- | | |
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| <p>(1) is it suitable for God to predestinate? (2) what is a person's predestination, and does it posit anything in the person? (3) is it God's doing to reprobate some? (4) is predestination so related to election that the predestined are "chosen"?</p> | <p>(5) are merits the cause or reason for predestination, reprobation, or election? (6) is predestination so sure or settled that the predestined are infallibly saved? (7) is there a fixed number of the predestined? (8) is predestination helped by prayers of the saints?</p> |
|--|--|

article I

Are human beings predestined by God?

In I Sent. d.40, q.1, a.2, 3 CG c.163, De Veritate q.6, a.1, In Epist. ad Romanos c.1, lectio 3

It seems that people are not predestined by God.

(1) Damascene says in Book II, "One must realize that God foreknows all things but does not predetermine them all. He knows the things present in us but does not predetermine them." Well, human merits and demerits are present in us, as we are masters of our own acts through free choice. Ergo the facts pertaining to merit or demerit are not predetermined by God. So, "predestination" of human beings is out the window.

(2) Besides, all creatures are arranged to achieve their purposes by divine providence, as was said before. But other creatures are not said to be "predestined" by God. So neither are human beings.

(3) Also, the angels are capable of blessedness, just as human beings are. But being "predestined" does not seem to go with the angels because they were never in misery, and predestination is a "plan for the relief of misery," as Augustine says. Ergo human beings are not predestined.

(4) Furthermore, the blessings that people receive from God are revealed to men of sanctity through the Holy Spirit, as the Apostle says in 1 Corinthians 2: 12, "Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the spirit which is of God, that we might know the things that are freely given to us of God." So, since predestination is a blessing from God, if He did predestine people, their predestination would be *known* to the ones predestined — which is certainly not the case.

ON THE OTHER HAND, there is Romans 8: 30, "whom He did predestinate, them He also called."

ANSWER: it is suitable for God to predestine human beings. For all things lie subject to divine providence, as was shown above, and it is the work of providence to arrange things to achieve a purpose, as I also said. But there are two purposes towards whose achievement created things are directed by God:

- one of them is disproportionate and exceeds the ability* of created nature, and this purpose is the eternal life that lies in seeing God (which, as discussed above, is above the nature of any creature).
- The other is a purpose proportionate to created nature, *i.e.* one which a creature can attain by the strength¹ of its own nature.

To reach a goal to which no strength of its own nature can bring it, a creature has to be propelled[‡] to it by something else, as an arrow is sent to a target by an archer. A rational creature, though open to eternal life, is brought to it, strictly speaking, as if propelled there by God.¹ The plan for this pre-exists in God, as does the plan arranging everything to achieve a purpose (the plan we said was providence). A plan for a deed to be done, existing in the mind of the doer, is a pre-existence in him of the deed to be done. Thus the plan for the above-mentioned propelling of a rational creature to the goal of eternal life is called "pre" destination. For 'to destine' is 'to send [to a goal]'. Clearly, then, as far as its objects are concerned, predestination is part of providence.

¹ Seeing God came up as a cognitive possibility in q.12. Here it emerges as a purpose or goal (*finis*), and we meet the set vocabulary in which Aquinas regularly described it. He always said the Vision "exceeds the proportion" of our nature, so as to contrast it with another, proportionate *finis*. He defined 'proportionate to N' as 'achievable by N's natural active ability' (*facultas, virtus*). To such an ability there corresponds a natural passive potency. According to *De Veritate* q.27, a.2, the *finis* we can reach by natural ability is a *philosophical* knowledge of first causes. This is what we are in natural passive potency to be led to, not the Vision. Progress towards the Vision is not *our* natural development but God's artful casting, and our being "open" to the Vision (*capax*) is not natural potency but the kind Aquinas called "obediential." In this sense, wood (but not cloth) is "open" to be sharpened and shot to a target by the *art* of a hunter.

* *facultas*

q.12, a.4

† *virtus*

‡ *transmissi*

De fide orthodoxa,
II, c.30,
PG 91, 972

q.22, a.2

De divinis quaestio-
nibus I: PL 40, 115

q.22, a.2
q.22, a.1

Compendium
theologiae, c.104

TO MEET THE OBJECTIONS — *ad* (1): what Damascene means by ‘predetermining’ is imposing necessariness, such as one finds in natural processes that are predetermined to one outcome. This is clear from what he says next: “for He does not will malice, and he does not *compel* virtue.” So predestination is not excluded [by patristic authority].²

ad (2): the goal that exceeds human nature’s active ability is such that sub-rational creatures are not even open to it. This is why they are not properly called predestined. (However, ‘predestination’ is sometimes used improperly for assignment to any other goal.)

² As discussed at length in Cajetan’s commentary on q. 22, a. 4, the fact that God’s plan is timelessly settled in its truth-value neither (a) suppresses the physical possibilities for events to turn out otherwise nor (b) supports a non-physical modality of “unavoidability.” So one’s predestination does not work like one’s “fate.” Certain Reformers did not understand this and so (for this among other reasons) chose to repudiate human freedom, in conflict with all the Fathers.

ad (3): being predestined goes with being an angel just as it goes with being human, even though the angels were never in misery. A change does not get its classification, after all, from its point of departure but from what it is a change *to*. It makes no difference to the definition of blanching, for instance, whether a thing blanched started out as black, yellow, or red. Likewise, it makes no difference to the definition of ‘predestination’ whether someone predestined to eternal life is taken from a state of misery or not.³ — Still, one can say that conferral of a good going beyond what is owed to the recipient is a case of mercy, as I said above.

ad (4): to some people, their predestination is revealed, by way of a special privilege; but it would not be suitable for it to be revealed to everyone. Those who are not predestined would despair; and in those who are predestined, security [about it] would beget negligence.

q.21, a.4

³ This answer *ad* (3) should have preserved Thomists from ever defining ‘redemption’ as ‘from a state of sin’; they should have had more room to accept the Immaculate Conception.

Cajetan’s Commentary

In the title, notice that the question here is not whether divine predestinating happens at all, as the customary order of inquiry would require, but whether it happens towards human beings. Still, both issues are meant to be handled. Aquinas settles the does-it-happen-at-all question in the body of the article and settles the one about human beings in answering the objections.

Analysis of the article

ii. In the body of the article, a single conclusion answers the question with a yes (in God there is predestinating), and a corollary is attached at the end.

The support for the conclusion goes thus. [*Antecedent:*] Eternal life, consisting in the Vision of God, is a goal surpassing the proportion and the ability of a created nature; so [*1st inference:*] a rational creature open to said goal is brought to it as if propelled there by God; so [*2nd inference:*] the plan for this propelling pre-exists in God; hence [*conclusion:*] there is predestinating in God.

The antecedent is clarified by distinguishing the two purposes to which a creature is ordered by divine providence, namely, the proportionate purpose and the supra-proportionate; and this distinction is supported by remarks made above in q.12. — The first inference is supported by the fact that when a thing cannot reach a goal by its own strength, it has to be propelled to it by another, as an arrow is propelled by an archer. — The second inference is supported on the ground that there is in God a plan (called providence) for the arrangement of everything to achieve its purpose. — The third inference is supported, too, as follows. The plan of a deed to be done, already present in the mind of its

doer, is a pre-existence of the deed; so the plan to do this sort of propelling is a pre-existing propelling; ergo it is predestinating. This last is supported on the ground that ‘destine’ is ‘send [to a goal]’, and ‘predestination’ is ‘plan for sending to eternal life’.

The corollary is that, as far as its objects are concerned, predestination is a part of providence. The supporting ground is that all things, as regards their being arranged to reach their purpose, lie subject to divine providence.

Act vs. objects

iii. Notice here that predestinating considered as an act is not said to be part of providence [advanced planning considered as an act], because a divine act has within itself neither the makings of “a part” nor the makings of “a whole.” Rather, it is called a part of providence on the object side. Any of the three “objects” of predestination is part of the object of advanced planning — a rational creature is a thing, a propulsive sending is an arrangement, eternal life is a purpose — and any of these is clearly part of the entire being, arrangement, and purpose of a created thing, the object of advanced planning.

A difference in usage

iv. In this area, notice a difference between St. Thomas’ teaching and that of others, including Scotus (on *I Sent.*, d.40). The others think predestination is properly speaking *election*, and so ‘predestinating’ means for them an act of God’s will. It says here, by contrast, that ‘predestinating’ implies an act of intellect, as does ‘advanced planning’, because it names an exercise of prac-

tical wisdom. For greater clarity, review the fact that

- first God's intellect (as best we are able to talk about it in human language) thinks out an arrangement of those to be chosen and propelled to eternal life and then proposes it to His will to be accepted;
- then His will freely chooses to implement this arrangement;
- and thus, thirdly, the arrangement that first (in itself) had the character of a thought-out plan now has the character of a *decided-on* plan.

So the difference of opinions here lies in the fact that the other writers say that what is to be understood by the word 'predestinating' is the very choice that decides on this thought-out and proposed plan, whereas we use 'predestinating' to mean *the plan itself*, not as thought-out but *as decided-upon* in the mind of the plan's Author. And since this difference is more a matter of words than of things (in that no one disputes that all these elements are required for predestination), let each author abound in his own sense, so long as we use words as most people do.

Does predestination posit anything in the person predestined?

In I Sent. d.40, q.1, a.1; *In III Sent.* d.7, q.3, a.1

It looks as though predestination posits something in the person predestined.

(1) After all, any active doing implies, of itself, a passive being done-onto. So if predestinating is an action in God, there has to be a passive being-predestined in the person predestined.

(2) Besides, Origen makes a comment on Romans 1:4 (“who was predestined to be the Son of God with power.” etc.) saying, “predestinating is of one who is not, while destinating is of one who is.” But Augustine asks [in his *De diversis quaestionibus*, “What is predestination but the destinating of someone?” Thus [taking the two texts together], predestination only applies to someone who exists. And so it posits something in the person predestined.

(3) Moreover, “preparation” is something real in the thing prepared. But predestination is “a preparation for the blessings of God,” as Augustine says in *De dono perseverantiae*. Therefore, predestination is something real in the predestined.

(4) Furthermore, a temporal item is not put into the definition of an eternal one. But grace, which is a temporal item, is put into the definition of predestination; for [in book I of Peter Lombard’s *Libri IV Sententiarum*, d. 40] predestination is said to be “the preparation for grace in the present life and for glory in the next.” Hence predestination is not something eternal. And so, since anything in God *is* eternal, predestination cannot be something in God; it has to be in the persons predestined.

ON THE OTHER HAND, Augustine says [in the place last cited] that predestination is “foreknowledge of God’s blessings.” Well, foreknowledge is not in the objects foreknown but in the foreknower. Predestination, too, therefore, is not in the predestined but in the One who predestinates them.

I ANSWER: predestination is not something in the predestined, but only in the one who predestinates. I said above that predestination is a certain part of providence. Well, providence [*i.e.* advanced planning] is not in the things planned but is a certain reasoning in the mind of the planner, as I said before. Rather, the *carrying out* of the plan, called governance, is what is present as a passive state in the things governed but present as an action in the governor. Thus, it becomes clear that predestination itself is a certain plan, existing in the divine mind, for the arrangement of some people to achieve eternal salvation — while the carrying out of this plan is pre-

sent as a passive state in the predestined but present as an action in God. Well, the carrying out of predestination is the calling and the glorifying, according to the word of the Apostle in Romans 8:30. “whom He did predestinate, them He also called, and whom He called ... them He also glorified.”

TO MEET THE OBJECTIONS — *ad* (1): actions that flow forth into outside matter (like heating something up or drying it out) imply of themselves a passive being-acted-upon; but actions remaining immanent within the doer (like understanding and willing) carry no such implication, as I said already.¹ Predestination is immanent action. So it posits nothing in the predestined. Rather, its execution, which flows forth into outside things, posits an effect in them.

ad (2): sometimes ‘destinate’ is taken for the real sending of someone to a terminus; and so taken, ‘destinating’ only applies to one who exists. But the word can be used for a sending which someone conceives in his mind, as we are said to “destinate” what we firmly propose mentally; such is the usage in 2 Maccabees 6:20 [Vulgate], where Eleazar “determined [*destinavit*] not to do any unlawful things for the love of life.” Taken in this sense, ‘destinate’ can apply to one who does not exist. In any case, no matter how ‘destinate’ is used, ‘pre-destinate’ can apply to one who does not exist, thanks to the fact that it implies a coming beforehand.

ad (3): there are two sorts of preparation. One is a preparation of the thing that undergoes a change, so that it may undergo it; and this preparation is in the thing prepared. The other is a preparation of the agent to act, and this is in the agent. Predestination is a preparation of the latter sort: anything that acts through its mind is said to “prepare itself to act” by conceiving in advance a plan of the work to be done. Thus God from eternity “prepared” by predestinating, conceiving a plan of arranging for some to achieve salvation.

ad (4): grace is not put into the account of predestination as a factor in its essence but on the basis that predestination involves a relation to grace, as a cause relates to its effect, and as an act to its object. So it does not follow that predestination is a temporal item.

¹ This is not a point of grammar but of (second order) ontology. In mere grammar, the active ‘I think of x’ implies the passive ‘x is thought of’ just as ‘I pick up x’ implies ‘x is picked up’. But ontologically, the transitive picking-up presupposes an already real thing and conveys a change in it, while the immanent thinking-of does neither.

 Cajetan's Commentary

In the title, 'does it posit anything' — in other words, when we say, "Socrates is predestined," does the word 'predestined' predicate a substantial or accidental being in Socrates (as happens when we say, "Socrates is animal," or "Socrates is pale"), or does it posit nothing in him but only describes him with an extrinsic denomination, as when we say that he "seems pale"?

ii. In the body of the article, a single conclusion answers the question in the negative: Predestination is not something in the person predestined but only in the one who predestinates. — The conclusion is both supported and clarified.

The support goes as follows. [*Antecedent:*] Advanced planning posits nothing in the things planned but only a plan of arrangements, *etc.*, in the mind of the planner; [*inference:*] ergo predestination posits only

"a plan for arranging the elect, *etc.*, in the mind of God. Drawing the inference is supported on the ground that predestination is a part of providence.

The conclusion is clarified by the difference between predestination itself and the execution or carrying out of it. This latter, taken action-wise, posits something in the one who carries it out (God) and [taken passion-wise] something in the persons predestined. This is illustrated by the parallel difference between providence and governance, where the latter posits something action-wise in the governor and passion-wise in the governed. — And since the carrying out of predestination has no one proper name, it is expressed in the text with two, at the point where Aquinas adds the information that the carrying out is "calling" and "glorifying," according to the testimony of St. Paul, *etc.*

Does God reprobate anyone?

In I Sent. d 40, q 4, a 1, 3 CG c 163; In Ep. ad Romanos, c 9, lectio 2

It seems that God does not reprobate any human being.

(1) After all, no one reprobates a person whom he loves. But God loves every human being, according to Wisdom 11:24, "For thou lovest all the things that are, and abhorrest nothing which thou hast made." Therefore, God reprobates no one.

(2) Besides, if God reprobates anyone. His reprobating has to stand to the reprobates as His predestinating stands to the predestined. Well, for these latter, the predestinating is the *cause* of their salvation. Hence the reprobating will be the cause of perdition for the reprobates. But this last is false; Hoseah 13 9 says, "O Israel, thou hast destroyed thyself;¹ but in me is thine help." Therefore, God does not reprobate anyone.

(3) Moreover, one should not impute to a man what he cannot avoid. If God reprobates someone, then he cannot avoid perishing; for Ecclesiastes 7:13 says, "Consider the work of God; for who can make that straight which He hath made crooked?"² So [if God reprobated people,] the fact that they perish would not be imputed to them. But this is false. Ergo, God does not reprobate anyone.

ON THE OTHER HAND, there is Malachi 1:2-3, "I loved Jacob, and I hated Esau."

q 23, a 1
q 22, a 2 ad 2
I ANSWER: God does reprobate some people. As I said before, predestination is a part of providence. It belongs to providence to allow one or another defect to arise in the things subject to providence, as I also said. So, since it is arranged through God's providence that people achieve eternal life, it also pertains to His providence that He allow some to fall short of this goal, and this is called "reprobating" them.

So, then, just as predestination is the part of providence dealing with those divinely arranged to achieve eternal salvation, so also reprobation is the part of pro-

vidence that deals with those who fall away from this purpose. Thus 'reprobation' does not name foreknowledge alone, but holds more in its definition (as 'providence' does, too, as I said above). For just as 'predestination' includes God's willing to confer grace and glory, so also 'reprobation' includes His willing to allow someone to fall into guilt and to inflict the punishment of damnation for that guilt.

q 22, a 1 ad 3

TO MEET THE OBJECTIONS — *ad* (1): God does love all human beings, and even all creatures, since He wills some good to all of them; but He does not will each and every good to all of them. So inasmuch as He does not will for some the good that is eternal life, He is said to "hate" or "reprobate them."³

ad (2): causally, reprobation is different from predestination. Predestination is the cause both of what is awaited by the predestined in the future life (glory) and of what is shared by them in the present life (grace). Reprobation is not a cause of the guilt that is here in the present life and causes abandonment by God. It is, however, the cause of what is rendered in the future, *i.e.*, eternal punishment. But the guilt comes from the free choice of the one reprobated and abandoned by grace. And this is how the saying of the prophet ("O Israel, thou hast destroyed thyself") comes out true.

ad (3): God's reprobation takes nothing away from the reprobate's power [to choose]. So when it is said that a reprobate cannot obtain grace, this is not understood to be impossible in its own right but conditionally, just as I said above that 'a predestined person has to be saved' is conditional necessity, which does not take away freedom of choice.⁴ So, while it is true that a person reprobated by God cannot obtain grace, his falling into this or that sin arises from his own free choice; so the guilt of it is rightly imputed to him.

q 19, a.8 ad 1; see
fn. 5 on p. 434

¹ So reads the Hebrew and the Vulgate (*perditio tua, Israel, ex te est*). Many modern exegetes correct the Hebrew in light of the LXX, which conveys the radically different sense, "I mean to destroy you, O Israel, and who can come to your help?" Still, if verse 9 is altered, the object's point is made elsewhere, *e.g.*, at Hoseah 14:1-2, "O Israel, return unto the Lord thy God; for thou hast fallen by thine own iniquity."

² The sense in the Vulgate is less general and more striking: no man can correct a person whom God has despised.

³ Recall that not-willing does not imply counter-willing. From "God does not will that *x* avoid sin" it is fallacious to infer "God wills that *x* not avoid sin". The latter would not be allowing sin; it would be forbidding righteousness.

⁴ "Conditional necessity" is what is had by the consequent in a strict implication whose antecedent is true but not necessary. The example above was: α (if *x* is predestined \supset *x* is saved). Now the example is: α (if God does not will *x* to have grace \supset *x* does not obtain it). Stating these consequents as 'has to be saved' and 'cannot obtain grace' is misleading.

 Cajetan's Commentary

In the title question, 'reprobate' means 'reject someone as unworthy'; in the matter at hand, the issue is unworthiness for eternal life.

ii. In the body of the article, Aquinas does two jobs: (a) he answers the question with yes, settling the point that there is such a thing as reprobation; (b) at the paragraph beginning "So, then ...," he settles the issue of what reprobation is. The latter was not directly asked here; nevertheless, since a distinctive cause of [knowing] whether-x-occurs is [knowing] what-x-is, as it says in *Posterior Analytics II*, it is right that both issues are settled here.

c 2;
90a 5-12, 31-34

Analysis of the article, I

iii. As to job (1), the conclusion is this: God does reprobate some people. — The support goes thus. [*Antecedent:*] It pertains to providence to allow some defect in the things subject to it; [*1st inference:*] so it belongs to God's providence to allow some people to fall short of eternal life; [*2nd inference:*] so it belongs to His providence to reprobate some.

The antecedent is obvious from points already made. The first inference is supported on the ground that it is the work of divine providence to arrange for people to attain eternal life. — The second inference rests on the ground that this [allowance of falling short] is just identically reprobating.

Is the argument valid?

iv. Concerning this argument, doubt arises: the entire force of it does not yield the point wanted. Either

- (1) it means to say that reprobation or allowance of falling short of eternal life is rightly inferred from the fact that advanced planning includes allowing; or else
- (2) it means to say that reprobation is rightly inferred from the fact that advanced planning includes allowing *if any allowance is made*.

If construal (2) is the one intended, it does not answer the question; it does not yield the conclusion that

God does reprobate some people,

but only the conclusion that

if He reprobates anyone, His doing so belongs to His providence.

On the other hand, if construal (1) is what is intended, the argument is worthless. It commits a fallacy of the consequent, arguing from [how it is with] advanced planning in general, for "a purpose" in general, to [how

it is with] planning specifically for this purpose, eternal life. For suppose allowing some defect is required for the job of planning the whole universe; suppose also that allowing some does not conflict with advanced planning in general; it is still not the case that *every exercise of advanced planning* requires this; planning for necessary effects *qua* necessary obviously does not; and yet the argument in the text proceeds as if advanced planning includes allowing ... were universal.

The response

v. The short answer to this is that construal (1) is what the text is directly after, since, so taken, the argument answers the question. But it is not necessary to admit that a fallacy was committed, nor need one take the premise in question as unqualifiedly universal; it only has to be universal *for topics inherently defectible*. The sense of the premise, then, is this:

allowing ... belongs to the advanced planning of things inherently liable to fall short of their purpose;

and now it follows optimally that

divine advanced planning has this act, *i.e.*

allowing some to fall short of eternal life,

because rational creatures are [inherently] liable to fall short of this goal. — And if you are looking for something to ground the above premise, know that it is the *gentle disposing* of things planned for. After all, from the fact that [divine] providence disposes gently, it follows that things liable to fall short are left to their own powers [*viribus*]; and thus defects turn up.

Analysis of the article, II

vi. As to job (2), Aquinas makes three claims about reprobation:

- (a) that it is a part of providence (which he supports on the basis of its parallel* with predestination);
- (b) that it is not just foreknowledge (which he proves by its being part of a whole, *viz.* advanced planning, which is obviously more than just foreknowing);
- (c) that it includes the willingness to allow a fall and punish the guilt of it (which is again proved by the parallel with predestination, in that the latter bears both on what is in this world and on what is in the world to come, *etc.*).

* *proportionalitas*

From these one easily gathers the what-it-is of reprobation: it is foreknowledge together with willingness (α) to allow guilt to arise and (β) to punish for it.

Are the predestined "chosen" by God?

In I Sent. d.41, a.2; De Veritate, q 6, a.2; In Ep. ad Romanos, c 9, lectio 2

It looks as though the predestined persons have not been chosen by God.

PG 3, 693

(1) In c. 4 of *De divinis nominibus*, Denis says that as the physical sun, without choosing, sheds its light on all bodies, so God sheds His goodness. But the divine goodness comes most especially to those who share in grace and glory. Thus God communicates grace and glory — which is what predestination is all about —

* *electio*

without making a choice.*
(2) Besides, a choice is made among things that exist. But predestination from eternity is even of persons who do not exist. The relevant persons are predestined, therefore, without a choice being made.

(3) Moreover, choice involves some differentiation. But God "wills all men to be saved," as it says in 1 Timothy 2:4. Therefore, the predestinating that pre-arranges for people to attain their salvation is done without choosing.

ON THE OTHER HAND, there is what Ephesians 1:4 says: "He hath chosen us in him [in Christ] before the foundation of the world."

q 23, a.1

ANSWER: by its very definition, predestination presupposes a choice, and choice presupposes love. The reason for this is that predestination is part (as I said) of providence. Providence, in turn, like practical wisdom, is reasoning, taking place in the intellect, that is directive of how certain things are to be arranged to achieve a purpose (as said above). Well, nothing is directed to be arranged for a purpose unless a volition embracing the purpose is already there. Thus the predestination of certain persons to eternal salvation presupposes (by its definition) that God wills their salvation. To this willing, [the terms] 'choice' and 'love' both apply.

q 22, a.1

- 'Love' applies, because God is willing for these people the good of eternal salvation, and "loving" is willing someone a good (as was said before).

q 20, a.3

- 'Choice' applies, because God is willing this good for some ahead of others [*prae aliis*], given that He reprobates some (as I said above).

q 23, a.3

But how choice and love are related in us is different from how they are related in God. Our will does not cause a person's goodness by its act of loving him or her; we are rather prompted to love by a good feature already there, and so we *choose* someone to love; this

is how choice, among us, precedes love.¹ In God it is the reverse. The willing with which, in loving, He wills a good feature for another is the cause of the fact that this other, rather than somebody else, has that good feature. And this, clearly, is how choice presupposes love [in God], by the definition [of love]; and predestination presupposes choice. Thus all the predestined are "elect" and beloved.²

TO MEET THE OBJECTIONS — *ad* (1): if you look at the sharing out of God's goodness in general. He shares it "without choice" in the sense that there is nothing which fails to get something of His goodness (as emerged above). But if you look at the communication of this or that good, it does not come "without choice," because He gives certain goods to some which He does not give to others. This is how choice is involved in the bestowal of grace and glory.

q.6, a.4

ad (2): when the chooser's will is attracted to choice by a good already existing in the real, choice has to be among things which exist, as happens in our choosing. But in God it is otherwise, as I have said. And so, to quote Augustine, "the chosen of God are people who are not, and yet He who chooses errs not."

Sermo ad
pulum 26:
Pl. 38, 173

ad (3): to repeat an answer I gave before. God wills all men to be saved *antedecently*, which is not willing it unqualifiedly but in some respect; He does not will this *consequently*, which is willing it unqualifiedly [or "all things considered"].

q.9, a.6 ad 1

¹ Choice does not always precede the desire-love (*amor concupiscentiae*) with which we are spontaneously attracted to certain objects; rather, it precedes the friendship-love (*amor amicitiae*) with which we want this or that person to have good things. Features which already exist in persons attractive to us stir us up to share with them the objects of desire-love and so stir us up to caused friendship-love. God's, of course, is not caused.

² God's willing regarding creatures is *uncaused* friendship-love. There is just one such act in Him, in which He wills the state of affairs that created persons share in the Good which He is. This uncaused act "presupposes" love and choice in the sense that it fits the definition of both — of love because it is willing good for another, and of choice because it is willing this good rather than that one for this someone rather than someone else (who either is not created or is not predestined, the will-act itself causing the one or the other).

Cajetan's Commentary

In the title question, the talk of choosing is taken in the strict and proper sense in which 'a choice' means an act of the will by which, given options, the will prefers one option over another.

Analysis of the article

ii. In the body of the article, a single conclusion answers the question in the affirmative: all the predestined are chosen and loved by God. — The support goes like this. [*Antecedent:*] Practical wisdom [prudence] is reasoning taking place in the intellect, prescriptive of how some things are to be arranged to achieve a purpose; so [*1st inference:*] advanced planning [providence] is reasoning ... prescriptive ..., etc.; so [*2nd inference:*] predestination is reasoning prescriptive of how it is to be arranged that some persons achieve eternal life; hence [*3rd inference:*] the predestination of people presupposes that God wills their salvation; ergo [*4th inference:*] predestination presupposes choice, and choice presupposes love; ergo [*conclusion:*] all the predestined are chosen and loved by God.

Drawing the first inference is supported by the fact that how to describe advanced planning is the same as how to describe practical wisdom. The 'as' here is more expressive than comparative, because advanced planning is the main part of practical wisdom (as was said above); indeed, preplanning is the principal act of practical wisdom as it applies to managing a polity [*prudentia politica*]. — The second inference is not explicit in the text but is supplied to make the connection clearer. — Drawing the third inference is supported by the fact that one does not prescribe how a thing is to achieve a purpose unless one wills to achieve that purpose. (Please understand this in terms of genuinely interior prescription; I say this to avoid confusion with the outer directives called divine "symbolic willing" in q.19: if you take 'prescribe' in the outward sense, God prescribes a lot that He does not will, as is clear from the fact that sinners succeed in flouting them.) — The fourth inference rests on the fact that 'choose' and 'love' apply to such a divine act of willing.

Since three items are inferred in this fourth inference — choice, love, and the order between them in God — these are set forth in the text individually.

• The first point is that [calling it] "love" follows from such an act of willing, because He wills them this

good, and 'to love them' is 'to will them good'.

• The second is that [calling it] "choosing" follows from it, because He wills this good for these people rather than those (whom He reprobates).

• The third point is that God's choice of these people presupposes love for them, and this follows from the difference in order between these acts in us and in God: love precedes choice in God, while the reverse is true in us. And the reason for this difference in order is that God's will causes the good state of things, whereas our will is moved by their good state.

On the order between choosing and loving

iii. On the difference in order asserted here, take care to understand this difference [as characterizing the order between these acts when they are taken] *as bearing on one and the same object* and as talking about the *primordial reason for the choice*. Otherwise, the difference in order would not seem to hold up, if taken as asserted across the board. After all, since love is the will's primordial act, even we cannot choose without first loving. But it is out of love for accompanying features that we choose this person, so as to *love this person* (as we see in the choice of a spouse). And so 'choosing precedes loving in us' is not true towards any object you please, but it is true towards *this person*. It is obvious, too, in our general benevolence that, while willing-to-do-good precedes the choice of a particular beneficiary, so long as we attend to everyone with equal love, it is impossible that an effect arising in a person from our love alone should lead us to choose this person; for so long as equal love is in place, no choice can follow. If disparity emerges in the loving, we are being moved to choose *this person* to be loved, above the others, by preferred features accompanying this person. And so our love towards this one cannot be the primordial reason for our choice of him or her (although it can be a subsequent reason for choices, as when, out of love for her, we will that she receive some other good — as happens every day). In God's case, however, God's love for this one has to come first as the primordial and total cause (on the object's side) of this person's being chosen. The reason is: choice assumes a disparity of one from another; but, in a creature, the whole reason for its disparity [from any other] is a good feature willed to it by God. Thus the love in God is the reason for the choosing in God.

Is foreknowledge of merits the reason for predestination?

In I Sent d.41, a.3; 3 *CG* c.163; *De Veritate*, q.6, a.2; *In Joan* c.15, *lectio* 4; *In Ep. ad Romanos*, c.1, *lectio* 3; c.8, *lectio* 6; c.9, *lectio* 3; *In Ep. ad Ephes.* c.1, *lectiones* 1, 4

It looks as though God's foreknowledge of people's merits is the reason He predestinates them.

(1) St Paul himself says in Romans 8:29, "whom He did foreknow, He also did predestinate." And in a gloss on Romans 9:15 ("I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy"). Ambrose says it means, "I will give mercy to the one whom I foreknow will return to me with his whole heart." It thus seems that foreknowledge of merits is the reason for predestination.

PL 17, 142

(2) Besides, divine predestination includes a divine volition which cannot be without a reason, since predestination is "a plan" for the relief of misery, as Augustine says. Well, no other reason can be given for predestination except foreknowledge of merits. Such foreknowledge, therefore, *is* the cause or reason for predestination.

De diversis questionibus I, 2, PL 40, 115

(3) Also, there is no unrighteousness with God, as Romans 9:14 says. It seems wicked to give unequal benefits to equal persons. All people are equal both in their nature and in original sin; their inequality is from the merits and demerits of their own actions. So the only reason God prepares unequal benefits for people is because of a difference in foreknown merits.

ON THE OTHER HAND, there is what St. Paul says in Titus 3:5, "Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to His mercy He saved us." Well, the basis on which He has saved us is the basis on which He predestined us to be saved. Ergo, foreknowledge of merits is not the cause or reason for predestination.

ANSWER: since predestination includes God's volition (as was said above), a reason for predestination has to be sought in the same way as one seeks a cause for God's will. It was said above that no cause is to be assigned to His will on the side of the act of willing itself; a reason can only be assigned on the side of the objects willed, in that God wills this-to-occur-on-account-of-that. No one, then, has been fool enough to say that merits cause divine predestination on the side of the very act of predestinating. The question, rather, is whether predestination has a reason on the side of its effects. This in turn amounts to asking whether God foreordained Himself to give a person the effect of predestination on account of merits of some sort.¹

a.1
q.19, a.5

There have been writers who said a soul is fore-

¹ Our deeds do not *move* God to will anything, but He might have adopted a policy of rewarding them. God causelessly wills a set of n-tuples of causally ordered objects, such as <x to occur on account of y>, in which y is a reason for willing x on the object side. So the question is whether any n-tuples willed by God include segments like <Jones to get grace on account of Jones's doing a good act>.

ordained to get the effects of predestination on account of merits gained in a prior life. This was Origen's position; he supposed human souls had been created from the beginning and, thanks to how they had acted, got different statuses when united to their bodies in this world. But St. Paul rules this out in Romans 9:11-12, where he says, "the children being not yet born, neither having done any good or evil, that the purpose of God according to election might stand, not of works, but of Him that calleth, it was said unto her, 'The elder shall serve the younger'."²

There have been others who said that merits already gained in this life are the reason and cause for the effect of predestination. The Pelagians said that we have the strength to start doing good, but then God brings the effort to completion. On this theory, one man gets the effect of predestination while another does not, because the first made a start towards preparing himself, and the other did not. But this is contradicted by what the Apostle says in 2 Corinthians 3:5, "not that we are sufficient of ourselves to think anything as of ourselves." One cannot find any "start of doing good" that would be prior to the mere thought of it; so it is untenable to say that a start exists in us that would serve as the reason for predestination's effect.³

Still others have said that merits subsequent to predestination's effect are the reason for predestination — the idea being that God gives grace to a person (and foreordained Himself to do so) because He foreknew that the person will use the grace well, as a king would give a horse to a soldier whom he knows will use it to good effect. But these writers seem to have been splitting what arises out of grace from what arises out of free choice, as if the same act could not arise out of both. Obviously, what arises out of grace is predestination's effect; it cannot be put down as the reason for predestination, because it is included in it. So if something else, arising from us, is going to be the reason for our predestination, it will be something *outside* predestination's effect. But what arises out of our free choice is *not distinct* from what arises out of our predestination, as what comes of a secondary cause is not distinct from what comes of a first cause; after all, divine providence produces *its* effects through the operations of secondary causes, as I said above. Thus what arises by free choice is also arising from predestination.⁴

Petr archón II, c.9, PG 11, 156

Cf. Augustine, *Retractationes* I, c.23, PL 32, 621

q.22, a.3, cf. *L. Veritate* q.29, ad 4

² So, no divine will-object has the form <Jones to get grace on account of a good act his soul did before having a body>.

³ No divine will-object has the form <Jones to get grace on account of a good act he started to do without it>.

⁴ No divine will-object has the form <Jones to get grace on account of a good act he will do after getting it>. But see the answer *ad* (1).

The thing to say, therefore, is that we can look at predestination's effect two ways.

* *in particular*

(1) One way is piecemeal.* In this perspective, there is no problem with saying that one effect of predestination is the cause and reason for another; under the definition of purpose-wise causing, a later one causes an earlier one, while under the definition of meritorious causing (which is material disposing), an earlier one causes a later one. Thus we might say both (a) God prearranged that He would give a certain person heavenly glory because of his merits and (b) God pre-arranged that He would give the same person grace so as to merit the said glory.

† *in communis*

(2) The other way to look at predestination's effect is "as a whole."† In this perspective, it is impossible for predestination's *whole* effect to have any cause arising from us. For anything present in us disposing us to salvation is included within predestination's total effect — even the preparation for grace, since even this does not arise without predestination's total effect — "Turn us unto thee, O Lord, and we shall be turned." Rather, the reason for predestination on the effect's side, when taken as a whole, is the divine Good State; the total effect of predestination is ordered thereto as to its purpose, and the total effect proceeds therefrom as from the first source prompting it.

V.g. "converte nos ... et convertemur"

TO MEET THE OBJECTIONS — *ad* (1): foreknown use of grace is not the reason why grace is granted, except in the sense of a purpose-wise reason, as I said.⁵

ad (2): on the side of its effect taken as a whole, predestination does have a reason: the divine Good State itself. Taken piecemeal, one of its effects is the reason for another, as I said.

ad (3): a reason for the predestination of some and the reprobation of others can be drawn from the divine Good State itself. God is said to have made all things "on account of His own Good State" in the sense that the purpose was that His Good State might be represented in things. One and simple in itself, the divine Good State is such that its representation in created things has to be multiform, because created things cannot attain to the divine simplicity. To fill out the created universe, therefore, different levels of things are required, some to hold a high place, some to hold the lowest in the universe. And to preserve the multiformity of levels among things, God permits some evils to arise, lest many goods be impeded, as was said above.

q 22, a.2

⁵ The claim, 'God wills <Jones to get grace on account of what he will do after getting it>' is ambiguous because 'on account of' can express different types of cause. If it expresses the purposive type, 'on account of' means the same as 'for the sake of' or 'in order that', and the claim just mentioned is orthodox about the effects of predestination taken piecemeal. God gives us His grace in order that we may bear fruit with it. But this is not what the objector had in mind. He wanted 'on account of' to express a dispositive cause, so that 'on account of' would mean 'as a

So, if we consider the whole human race as we were just considering the total universe, then, by the human beings He predestinates. God has willed His Good State to be represented in the mode of mercy, sparing; and by those He reprobates, in the mode of justice, punishing. This is why God chooses some and reprobates some. This is also the reason assigned by St. Paul in Romans 9:22-23, saying, "God, willing to shew His wrath" — *i.e.* the execution of His justice — "and to make His power known, endured" — *i.e.* permitted — "with much long-suffering the vessels of wrath fitted to destruction, that He might make known the riches of His glory in the vessels of mercy, which He had afore prepared unto glory." And in 2 Timothy 2:20 he says, "But in a great house there are not only vessels of gold and of silver, but also of wood and of earth; and some to honour, and some to dishonour."

But as to why He chose for glory *these* people and reprobated *those* — for this there is no reason but the sheer divine will. Thus Augustine comments on John's gospel [tract. 26, on John 6:44, "No man can come to me except the Father ... draw him"] by saying, "If you don't want to go wrong, don't try to figure out why the Father draws this man and not that one." In much the same way, in looking at natural things, one can assign a reason why prime matter (though all uniform in itself) is initially created by God segmented into a part subject to the form of fire and a part subject to the form of earth, namely, so that there might be a diversity of natural kinds; but as to why *this bit* of matter is under this form, and *that bit* under another — it depends on God's sheer will.⁶ Likewise, the building art provides a reason why there should be stones in this part of a wall, and stones in that part, but it depends on the sheer will of the builder that this stone is in this part and that stone in the other.

Neither, on this account, is there any unrighteousness with God, if He prepares unequal benefits for persons not unequal. It *would* contradict fairness to do so, if predestination's effect were being paid out, as something due, instead of being given out *gratis*. In things that are given out *gratis*, a man may give as he likes to whom he pleases, however much or however little, so long as he takes away from no one what is owed to him, without damaging fairness. And this is what the goodman of the house says in Matthew 20:14-15, "Take what is thine and go thy way ... Is it not lawful for me to do what I will with mine own?"⁷

moral result of' This Aquinas rejects, following Augustine's own retraction of the idea.

⁶ The cosmology in this illustration is easy to update. A universe with anything interesting in it requires that the initial Bang eventuate in particles not evenly distributed but variously clumped. So any plan to produce a variegated universe will provide that some particles be clumped here, some there, some scattered. But (*pace* Leibniz) nothing does or can explain why this particle instead of that one is in a lumpy region.

⁷ On the excess pay to late-comers, as a gift not owed, see also fn. 1 on q.62, a.4.

Cajetan's Commentary

The title is explained in the body of the article. There Aquinas does three jobs: (1) he clarifies the title question, (2) handles three opinions on it, and (3) answers it.

Analysis of the article: job (1)

ii. As for job (1), Aquinas distinguishes two ways in which the talk of a predestination's being "caused" by foreknown merits can be understood. One way takes it as positing this cause on the side of the act; so taken, no question arises [because the idea is too absurd]. The other way takes it as positing this cause on the side of the effect; and so taken, the matter is in doubt. Aquinas also shows that this distinction, with its two options, applies here, thanks to the fact that divine volition is involved in predestinating. For the same distinction has to be used when the question is about a cause for why God wills something, as became clear in previous remarks. The text is clear.

q.19, a.5

Analysis of the article: job (2)

iii. As for job (2), the first opinion handled is that of Origen, who says that the past merits of souls, prior to this life, are the cause of predestination. — This is refuted on St. Paul's authority, "when they had not yet done any good," etc.

The second opinion is that of the Pelagians, who say that pre-existing merits in this life are the reason for predestination, because the start of doing good originates from us. — This is refuted on the Apostle's authority, "not that we are sufficient of ourselves to think" etc. It is cut and dried, after all, that thinking is our first contribution to cooperating with.

A third opinion is that future merits, though still in this life, are the cause of predestination. An opinion retracted by Augustine, *i.e.*, that future faith was the reason for Jacob's predestination over Esau, reduces to this one. — In the text, Aquinas refutes it as follows. [*Conditional:*] If anything arising from us [in a good use of grace] is the cause of our predestination, it is not included in the effect of predestination; but [*negation of the consequent:*] everything found in a good use of grace is an effect of predestination; ergo nothing found in a good use of grace is a cause of predestination. — Negating the consequent is supported thus. [*Antecedent:*] What arises from a secondary cause is not distinct from what arises from the First Cause; so [*1st inference:*] what arises from free choice is not distinct from what arises from predestination; so [*2nd inference:*] what is done by free choice arises out of one's predestination. — The first inference just made is supported by the fact that divine providence produces its effects through the operations of secondary causes.

A new defender of the third opinion

iv. Anent this part of the article, be aware that Henry of Ghent holds an opinion quite close to the one

just refuted.¹ In his *Quodlibetum IV*, a.19, and *Quodlibetum VIII*, a.5, he says that good use (not of grace, exactly, as the preceding opinion said, but) of free choice is the cause of predestination. And since the argument made here in the text goes directly against such an opinion, Henry tries to break Aquinas' argument and to support his own opinion. The latter he supports first by the authority of Augustine [in the *Book of 83 Questions*]: "it comes from very hidden merits," etc., as Peter Lombard reports in *I Sent.* d.41. Then he supports his opinion on three grounds:

ed. Vivès, p. 197

(a) because election presupposes a disparity between the one to choose and the one to reprobate;

(b) because justice always goes hand in hand with mercy; so in a person to be predestined there has to be some suitability for the mercy of predestination; and

(c) because reprobation has a cause arising from us, and so predestination has one too.

Meanwhile, he attacks Aquinas' argument by denying that *indistinction* between what is of free choice and what is of divine grace implies that what arises from free choice is entirely included in predestination or its effect. For it can well be the case that the indistinct doing is a good use of free choice which is from both grace and free choice and yet is coming from free choice *in a way* in which it is not coming from grace. And so in the way in which it is our doing and not of grace, it can be the cause of predestination. The point that one's good use of free choice is *in some way* one's own and is not *in that way* of grace is clear, he says, from the authority of St. Augustine commenting on "Help us, O God our Savior," where he maintains that we cooperate with grace.

Ps 79: 9 =
1g 78: 9

v. As this opinion obviously labors under the same difficulty as the one discussed in the text, it needs just a brief response now. To the authoritative quotation from Augustine, Peter Lombard provides the answer by saying that Augustine retracted it in a similar passage. The Master of the *Sententiae* did well to say this; for Augustine himself laid down explicitly this rule about his retractions: an opinion retracted from any passage is to be thought of as retracted throughout his works.

Retract. I, c.4

To Henry's arguments I respond as follows:

ad (a): election presupposes love, which is the source of disparity; but the love is not outside predestination.

q.23, a.4

ad (b): justice should also be required to go hand in hand in the very first effects, not towards creatures, but [towards] the divine Good State and wisdom.

q.21, a.4

ad (c): one does not make the same judgment about reprobation and predestination. With reprobation, there is something outside reprobation's total effect, namely, moral wrong. Such is not the case with predestination.

q.23, a.3

¹ Henry of Ghent, dubbed the *doctor sollemnis*, was the most prominent theologian of the period between the death of Aquinas and the rise of Duns Scotus. He died in 1293, having published in his lifetime 15 quodlibetal disputations.

where everything disposing one to eternal life is predestination's effect.

From these points, too, one sees how Henry's attempt to break Aquinas' argument goes wrong. He seems to treat

- sanctifying grace

(which Augustine was talking about, and which verifies the point that a good use of free choice is "from us" in a way in which it is not "from grace") and

- the grace of predestination

(i.e. gratuitous predestination) the same way, when in fact they are as different as heaven and earth. For what comes under predestination is not just acts of loving God but also all their modes and all the freely given helps and (in short, as the text puts it) "anything disposing" a predestined person "to eternal life." So since a good use of free choice, taken even as it arises "from us," is among the factors by which we are disposed to eternal life (for we are disposed to it in such a way that we reach it *by freely cooperating well*), it follows that not only the good use of free choice itself but also the mode in which it comes "from us" fall under predestination, even though the latter does not fall under sanctifying grace. So the point the text makes,

what arises out of our free choice is *not distinct* from what arises out of our predestination,

is to be understood as applying not only to the very act of choosing but also to every mode it has; hence it should be interpreted as applying across every such distinction. — Let that be the end of the opinions.²

² In recent decades, an opinion reminiscent of Henry's has been put forth by an American theologian, Fr. William Most (*New Questions and Old*, Christendom Press, 1996). Fr. Most concedes that any positive motion of ours towards salvation (including the very first) presupposes the influence of grace and thus falls within predestination's effect. But he thinks that, in logical priority to the influence of grace, our free will is capable of a negative, a failure to act in a certain way, namely, an omission of resistance to grace. Those who omit resistance are receptive to God's salvific initiative in a way in which those who resist are not, and the resisters are physically *capable* of omitting resistance, even when offered a non-*efficacious* grace. Most's motive was not to respond to Cajetan but to escape Domingo Bañez's account of "sufficient" grace. In part, Most is in line with Cajetan. The latter admits, after all, that there is a *mode* or *way* in which a good use of free will is "from us" and not from sanctifying grace (nor, we may as well add, from actual graces): one can then identify omission of resistance as that way, i.e. as *how* the good choice (otherwise "from grace") is (also) "from us." But Cajetan also insists that predestination's effect is broader than grace's effect, so that the way just mentioned is within predestination's effect. If Most's aim is to deny this, then he has invented a new (and sophisticated) version of Henry's position. Most can admit (with Aquinas) that anything *positive* distinguishing Smith from Jones is caused in Smith by God's love (and so is within predestination's effect) while also saying (with Henry) that something distinguishes Smith outside predestination (something negative: an omission of resistance) which God foresees in priority to predestinating (as an absence of demerit).

Analysis of the article: job (3)

vi. As to job (3), Aquinas answers the question with a distinction and three conclusions.

The distinction is this. Predestination's effect can be considered in two ways: *in communi* or *in particulari*. This does not mean to contrast generalness with particularity in predication but to contrast wholeness with partition, so that '*commune*' here means predestination's *whole effect* (whether in everyone or in a given predestined person), while '*particulare*' means some part of the whole effect (whether a part in some one predestined person or a part in all the predestined together — that does not matter for present purposes).

The first conclusion is: nothing prevents parts of predestination's effect from having a cause, such that one part causes another and *vice-versa*. — This is clarified by the point that a later part is the purpose of an earlier part, and an earlier part is like matter for a later part, as merit is matter for a reward, *etc.*

The second conclusion is: predestination's whole effect has no cause arising from us. — This is supported on the ground that everything in us that orders or disposes us to eternal life is an effect of predestination — which in turn rests on the ground that even the preparation of us [to receive grace] is an effect of predestination, according to the text, "Turn us unto thee, O Lord, and we shall be turned."

The third conclusion is: the whole effect of predestination has the divine Good State for a cause. — This is supported on the ground that God's Good State is the ultimate purpose of our being predestined and is also the first reason for it, as the first thing moving the divine will to predestinate.

Disputes over the answer *ad* (3)

vii. Because the lengthy answer *ad* (3) contains so many points, and almost every word of it has been challenged by Henry of Ghent and Peter Aureol, it needs separate treatment and examination.³ Here it is.

In this answer, Aquinas performs three tasks: (1) he assigns a reason why there is reprobation and predestination in general; (2) he assigns a reason why particular persons [fall under the one or the other], in the paragraph beginning, "But as to why ..." (3) he meets the objection head on, in the paragraph beginning, "Neither, on this account ..."

Analysis of the answer: task (1)

viii. As for task (1), Aquinas is after this conclusion: God reprobates some and predestinates some in order that His Goodness might be represented both in the mode of mercy that spares and in the mode of justice

³ Henry of Ghent's attacks are in his *Quodlibetum VIII*, q 5; Peter Aureol's are in his commentary on *I Sentences*, d.41, q.1, a.1. Peter Aureol (also spelled 'Auriol' and 'Oriol') was a Franciscan who heard the lectures of Duns Scotus at Paris and soon became a celebrated theologian in his own right (the *doctor facundus*). He charted his own course, pioneering a revival of conceptualist nominalism. Aureol died in 1322 as archbishop of Aix-en-Provence.

that punishes. — This is supported in two ways: first, by an argument, and second by St. Paul's authority in Romans 9 and 2 Timothy.

* *similitudo proportionalis*
The argument is drawn from the analogical parallel* between the universe [as related to what it is for] and the human race as related to eternal life. This parallel consists in the fact that

just as the divine Goodness is the purpose-wise cause of the universe's being complete, in that out of His Goodness one gets the reason why there are diverse levels of things (high and low) and permission of evils, *so also* one gets from His Goodness the reason why there are diverse levels in the human race, by His mercy sparing and by His justice punishing.

The 'just as' part of this is made clear as follows. The purpose of all things is that the divine Goodness be represented through them. Since it is one and simple, but no creature can be so simple, it has to be represented by diverse things. Hence, if the universe is to represent God's Goodness completely (but within creaturely limits), it has to consist of all levels [of beings] from the lowest to the highest. And if these levels are to be preserved, many evils have to be permitted, as was made clear above.

q 22, a.2 ad 2

ix. In this argument, four features are attacked.

(a) The first is the parallel between the human race and the universe. Henry attacks this by saying that the parallel should have been drawn between the whole set of rational creatures and the universe. That way, divine Goodness would be represented in the mode of punitive justice among the demons, and so the argument that it would need to be represented in that mode among human beings is worthless.

(b) The second is the parallel between the levels of the universe and the levels of people. Henry says there is a crucial dissimilarity: all the species in the universe belong intrinsically⁴ to the universe's perfection, but not all the species of morally significant acts. This is supported on the ground that no defect, be it moral evil or punitive, belongs directly to the perfection of the universe; but many morally significant acts, such as lying, stealing, and the like, are obviously species of moral evil. [So, Aquinas used 'level' equivocally.]

† *per se*

(c) The third feature attacked is the limiting of justice to the reprobates. Aureol says that justice is also represented by the predestined, according to St. Paul's words [about the crown]: "which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day." [So divine Goodness can be represented in the mode of justice by a universe in which no one is punished.]

2 Tim. 4: 8

(d) The fourth feature is the purpose-wise causality attributed to punitive justice *vis-à-vis* reprobation in general. Both critics attack this. To Henry, it does not seem reasonable that God should permit sins to be done and then punish them. Indeed, we see in human affairs that a man who permits another to sin is sin-

ning himself if he could have forbidden or impeded the other. So no such conduct should be attributed to God.

— Aureol adds a confirming argument: evil is not to be done that good may come; but reprobating people without any demerit is evil; so it is not something God should do just to make His Goodness appear in the form of His justice. Besides, says Aureol, punitive justice is not something intended in itself, but only under the condition that a punishable wrong is done. Ergo: justice is not the principal cause of reprobation, but the sin that is prior to it, and (ergo again) there is no need for anything to be done in the universe in order for punitive justice to have its lustre.⁴

Answering these attacks

x. The way to answer the first [(a)] is to say that, while the rational creatures could have been taken as one whole set, Aquinas was still proceeding rationally to take the human race as a whole set (not because people and angels make two whole sets, but) because it is clearly a matter of fact that some *people* are reprobated and some predestined, so that our race has the makings of a "whole set" consisting of so-many levels. The wording of the text, "So, if we consider the whole human race as we were just considering the total universe of things," suggests that this was Aquinas's thinking. The use of 'if' suggests that he is making this parallel not so much on the force of an argument as on a *fact*.

[*ad* (b)]: My response to the second is that perhaps Henry made this objection to the text while nodding off; no such comparison of levels is made.⁵

[*ad* (c)]: I have two replies to the third attack. First, the text is not inferring reprobation from the manifestation of just any justice, but from that of *such-and-such* justice, which is not manifested in the predestined. — My second reply is that reprobation can be inferred even from the sheer definition of justice. For what is properly called "justice" is a work in which justice shines out most prominently, mercy much less so, and (*vice-versa*) what is unqualifiedly called "mercy" is a work almost entirely of mercy, leaving little room for justice. So while predestinating shows a grain of justice, reprobating is done to show the abundance of it.

xi. For my answer to the fourth [*ad* (d)] to be well understood, together with St. Thomas' doctrine, I have to make some preliminary remarks about reprobation.

⁴ In other words, punitive justice is sufficiently manifested by intending (and I suppose revealing) deontic conditionals — God intends that, obligatorily, if anyone does *A*, he is punished with *B*. The antecedents of the conditionals need not come true, says Aureol, in order for justice to shine.

⁵ Aquinas' text does not compare high/low *species* of human action with high/low *species* in the universe (say, lions and lice). On both sides, the high is high standing (not being allowed to fail of purpose) such as a heavenly body has and a predestined person has, and the low is low standing (being allowed to fail of purpose) such as a corn crop has and a reprobate has. Thus the *ratio* of 'level' is the same on the human side and on the universe's side, there is no equivocation.

There are three items involved with it:

- (1) allowance of sin,
- (2) sin itself, and
- (3) eternal punishment.

These are not three *effects* of divine reprobation, the way every factor disposing to eternal life was an *effect* of predestination. Hence we cannot rightly speak here of “reprobation’s whole effect” or “piecemeal effects,” the way we distinguished predestination’s effect. Rather, we have to talk carefully, speaking of “all that is in reprobating” or “what is in it by virtue of the One doing the reprobating.” Next, you need to know that, for St. Thomas (as comes out in his commentary on Romans 9), the opinion to hold about the cause of predestination is very different from the one to hold about the cause of reprobation. Reprobation’s ultimate effect (punishment) has a cause arising from the person reprobated (moral wrong) and of this cause God is in no way the agent. But predestination’s ultimate effect (beatitude), although having some cause in us (merit), is still wholly from God predestinating. So if one is talking about the “whole effect” of both (reprobating and predestinating), no question of sin should arise; one should only be talking about the factors that are *from* the One who reprobates and predestinates — and those factors have to be good, and of them we say that the divine Good State is their cause. But if we are talking about “all that is found in the person reprobated,” then something in him is from God and the divine Good State, but something else in him is neither from God nor for the sake of the divine Good State but is quite averse to it (as is clear about mortal sin). So even though foreknowledge of merits is not admitted as a cause of predestination, foreknowledge of demerits is (in a special way) the cause of reprobation. For it is because of foreknown demerits, not prepared by Him, that God decreed some people to be everlastingly punished by Him, so that His Goodness might be shared even in such justice, and that the modes of sharing in it established by His wisdom might be implemented.⁶

⁶ As Cajetan insists that the sinner’s bad act (with its moral evil) is distinct from God’s effect, the modern reader might feel a nagging question. If (as Aquinas said and Cajetan repeated) a salvific use of free choice is “not distinct” from predestination’s effect, *as the effect of a secondary cause is not distinct from that of the First Cause*, and any bad use of free choice is also the effect of a secondary cause, why is it not the case that the bad choice (and with it, moral evil) is “not distinct” from the First Cause’s effect? The answer will not emerge until the distinction is drawn between the exercise of free choice and its specification. Good and bad uses of free choice are equally from God *qua* exercises (*i.e.* as reductions of the will from potency to act), but their opposite specifications are from the objects chosen. The bad object is not proposed to the will in any thought coming from God, but the good object salvifically chosen has come from a thought inspired by God. So God is behind both the exercise and the object of the good choice, which is therefore “not distinct” from His effect; He is not behind the object of the bad choice, and this is why it is distinct from the First Cause’s effect.

Now, when the text says that the manifestation of God’s Goodness in the mode of punitive justice is the purpose of reprobation and the reason for it, this purpose is to be taken as relating to the effects of reprobation, *i.e.*, the allowance of sins and the penalties for wrong-doing (prepared or already imposed), and not as referring to sin itself. For the purpose of sin is not any good at all, as is evident from remarks already made. And the purpose is not to be taken as relating to these effects in such a way as to exclude other causes of each, as our critics seem to have thought (and so are deceived). For as the text explicitly says, preservation of diverse levels is the [purpose-wise] cause of God’s allowing for evils. And as applied to moral evils, gentle management of rational creatures and human beings is obviously the cause of God’s allowing for sins, in that certain human beings are left in the hand of their own counsel. And moral wrong, which is in no way from God, is the de-meritorious cause of punishment. Hence all the arguments, both Henry’s and Aureol’s, come from a false interpretation of this text, in that they took St. Thomas to be making the manifestation of divine justice the purpose of reprobation’s effects to the exclusion of other causes, especially moral wrong. We have now shown the opposite.

xii. Responding now singly to their claims (under (d)), my reply to their first is that the causal order among predestination’s effects is different from that among reprobation’s effects. Its later effect [punishment] is not the purpose of the earlier [sin], as reward is the purpose of merit. We do not say the reason God permits sins is “in order to punish.” We say, rather, that He allows and punishes for the sake of manifesting His justice. Since this is reprobation’s whole effect, divine justice is rightly said to be the reason for reprobation. — And there is no truth to the claim that anyone able to impede the sin of another sins himself if he allows it. Such is only the case with a person who is duty-bound to impede. As experience in human governing teaches us, much of a regime’s gentleness would be ruined, if allowance were not licit.⁷

Next, my reply to Aureol’s confirming argument is that while reprobation in its ultimate effect (punishment) would be evil in the absence of all demerit, it is not evil in its first effect (allowing demerit), even if no other cause were at work except manifesting God’s justice. After all, allowing a fall suppresses nothing *owed* to the one who falls. It only denies God’s *gratuitous* love to hold him back from falling. Since allowance is not evil in itself, and manifestation of God’s Goodness in punitive justice is a great good, if the allowing were not aimed at any other purpose, it would still be good. One must deny, then, that reprobation in its first effect would be evil in the absence of any other cause, and (as is clear by what I just said) one must also deny that reprobation in all its effects is being alleged by us to have no other

⁷ This is a crucial text on the advantages of political freedom, a measure of social tolerance, and (most of all) of limited government.

cause.

My response to the last argument [under (d)] is to deny an assumption it makes, namely, that punitive justice is not in itself [*per se*] intended. For the phrase 'in itself intended' is used in more than one way. A thing can be in itself first-off intended [*per se primo intantum*], and a thing can be in itself but not first-off intended [*per se non primo*]. An item that is *per se* first-off intended is one which, being good, includes in itself intending all the factors contributing to it in any way; that is, both the item itself and everything meeting conditions for it in any way are intended by the agent by whom the item is *per se* first-off intended. By contrast, an item which is *per se* but not first-off intended is one which is good and intended in itself, but is occasioned by something in no way intended. Of this latter sort is punitive justice, which gets its occasion from sins needing punishment.⁸ — For the point that complicative traits presupposing moral evil [like punitive justice] are *per se* intended and should be so described, evidence comes from the manifestation of divine Goodness in the passion of Christ. Undoubtedly, the passion was *per se* intended by God, since through it the whole spectrum of happiness for predestined humans was intended, as was the glory of Christ's body, along with the other blessings He merited for Himself and others. And yet it had to be occasioned by the moral fault of those who were killing Him.⁹

Thus neither inference drawn by Aureol is worth anything. This is already clear enough about his first one. And one need not worry about his second, since it is already perfectly clear that, on account of these goods occasioned by moral evil, it is profitable and reasonable for many things to be done in the universe, as is clear from the examples I just adduced.

Analysis of the answer: task (2)

xiii. As for task (2), the conclusion Aquinas means to get is this: the reason God predestinates these and reprobates those is solely God's will. This he supports by the authority of Augustine and by an analogical likeness to the parts and regions of matter in natural and artificial things, as is quite clear in the text.

xiv. Here three things have come under attack: the

⁸ The *per se primo* situation arises when God both intends a conditional (intends that if *p* then *q*) and intends its antecedent for the sake of its consequent. The *per se non primo* situation arises when God intends the conditional but not its antecedent. In the present case God intends to punish offenses if they happen but does not intend that they happen.

⁹ If I understand Cajetan's argument, it goes like this. God *per se* intends all sorts of blessings to come into the world by way of Christ's passion. But He *non primo* intends the passion to occur, in that He intends a conditional without intending its antecedent. For God intends that Christ's passion occur if the soldiers bring violence against Him, where Christ's innocence makes the violence wrong, a moral evil, which God does not intend in any way. Ergo what is *non primo* intended can still be *per se* intended.

conclusion itself, the natural example, and the artificial example.

First Henry objects to both examples because, in the parts of matter (be they subject to art or natural agency) the defining makeup is the same; but in these and those humans, the defining makeup is different, this group being disposed differently from that one. — Then Aureol objects, because such parts of matter have no sensation and lack experience of good and evil, while these and those humans experience good on the one hand, the evil of punishment on the other. Hence the case is not the same: in Aquinas' examples, sheer will was a sufficient explanation, because no injury was done to anything; but in the case at hand, God's sheer will is not enough, because injury is done to those who are suffering and afflicted.

xv. Aureol and Henry also attack the conclusion, but since they do not bring up any difficulty beyond what was already aired and cleared up [in §§ ix-xii], it makes sense to pass over them. After all, this conclusion does not mean to say more than that (keeping what was established above — *i.e.* keeping the causes of reprobation and predestination in general) there is no reason but the divine will why these causes and their effects come to bear on one person rather than another. Why He permits this man to fall but holds back that one lest he fall — it depends on His will alone. But why He punishes this man does not depend on His will alone but on the demerit of this man, as we said about the punishment of reprobates in general. So (to conclude), God's will is the sole reason why reprobation's first effect is in this person and not in that one. No reason why this effect is placed in this man rather than that one is forthcoming from God's Goodness or from unequal disposition (as there is no disposition prior to the first effect, as proved in the body of article, contrary to Henry's position).

xvi. From these remarks, it becomes obvious how to solve Aureol's objections. He attacks a position we never dreamed of holding, namely, that God, at the mere whim of His will, punishes and afflicts this man rather than that one; he thinks this is what the text here intended, with the examples adduced, when in fact they all bear upon first effects (allowance and love). — It also becomes obvious how to answer Henry. Prior to the just-named first effects, these people and those *are* equally disposed, like the parts of prime matter, and like stones in relation to a house.

Analysis of the answer: task (3)

xvii. As to task (3), he replies to the objection by saying that there is no unrighteousness in preparing unequal benefits for equal recipients in the case of benefits given out *gratis* (not owed benefits). This is confirmed by the case of the householder in Matthew 20.

xviii. Be aware that Henry and Aureol try to fault this response on the ground that reprobation is not a thing given out *gratis*. To punish is not a work of free gift [*gratia*] but of justice; and the parable of the householder has no place in matters of justice.

But the answer could hardly be easier. As already said, reprobating is doing an act of justice in its *ultimate* effect (the punishing); and in acts of justice, as the text says in so many words, it is not licit for a person to do as he pleases. But in its first effect (the allowing of a sin, *etc.*), reprobating is doing the omitting of an act of mercy or grace. Well, it is not

only the gift of more or less grace that is a benefit given out *gratis* but also the very giving or not giving of any grace at all; so reprobating and predestinating are rightly counted among things given out *gratis* (though each in a different way, as emerges from the remarks made above). And so the statement of the householder in the parable applies to them perfectly well.

Is one's predestination sure [*certa*]?

In *I Sent.* d.40, q.3; *De Veritate* q.6, a.3; *Quodl. XI*, q.3, *Quodl. XII*, q.3

It looks as though one's predestination is not sure.¹

(1) About Revelation 3:11 ("hold fast that which thou hast, that no man take thy crown"), Augustine says, "No one else would get the crown, unless the person lost it." So the crown, an effect of predestination, can be gained *and lost*. Ergo, one's predestination is not a sure thing.

(2) Besides, given a possible condition, nothing impossible follows. Here is a possible condition: a predestined person, such as Peter, sins and then is killed. But *given* this condition, predestination's effect is frustrated. So its frustration is not impossible. Hence one's predestination is not sure.

(3) Also, whatever God could have done, He can do. He could have not-predestinated people whom He did predestinate. Hence, He can now not-predestinate them. Therefore, their predestination is not assured.

ON THE OTHER HAND, there is Romans 8:29, "whom He did foreknow, He also did predestinate," etc. The gloss on this [taken from Augustine's *De dono perseverantiae*] says, "Predestination is the foreknowledge and preparation of God's benefits, by which those liberated [from damnation] are most surely liberated."

ANSWER: predestination most surely and unfailingly achieves its effect, and yet it does not impose necessity so as to make its effect come about necessarily. For it has been stated already that predestination is a part of providence. But not all outcomes subject to providence are necessary; some turn up contingently thanks to the character of the proximate causes that divine providence has assigned for such effects. And yet providence's arrangement is fail-safe, as shown above. Predestination's arrangement is therefore assured as well; and yet freedom of choice, out of which predestination's effect emerges contingently, is not taken away.

On this point, one should also bear in mind what was said above about God's optimal knowledge and

[consequent] will: although perfectly sure and unfailing, they do not take away contingency from things.

TO MEET THE OBJECTIONS — *ad* (1): a given person, *x*, is said to have a crown in two ways: (1) by divine predestination (and in this sense no one loses his crown); (2) by merit of grace (since what we merit is in some way ours), and in this sense *x* can lose his crown through a subsequent mortal sin. Another person, *y*, gets that crown insofar as *y* is made *x*'s substitute. For God does not permit any persons to fall without raising up others, according to Job 34:24, "He shall break in pieces mighty men without number, and set others in their place." In this way, humans were substituted for the fallen angels, and gentiles were inserted in place of the Jews. The person, *y*, put into the state of grace as a substitute also gains thereby the crown of the fallen person, *x*, because *y* will rejoice in eternal life over the good things done by *x*. (In eternal life, each person will rejoice over good things done both by himself and by others.)

ad (2): 'a predestined man dies in mortal sin' is possible insofar as he is looked at in himself, but impossible *given* (and insofar as given) that he is predestined. So it does not follow that predestination can fail.

ad (3): predestination includes divine volition; so the point that God's willing a created state of affairs is not necessary in its own right (but only *given* a supposition [that He does will it] because of His volition's immutability) is now to be made about predestination. 'God can not-predestinate one whom He has predestinated' should not be said in the composed sense; 'God can predestinate or not predestinate' should be admitted, [each alternative] taken in isolation. But by this last, the sureness of predestination is not removed.²

² The composed sense is '∅(God does not predestinate *x* & God once predestinated *x*)', which is false because a divine decision is immutable, once taken. God cannot change His mind and "un-predestinate" someone. The divided sense, '∅(God predestinates *x*) & ∅(God does not)' is true, because God could have chosen another plan; but either 'God predestinates *x*' or its negation is definitely true (at eternity) in the plan chosen.

¹ Predestinating is "sure" in case it selects one's actual future from among the foreknown set of one's possible futures.

De correctione et gratia, c. 13; PL 44, 940

c. 14; PL 45, 1014

a. 1

q.22, a.4

q.14, a.13

 Cajetan's Commentary

On the title question, notice from *De Veritate* q.6, a.3, that the word 'sure' can be understood two ways: to express the sureness of a cognition [*certitudo cogniti-onis*], or to express the sure-to-work status of an arrangement [*certitudo ordinis*]. As predestinating involves two jobs

- (1) knowing in advance and
- (2) arranging causes in advance,

the "sureness" of it can be taken as a matter of cognition, such that God has "sure knowledge" of predestination's effects and outcomes, and can also be taken as a matter of causality, such that God has a fail-safe arrangement for reaching and sustaining predestined effects. Since cognitive sureness does not go beyond the topic of God's optimal knowing, already treated at sufficient length [in q.14], while the sureness of the arrangement presents distinctive difficulties in this area, the title question here should be understood in terms of the sureness of the arrangement. Thus the sense of the question is this: Does predestination as a cause have fail-safe connection to the intended effects?

Analysis of the article

ii. In the body of the article, a single conclusion does the answering, but it has two parts: (a) predestination is sure, and yet (b) it does not impose necessity. Both parts are supported together, in two ways:

(1) The first way is by an argument from providence, which goes thus. [*Antecedent:*] The arrangement set by advanced planning [providence] is fail-safe, and yet some of the things subject to it come about contingently, thanks to the character of their proximate causes; [*inference:*] so predestination's arrangement is also sure, and yet predestination's effects come about contingently, in keeping with freedom of choice. — The antecedent was made plain in q.22. Drawing the inference is supported on the ground that predestination is a part of providence.

(2) Secondly, Aquinas says the conclusion can be seen from the similar bearing (already mentioned) of divine knowing and willing toward contingent matters.

On sureness and providence

iii. Notice here that the text clearly equates the sureness of providence with that of predestination; indeed, from the sureness of the former's arrangement, Aquinas proves *a priori* the sure arrangement of the latter; thus, as every outcome planned in advance occurs unfailingly, so every outcome predestined comes about unfailingly. By contrast, the words of St. Thomas in *De Veritate* q.6, a.3, where a difference is posited between predestination and providence on this very point, namely, that providence is not sure with respect to the achievement of a particular thing's purpose in contingent matter, are not to be construed the way they

sound, as becomes clear from our present text and the remarks I made above [in §§ *ii-iii* of the comment on q.22, a.1]. For he does not mean to say that such achievements are not subject to divine providence, nor that the opposite of a planned achievement may turn up; he just means that, under divine providence, such contingent causes have multiple connexions to future states which, nevertheless, will never be [actual]. This is clear from the many cases in which contingent causes are prepared, and yet the intended achievements do not come from them [but from others]. Under predestination, however, there is no connection of a given particular person to a future state without that future state's coming about under the same [person's] predestination. This difference arises from providence's breadth of scope, *i.e.* because providence covers every causal connection, whether the connection is with the [actual, intended] future outcome or not, while predestination covers only the causal connections having an outcome [contributing] towards the intended purpose [eternal life] even in the particular case at hand [say, that Jones have eternal life]. For no connection falling short of the distinctive end intended is covered, *qua* falling short, by predestination.

iv. Still, Aquinas' words in *De Veritate* q.6, a.3, need to be repeated or further applied, because a causal connexion falling short of the proper outcome is not "planned" by God with respect to the outcome, but with respect to the connexion itself rather than the proper outcome; so such a non-outcome does not detract from the sureness of providence. This is why we said before [in the comment on q.22, a.1] and now say again that Aquinas changed his words for the better when dealing here with providence's sureness unqualifiedly, equating it with predestination's sureness. He makes no mention here of the earlier remarks because, as far as the realities they point to are concerned, they can still be sustained one way or another by pious interpretation.²

The other issues that should be disputed on the topic of predestination's sureness have already been aired in the foregoing inquiry into providence. So there is no need to pursue them further.

See especially the commentary on q.22, a.4

² Each contingent cause is under-determined as between producing the outcome O_1 or the outcome O_2 . Call the present situation w_0 , and let it contain a contingent cause, c ; then thanks to c , w_0 has causal connexion to two possible futures, one containing O_1 (call it w_1) and one containing O_2 (call it w_2); and from now, one of these will be the new present; say it will be w_1 ; and let God have planned all of the above. Then O_1 is the proper, intended outcome. Aquinas never denied that God's plan gets w_1 (and so providence is sure); but in *De Veritate* he was pointing out that w_1 may have been gotten not from c but from another cause, c' , which God put into w_0 as a backup. Providence covers all of the above, but predestination covers only persons and their salvific choices, for which there are no back-ups. If O_1 is to be my salvific choice, I have to be the one who will make it.

Is the number of the predestined a fixed number?

In 1 Sent. d.40, q.3; De Veritate, q.6, a.4

The number of the predestined does not seem fixed.

(1) After all, a number that can be added to is not fixed. But it looks as though the number of the predestined can be added to. The prayer in Deuteronomy 1:11, "The Lord God of your fathers make you a thousand times the number ye are," is glossed "*i.e.* [the number] defined before God, who knows who His own are." Hence, the number of the predestined is not fixed.

(2) Besides, no reason can be assigned why God should preordain to salvation *this* many people rather than *that* many. But nothing is set up by God without a reason. Ergo, no set number has been preordained by God as the number to be saved.

(3) Also, the working of God is more perfect than the workings of nature. But in the workings of nature, the cases that turn out well outnumber those that turn out defective and bad. So if God set up how many were to be saved, they would outnumber those to be damned. But the contrary is shown by Matthew 7:13-14: "wide is the gate, and broad is the way, that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat; strait is the gate, and narrow the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it." Thus, no number to be saved has been preordained by God.

ON THE OTHER HAND, there is what Augustine says in his book, *De correptione et gratia*: "Fixed is the number of the predestined, which can be neither increased nor diminished."^{c. 13, PL 44, 940}

ANSWER: the number of the predestined is fixed. Some writers claim the number is definite formally but not materially — as if we were to say that what is nailed down is that [a certain total], say, 100 or 1,000 will be saved, but not that these people or those will be the ones [in the total]. But this theory takes away the sureness of predestination, just discussed. So, one has to say that the number of the predestined is definite for God not only formally but also materially.^{a.6}

Moreover, one needs to bear in mind that the number is said to be definite for God not just because of knowledge (yes, God knows how many are going to be saved; but on this ground, the number of raindrops is definite for God, too, and how many grains of sand are in the sea), but because of a fixed choice* and decree [*definitio*].

As to why this is so, one needs to know that every agent intends to bring about something definite[†] as emerged above in talk of the indefinite [*infinite*].[‡] But one intending a definite amount in his effect

- thinks up amounts for its essential parts (those directly required for completing the whole),
- but does not choose amounts for items not required as basic ingredients[‡] but only needed for

the sake of something else, and he goes along with however many of them are needed for that.

Thus a builder thinks up a definite size of house, a definite number of rooms he wants to make in it, a definite number of square feet of wall or roof; but he does not preselect a definite number of stones; he accepts however many it takes to finish that amount of wall.¹

One should think similarly about God *vis-à-vis* the whole universe, which is His effect. He has pre-set how big the whole universe is to be and what amount is suitable for its essential parts (those that contribute to its perpetuity in any way), *i.e.* how many spheres, how many stars, how many elements, how many species of things. But corruptible individuals are not related to the good of the universe as basic features, but secondarily, insofar as the good of a species is secured in them.² So, yes, God knows the number of all such individuals; but the number of cattle, gnats, *etc.*, is not directly preset by God; divine providence just produces as many as are enough to preserve the species.

Now, among all creatures, those related to the good of the universe most basically are the rational ones (for *qua* rational they are incorruptible); and this status belongs most of all to the rational creatures who attain beatitude; they reach the universe's ultimate purpose more immediately.³ So the number of the predestined is definite for God not only as a known* but also as a basic choice made in advance.[†] — Such is not entirely the case, though, with the number of reprobates. [They seem to be in the universe merely for the sake of some-

* per modum cognitionis

† per modum cuiusdam principis practitionis

¹ Aquinas' exposition would be helped here by the modern terms "independent variable" and "dependent variable". The overall size of a house is an independent variable, as is the number of rooms. Given standard thicknesses for external and internal walls and an average size for stones, the number of stones needed is a dependent variable, calculable from the values assigned to the independent ones.

² In medieval cosmology, the Ptolemaic spheres and fixed stars were thought to be immune to substantial change and hence permanent, once created; the four elements of the sub-lunar world were thought to be permanent in their gross amounts, once created; extinctions were unknown, and so the species of plants and animals (once created) were thought to be permanent fixtures. Aquinas thinks of these "permanent" things as the universe's essential features, such that God's choices of amounts for them are His value assignments to the independent variables of His universe-design. In the next paragraph, he will add rational souls and angels (also permanent once created).

³ The ultimate purpose of the universe is participation in God's Good State by imitating it. God's Good State is a conscious, intellective self-possession and self-enjoyment. So optimal participation in it by imitating it will be a creature's conscious possession and enjoyment of that very State. Sub-rational creatures cannot attain this, but rational ones can be elevated to do so.

‡ principaliter

thing else; *i.e.*] they seem to have been pre-arranged by God for the good of the elect, for whom "all things work together for good."

Romans 8: 28

As to what this fixed number of all the predestined *is* — some say the people to be saved are as many as the angels who fell. Others say: as many as the angels who stood fast. Others say: as many as the angels who fell + the number of angels created. But the better course is to say: "to God alone is known the number of those elected to find a place in supernal bliss."

Collect *pro vivis et defunctis*

TO MEET THE OBJECTIONS — *ad* (1): the prayer in Deuteronomy should be taken as referring to persons foreknown to God as righteous in their current living. The number of these increases and diminishes, but not the number of the predestined.

ad (2): the reason a part has the quantity it does comes from its relation to the whole. Thus God has before Him a reason why He made so-many stars, or so-many species, and why He predestinated just so-many people — a reason derived from the relation of

these basic parts to the good of the universe.

ad (3): if the good in question is proportionate to the general state of a nature *N*, most cases of *N* have it, and relatively few fall short of it. But a good that goes beyond *N*'s general state is found in just a few, and most fall short of it. For example: most people have the brains to run their own lives; the few who lack this are called moronic or stupid; but there are very few people, relatively speaking, who get a deep knowledge of intellectual topics.⁴ So since the eternal blessedness that lies in seeing God goes far beyond our nature's general state (especially our nature as stripped of grace by the corruption of original sin), the saved are a minority. Yet even here the mercy of God is striking: He lifts up some of us to a salvation from which most of us, in the common run and bent of nature, fall short.

⁴ This anticipates the bell curve. Goods found in the average state of a nature are found "for the most part," not goods of high excellence.

Being saved, however, is not a good proportionate to our nature at all. So, all statistical bets are off.

Cajetan's Commentary

The title is clear. — In the body of the article, Aquinas does three jobs: (1) he handles the definiteness-in-itself of the number of predestined people; (2) he treats the number of reprobates; (3) he handles the sureness-to-us of the number of the predestined.

Analysis of job (1)

ii. As for job (1), the conclusion answers the question with yes: the number of predestined people is definite for God, not only formally but also materially, not only as a number known but also as a number chosen and fixed in advance.

This conclusion has three main parts. The first (the number is definite for God) is left as obvious.

When he says some deny the second part ("not just formally but also materially"), he states what its terms mean and supports it by an argument *ad inconveniens*.¹ It runs thus. [*Conditional:*] If the number of the elect were definite for God only formally, it would destroy the sureness attributed to predestination's arrangement in the preceding article; [*criticism of the consequent:*] this is awkward; [*conclusion:*] so [the number is definite materially as well]. — The conditional is obvious because [if the antecedent of it were true], 'Peter is predestined' would be consistent with 'Peter is not saved', and so predestination would not get its effect unfaillingly.²

¹ An argument *ad inconveniens* was *modus tollens* but weaker than an argument *ad absurdum*. It did not prove that a point was untenable — just more difficult to hold.

² Cajetan's defense of this conditional *seems* wrong. For if God predestinates only a certain total and not who shall be counted in it, no proposition like 'Peter is predestined' will

The third part ("not only as a number known but also as one fixed in advance") is both clarified as to its terms and supported. A 'number known' is exemplified by how many raindrops and how many grains of sand; a 'number fixed in advance' is clarified by the difference in (a) a builder's mind between (a) how many rooms a house has with their wall measurements and (b) how many stones. The support goes thus. [*Antecedent:*] Every agent intends to make something definite; so [*1st inference:*] he intends some determined measure in his effect; so [*2nd inference:*] he thinks of some amount in connection with the basic parts necessary for the whole; so [*3rd inference:*] God foreordained what the measure of the universe as a whole should be; so [*4th inference:*] He fixed in advance what would be a suitable amount for the universe's essential (*i.e.* permanent) parts; so [*5th inference:*] He fixed in advance a definite number of the predestined.

The antecedent is borrowed from q.7. — The second inference is cleared up by the contrast between an amount of items basically required for a work and an amount of items only needed for the sake of something

be true. But think further. On the "formal number" theory, the extension of 'predestined' has non-zero cardinality, and so '∃x(x is predestined)' must be true. But then 'x is predestined' must also be true for at least one *individual* who is a value of 'x', such as Peter. Hence Cajetan's thrust: if predestination is "unfailling," '(x is predestined & x is not saved)' is false for every value of x, and so '(x)(x is predestined ⇒ x is saved)' is true, with no modality involved. The only escape is to make the variable take "intensional" values (such as "the fifth baby born tonight" (if one is); but then the divine plan becomes an arrangement of *concepts*, not things!

else. An amount for the former is set in advance; an amount for the latter is anticipated as however much will be needed for constructing one of the former. — Drawing the third inference rests on the ground that the whole universe is an effect of God alone. — In the fourth inference, ‘the universe’s essential parts’ is clarified by the difference between corruptible and incorruptible things as such, in that the latter belong to the universe for their own sake, whereas the former belong to it for the sake of their species. Thence arises a corollary pertaining to God’s providence, namely:

outside the human species, the number of corruptible individuals is not definite for God by way of His settling it in advance but by way of His knowing it in advance, whereas the number of *species* is definite for God in both ways, as is the amount of elements, stars, and spheres.

Drawing the fifth inference rests on the ground that rational creatures attaining blessedness are more closely ordered to the good of the universe than other creatures. This in turn is supported by the fact that, *qua* rational, they are unqualifiedly incorruptible, and *qua* attaining blessedness, they reach the ultimate purpose of the universe, God, more immediately.

Does every agent intend a definite effect?

iii. Concerning the antecedent, doubt arises because of an open-ended motion. It is well accepted among philosophers that the movers of the orbs intend to move them always; hence they intend to bring about an open-ended [indefinite] effect. Yet the text here assumes that every agent intends a definite effect.

To this, there are two responses. The first is that the antecedent is meant to be talking about an effect in act; it was shown in q.7 that such an effect [one infinite in act] cannot be intended by any agent. The motion of a heavenly orb, of course, is not infinite in act [but only in potentiality]; hence it does not conflict with the antecedent proposed.

As a second response, philosophers would say that the movers of the orbs do not *per se primo* intend infinitely many revolutions, but rather intend to be like God in causing other things; since this is secured by moving, they intend quasi-accidentally to move always. It is as if the infinitely many revolutions are not for their own sake but because so many are required to preserve or diffuse the perfection that the movers have *vis-à-vis* the glorious God.³

What are the universe’s essential parts?

iv. Doubt arises about the listing of the universe’s parts. In *De Caelo I*, Aristotle and Aquinas take only the simple bodies [the elements] as parts of the universe by their species; here, however, the species of

c.2;
268b 11ff

³ We now know that no heavenly body has been moving everlastingly, and that no intentional agents need be posted as moving them. Hence the responses given here are as obsolete as the problem they were meant to address.

mixed bodies are counted in, both plant and animal.

This can be answered in two ways. First, [one can say] that the talk in *De Caelo I* is about the substantial completeness of the universe, whereas the talk here is about its completeness by way of imposed traits [*passiones*], as it were. For all bodily species relate to the simple bodies as imposed traits relate to the subject having them, since the said species arise actively out of the simple bodies and consist of them materially.

Secondly, one may say that ‘universe’ can be taken two ways. Taken one way, ‘universe’ stands for the corporeal universe *qua* corporeal; and this is how it is treated in *De Caelo I*. It is made up of the simple bodies alone; for the only bodiliness in the universe is that of the simple bodies; all the bodily matter of mixed things is from the elements.⁴ Taken the other way, ‘universe’ stands for the universe of perfection, and this is how it is being treated here. For the fullness of this, all the species are required, as it says in the text. After all, the specific perfections of mixed bodies are not from the simple bodies as such but from a higher nature, as is clear with the perfection of being alive.⁵

Conclusion to job (1)

v. As for the conclusion itself, be aware the Aureol tried to attack it (as Capreolus reports on *I Sentences* d.40). But since Aureol did not argue from points specific to fixed numbers but from general ideas of how the predestined differ from reprobates, and since he also equivocated on ‘purpose of the universe’, as I said [in the comments on q.23, aa.3, 4 and on q.19, a.6 *ad 1*], I have decided to skip the subject here. Answers to his attacks are easily seen from remarks already made.

Analysis of job (2)

vi. As for job (2), the conclusion is this: the number of reprobates is not entirely fixed in this way. — Here is the support. [*Antecedent:*] All things work together for the good of the elect; so [*1st inference:*] reprobates are pre-arranged by God for the good of the elect; so [*2nd inference:*] the number of reprobates is not entirely fixed in this way.

⁴ To update this passage, replace ‘corporeal’ with ‘massive’ and ‘bodily matter’ with ‘mass’. The only mass in the universe is that of the basic particles; all the mass of the “mixed things” is from the mass of the component particles.

⁵ The “universe of perfection” was the panoply of things classifiably distinct. “Mixed bodies” were those produced out of multiple elements. The classifying traits of mixed bodies came from their specific structure (“substantial form”), not from the elements. The substantial forms of non-elemental substances (especially the forms of plants and animals) were of a higher nature than those of the elements themselves. The reader should recognize the talk of “emergence” as a modern echo. Do all the properties of crystals and cells “reduce” to the natures of the elementary particles and their laws, or do new properties “emerge” with higher, more complex structures? If (as most philosophers of science now seem to admit) new properties do emerge, then the “universe of perfection” is still distinct from the “corporeal universe *qua* corporeal.”

Notice here the words 'entirely ... in that way'. In reprobates, after all, there are two factors: their nature, and that which pertains to being reprobated.

- As to their nature, the number of elect and reprobate is set in advance the same way, since both are of a nature that is incorruptible, rational, *etc.*

- But as to grace-given gifts, as the elect are set in advance for their own sake, to reach the ultimate purpose unqualifiedly by their own acts and joys, but the reprobates, like sub-rational creatures, are foreseen not for their own good (since they are deprived of fulfillment) but for the good of others, of God and the elect, so the number of the elect is fixed for its own sake, while the number of reprobates is for something else, *i.e.* for the elect. So if we look at the reprobates under the definition of [intellectual creature,] the subject of 'reprobate', we say that their number is fixed even by way of advanced choice. But if we look at them *qua* reprobate, we say that they are not of a certain number by advanced choice; rather, divine providence uses as many of them (as it were) as it sees conferring good on the elect. And the text intends to convey this difference through the words 'not entirely fixed in the same way'. By saying 'not ... in this way', the text has excluded reprobates from the principal and *per se primo* parts of the universe;

by inserting 'entirely', the text has removed them from the parts willed *purely* for something else; it has thus placed them in the middle, so to speak, because of the incorruptibility of the subject, *etc.*, as we said.

Analysis of job (3)

vii. As to job (3), the number of predestined people is discussed as to whether it is sure and certain to us. Three opinions are mentioned: none of them is approved, but a fourth and better is added.

Notice here that the three opinions are not being attacked. For one thing, in a matter that is very doubtful and hidden from us for purposes of sure knowledge, the authors were just expressing their opinions. For another thing, the authors of these opinions seem to have been famous writers, even saints (we know that the second comes from Gregory the Great). But the fourth opinion is said to be better than all the rest, because it is based on the authority of the Church, which prays in a silent collect:

Deus, cui soli cognitus est numerus electorum in superna felicitate locandus ...

Homilies on the Gospel, 34, 2

To hint at this, Aquinas has used the same words in the text.

Can predestination be helped by the prayers of the saints?

In I Sent. d.41, a.4; In III Sent. d.17, a.3, qu¹ ad 3; In IV Sent. d.45, q.3, a.3 ad 5; De Veritate q.6, a.6

It looks as though predestination cannot be helped by the prayers of the saints.

(1) After all, a temporal event does not precede anything eternal, and hence a temporal event cannot help to make something be eternal. Predestination is eternal. So, since the prayers of the saints are temporal events, they cannot help to bring it about that someone is predestined. Therefore, predestination is not helped by the prayers of the saints.

(2) Besides, the only reason someone needs advice is because he lacks knowledge, and the only reason someone needs help is because he lacks power. But God as He predestinates lacks neither, which is why [the Vulgate of] Romans 11:34 asks, "Who hath helped the Spirit of the Lord, or who hath been His counselor?" Therefore, predestination is not helped by the prayers of the saints.

(3) Also, whatever can help can hinder. Well, nothing can hinder predestination. Therefore, nothing can help it.

ON THE OTHER HAND, Genesis 25:21 says, "Isaac entreated the Lord for his wife, Rebecca, and she conceived." From that child was born Jacob, who was predestined. Well, his predestination would not have been implemented if he had not been born. Therefore, predestination is helped by the prayers of the saints.

ANSWER: on this question, several mistakes have been made. Some writers, looking at the sureness of divine predestination, have said that praying, or doing anything else to gain eternal salvation, was a waste of time, since the predestined would get it, and the reprobate would not, whether these acts were done or not. — But against this are all the admonitions in the Bible, exhorting us to pray and do other good works.

Other writers have said that divine predestination is altered through our prayers. This is said to have been the opinion of the Egyptians, who thought that a divine arrangement (called a "fate") could be headed off by certain sacrifices and prayers. — But against this there is also Scriptural authority. 1 Samuel 15:29 says, "The Victor in Israel will not spare nor repent," and Romans 11:29 says, "For the gifts and calling of God are without repentance."

So one needs to speak differently. One needs to see that in predestination there are two aspects to con-

sider: the divine pre-arrangement itself, and its effectuation.

- In its first aspect, predestination is not helped by the prayers of the saints in any way; for it is not thanks to their prayers that anyone is predestined by God.

- But in its second aspect, predestination is said to be helped by prayers of the saints and other good works, because God's providence (and predestination is part of providence) does not remove secondary causes but foresees their effects in such a way that the arrangement of secondary causes is also covered by providence. Just as natural effects are foreseen in such a way that the natural causes without which they would not occur are *arranged* to have those effects, so also a person's salvation is predestined in such a way that whatever moves one along towards salvation (one's own prayers, or other people's, or other good works, or anything else without which a given person does not reach salvation) is covered by the arrangement of predestination. Therefore the predestined must try to act and pray well, because that is how the effectuation of predestination is carried out with sureness.* This is why 2 Peter 1:10 says, "give diligence to make your calling and election sure."

* *certitudinaliter*

TO MEET THE OBJECTIONS — *ad (1)*: that argument just shows that the prayers of the saints do not help predestination in the pre-arrangement itself.

ad (2): a person is said to be helped by another in two ways. In one, it is by getting power: this is how the weak are helped, and so this does not suit God. This is also the sense of the text, "Who hath helped the Spirit of God?" The other way a person is said to be helped is by one who carries out his activity, as a lord is helped by a minister. This is how God is helped by us as we put into effect His arrangement, according to 1 Corinthians 3:9, "For we are God's helpers." This is not because of a defect of God's power but because He uses intermediate causes, so as to preserve a beauty of order among things and so as to communicate to creatures, too, the dignity of being causes.

ad (3): secondary causes cannot act outside the arrangement made by a universal First Cause, as I said above; rather, they put it into effect [by the First Cause]. And so predestination can be helped by creatures, but not impeded.

q 19, a.6
q 22, a.2 *ad 1*

Cajetan's Commentary

The title question is clear. — In the body of the article, Aquinas does two jobs: (1) he handles two opinions, and (2) he answers the question.

ii. As to job (1), the opinions and the criticism of

them are clear enough in the text. You should also know that in article 6 of q.6 in *De Veritate*, Aquinas maintains that the first opinion seems to have come from the Epicureans, the second from the Stoics (or

perhaps came from the Egyptians to the Stoics). And Avicenna seems to have fallen into this mistake, too. And since these opinions are extremes (the first holding that our efforts contribute nothing; the second, that they do everything, even changing predestination itself), a middle opinion is reasonably supported as true, *i.e.* that in some way our efforts do help, and in some way they do not, as the text goes on to say.

iii. As to job (2), Aquinas answers the question with two conclusions, one for each side of a distinction. It says that there are two aspects to predestination: the pre-arrangement itself, and its effectuation.

The *first conclusion* says: as to the pre-arrangement itself, predestination is not helped by the prayers of the saints. — This is supported on the ground that it is not because of the prayers of the saints that a person is foreordained by God to eternal life.

The *second conclusion* says: as to its effectuation, predestination is helped by the prayers of the saints and

by other good works. — The support goes thus. [*Antecedent:*] Providence does not remove secondary causes but uses them in such a way that, without them, the foreseen effects would not occur; hence [*1st inference:*] the predestination of someone's salvation includes in its arrangement any factors that move him towards salvation (whatever they may be) in such a way that, without the same, he would not reach salvation. *Ergo* [*2nd inference:*] predestination is effectuated surely through such prayers and works (which was the point to be proved). — The antecedent is obvious from points sustained above and is made explicit for natural cases. The first inference (the only one explicit in the text) is supported on the ground that predestination is part of providence. The rest is evident.

A corollary is also drawn in the text and is put in after the fashion of an exhortation, because this is highly profitable for people's conduct. And it is confirmed by the authority of the Apostle Peter, as is clear enough in the text.



Inquiry Twenty-Four: Into the book of life

The next topic for study is the "book of life." Three questions are asked about it.

- (1) What is it?
 - (2) What life is it a book of?
 - (3) Can anyone be erased from the book of life?
-

article I

Is the book of life the same thing as predestination?

*In I Sent. d.40, q.1, a.2 ad 5; In III Sent. d.31, q.1, a.2, qu?2. De Veritate q.7, aa.1, 4;
In Ep. ad Philipp. c.4, lectio 1; In Ep. ad Hebraeos c.12, lectio 4*

It looks as though the book of life is not the same thing as predestination.

(1) After all, Sirach 24:32 [KJV, v. 23] says, "All these things are the book of life," and the [Interlinear] Gloss adds, "i.e. the New and Old Testament." Well, this is not predestination. So the book of life and predestination are not the same.

c.14
PL 41, 680

(2) Also, Augustine says in Book XX of *The City of God* that the book of life is a "divine force [vis] whereby it comes about for each man that his deeds, good or evil, are committed to memory." But 'divine force' does not seem to characterize predestination: it is rather a term for His power. Ergo the book of life and predestination are not the same thing.

(3) Besides, predestination has an opposite: reprobation. So, if the book of life were predestination, there would also be a book of death.

Vg. Ps 68: 29

Glossa ordinaria:
PL 191, 639

ON THE OTHER HAND, there is the gloss on Psalm 69: 28 ("Let them be blotted out of the book of the living"). It says, "This book is God's awareness, with which He has predestined to life those whom He foreknew."¹

I ANSWER: 'book of life' is used figuratively in God's case, after a likeness borrowed from human affairs. It is customary among us that those selected for something be recorded on a written list, as soldiers are, and as the [late Roman] officials were, who used to be called *patres conscripti*. It came out above that all the predestined are selected by God to have eternal life. So the muster of the predestined is called the book of life.

By a figure of speech, what someone holds firmly in his memory is called "written on his mind." Thus Proverbs 3:1 says "forget not my law, but let thine

heart keep my commandments;" after a bit, there follows, "write them upon the table of thine heart." For even in literal cases, things are written in books to aid the memory. Thus the awareness with which God firmly holds it in mind that He has predestined certain persons to eternal life is called the "book of life." For just as the writing in a book is a sign of the things which are to be done, so God's awareness is a sort of sign with Him of the people who are to be brought to eternal life, according to 2 Timothy 2:19, "the foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal: The Lord knoweth them that are His."

TO MEET THE OBJECTIONS — *ad* (1): the term 'book of life' can be used two ways:

- (1) In one use, it is the muster of those selected for life, and this is how we are using 'book of life' here.
- (2) In the other use, it means a list of things that lead to life, and this in turn subdivides.

- It can be the list of things to be done [to gain eternal life], and this is the sense in which the Old and New Testaments are called the book of life.

- Or it can be the listing of deeds already done, and this is the sense in which a divine force whereby a person's deeds are committed to memory is called the book of life.

In much the same way, 'book of the army' can mean one in which the conscripts are recorded, or one in which the art of soldiering is taught, or one in which the feats of soldiers are recorded.

The solution *ad* (2) is thereby obvious.

ad (3): it is not customary to keep a list of those rejected, but only of those chosen. Hence no "book of death" corresponds to reprobation in the way in which the book of life corresponds to predestination.

ad (4): there is a shade of difference between the definition of 'book of life' and the definition of 'predestination'. The former is defined as an *awareness* of the other, as is clear from the gloss cited.

¹ This *sed contra* is not citing an authority but just counter-evidence. It will be treated below as a fourth objection.

 Cajetan's Commentary

In the title, note that the inquiry does not start with the question, 'Is there such a thing?', but with 'What is it?', taking the existence of the book of life as a given from the authority of Scripture. But because of its affinity with predestination, the what-is-it question is pursued by asking whether it is the same thing as predestination; the shade of difference between them will tell us what it is.

ii. In the body of the article, Aquinas does two jobs: (1) he gives a nominal definition; (2) he gives a real one. — As for job (1), he says three things: (a) that in God's case a book of life is not spoken of literally but figuratively; (b) that it means a list of the predestined; (c) that the origin of this metaphor is the human books in which officials or conscripts are recorded.

iii. As to job (2), the conclusion is: The book of life in God is an awareness that is steady and indicative of the predestined. — This conclusion is shown to hold in both its parts. That it is steady is shown by the authority of Proverbs 3 and then by the argument that writing things down in literal books is done to keep memory steady. — That it is indicative [of the predestined] is shown by the reason for the metaphor: as the writing in a book is a sign of things to be done, so God's awareness is a sign representing to Him those to be led to eternal life. This interpretation is confirmed by 2 Timothy 2.

From these points, the answer to the question is obvious and is made explicit in the answer *ad* (4); the main question, after all, was what the book of life is, and this was settled in the body of the article.

article 2

Is the book of life only about the glorious life of the predestined?

In III Sent. d.31, q.1, a.2, qu2, De Veritate q.7, aa.5-7

It seems that the book of life is not just about the life in glory of the predestined.

(1) The book of life is an awareness of life. But God takes cognizance of every other life through His own. So the "book of life" is mainly so called after the divine life, and not just that of the predestined.

(2) Besides, as life in glory is from God, so is life in human nature. So if awareness of life in glory is called a book of life, awareness of our life in nature will also be called a book of life.

(3) Moreover, some people are chosen to receive grace who are not selected for the life of glory, as is obvious from John 6:70, "Have not I chosen you twelve, and one of you is a devil?" Well, it has been said that the book of life is a record of divine choice. Therefore, it is also about the life of grace.

ON THE OTHER HAND, the book of life is an awareness of predestination, as I said. But predestination is not about the life of grace except insofar as it is ordered to glory; people who have grace but fall short of glory are not predestined. Therefore, the book of life is only about the life of glory.

ANSWER: the book of life, as I said before, involves a sort of conscription-record or awareness of those chosen to have life. A person is "chosen" for something not already allotted to him by his nature [*ad id quod non competit sibi secundum suam naturam*]. At the same time, that for which a person is "chosen" has the makings of a purpose [*finis*]; for a soldier is not chosen or conscripted to "be armed" but "to fight," the distinctive job for which military forces are set in order. Well, the purpose which stands beyond our na-

ture [*supra naturam existens*] is the life of glory, as I said above. So, the book of life deals uniquely with the life of glory.

q.12, a.4;
q.23, a.1

TO MEET THE OBJECTIONS — *ad* (1): divine life, even taken as a glorious life, is natural to God. So there is no such thing as His being "chosen" for it, and hence there is no "book of life" about it. After all, we don't say that a human being was "chosen" to have his five senses or anything else resulting from human nature.¹

Whence the solution *ad* (2) is also obvious. There is no such thing as being "chosen" for natural life, and so there is no "book of life" about it.²

ad (3): the life of grace does not have the makings of a purpose, but of a means to achieve a purpose. So a person is not said to be "chosen" for the life of grace, except insofar as the life of grace is ordered to glory. This is why those who have grace but miss glory are not called "chosen" unqualifiedly, but only in a certain respect. *i.e.*, insofar as there stands in God's plan and awareness the fact that they are to have some relation to eternal life by sharing in grace.

¹ This answer, plus the body of the article, draws an unmistakable distinction between natural ends and such ends as a thing may have thanks to being selected or elected. For Aquinas, the life of glory (consisting centrally of the beatific Vision) was an end of election for man, not an end of our nature. Our nature made us no more than remotely open (*capax*) for supernatural fulfillment. Cf. *De Veritate* q.27, a.2.

² Aquinas is making an argument from ordinary language; it should warn theologians not to slip into metaphysics here, as if God "selected" us to exist.

Cajetan's Commentary

The title is clear. — In the body of the article, a single conclusion answers the question with a yes: the book of life is uniquely about the life of glory. — The support goes thus. [*Antecedent*:] The book of life is God's awareness of those chosen to have life: so [*1st inference*:] it is to have a life that is above our nature and stands as a purpose; so [*2nd inference*:] it is just to have the life of glory. — Drawing the first inference is supported on the ground that what people are chosen for meets two conditions: (1) it does not come to them by their nature, and (2) it has what it takes to be a purpose. This is illustrated with the example of a soldier. Drawing the second inference rests on the ground that the life of glory is a supernatural purpose.

In stating the first of the conditions on what people are chosen for, the text does not say — please note — that it is beyond the ability of their nature [*supra facultatem naturae*]; for that would be false: fighting is not beyond our nature's abilities, nor is serving as a government official. Rather, the text states a negative condition: it does not suit them from their nature [*non convenit ex natura*]; the status of advising one's country or fighting to protect it is not something one gets from one's nature but from another source, the government. From this analogy, the text goes on to the conclusion that the book of life is about a life that is not only above our nature but above every ability of any created nature at all.

Is anyone erased from the book of life?

*In I Sent d 40, q 1, a.2 ad 5; q 3 ad 3, In III Sent d.31, q 1, a.2, qu3;
In Ep. ad Philipp. c.4, lectio 1*

It seems that no one is erased from the book of life.

(1) Augustine says, "The book of life is God's foreknowledge, which cannot be mistaken" (*City of God*, book XX). Nothing can be withdrawn from God's foreknowledge, nor likewise from predestination. Therefore no one can be erased from the book of life.

c 15;
Pl. 41, 681

(2) Besides, whatever is in a thing is in it after the thing's own fashion. The book of life is something eternal and immutable. Therefore, whatever is in it is not there temporarily but immovably and indelibly.

(3) Also, erasing is the opposite of new writing. Well, no one can be newly written into the book of life. Neither, therefore, can anyone be erased.

Fig. Ps 68: 29 ON THE OTHER HAND, it says in Psalm 69:28, "Let them be blotted out of the book of the living."

I ANSWER: some say that no one can be erased from the book of life in reality but that a person can be erased in people's opinion. It is a common usage in the Scriptures [they say] to talk of a thing as being "done" when the talk of it is spread around. Accordingly, rumor says, "Such-and-such people are written in the book of life" when people *think* they are written there, because of the uprightness currently seen in them. But if it comes to light (in this world or the next) that they have fallen away from being upright, people from then on say, "The so-and-sos are erased." This is how the *Glossa ordinaria* interprets the "blotting out" in the Psalm.

PL 191, 639

However, not being erased from the book of life is put among the rewards of the righteous in the Apocalypse 3:5, "He that overcometh, the same shall be clothed in white raiment; and I will not blot out his name from the book of life." Since what is promised to the saints is not just a status in human opinion [but in reality], one can say that being erased or not-erased is not just a matter of opinion but a reality.

After all, the book of life is the "muster" of the

persons related to eternal life, and being related to this comes from two arrangements: from divine predestination (which never fails) and from grace. For whoever has grace is thereby worthy of eternal life, and this relation sometimes ceases: some people are related to having eternal life thanks to having grace and yet fall short of eternal life by sinning mortally.

Those, then, who are related to having eternal life by divine predestination are unqualifiedly "written in the book of life;" they are written there as ones who are going to have eternal life in itself; and these are never "erased" from the book of life. But those who are related to having eternal life not by divine predestination but thanks solely to grace are said to be "written in the book of life" not unqualifiedly but only in a certain respect; they are written there as ones who are going to have eternal life not in itself but in its cause; and such people can be "erased" from the book of life. The erasure does not affect God's awareness (as though God knew something and then ceased to know it) but affects the thing known; *i.e.* God knows that a person is related to eternal life at a given time and is not related to it at a later time, when the person falls from grace.

TO MEET THE OBJECTIONS — *ad* (1): the erasure, as I just said, does not affect the book of life taken as God's own foreknowing, as if there were anything changeable in God, but only affects the "book" taken as the things known, which are changeable things.

ad (2): even though things have an immutable fashion of being in God, they are still mutable things as taken in themselves, and that is how an erasure from the book of life pertains to them.

ad (3): the sense in which one can be called "erased" also allows one to be called "newly written" in the book of life, *i.e.*: in people's opinion, or by starting to have a relation to eternal life through grace. God is aware of the new standing but not "newly aware" of it.

Cajetan's Commentary

The title is clear. In the body of the article, Aquinas does two jobs: (1) he handles a certain opinion; (2) he answers the question according to his own view.

To achieve job (1), he first mentions two propositions advanced by certain writers:

- (a) no one is erased from the book of life in reality;
- (b) some are erased from it in people's opinion.

The consistency of proposition (b) with the Bible is shown by the fact that sometimes a thing is said to be "done" in Scripture when it gets into people's minds;

by this usage, people are "erased" when they are seen by people to be so, on account of losing grace.

Next he argues, with all modesty, for the falsity of proposition (a). His ground is that a reward vouchsafed to the saints is to be understood as something in the real, not just in public opinion, *etc.*

ii. To achieve job (2), Aquinas again does two tasks. (A) He answers the question thus: Being erased or not-erased from the book of life is not just a matter of human opinion but also a reality. The last part of this

conclusion (which he is really after) is (B) supported thus. [*Antecedent:*] The book of life is the muster of those related to eternal life; so [*1st inference:*] it deals with those related thereto thanks to predestination and thanks to current grace; so [*2nd inference:*] it deals with those related thereto indefectibly and defectibly; so [*3rd inference:*] it contains those “written” unqualifiedly and those “written” in a certain respect; hence [*4th inference:*] it contains persons unerased and persons really erasable (which was the point sought).

Drawing the first inference rests on the ground that a person is related to eternal life thanks to two factors. The predestination factor is obvious. The other one, current grace, is supported on the ground that whoever has grace is by that very fact worthy of eternal life. — Drawing the second inference rests on the ground that the grace-relation to eternal life can cease, while the predestination relation is indefectible. — The third inference rests on the ground that the indefectible relations are “written” for eternal life in itself, while the defectible ones are “written” for eternal life in its cause (its meritorious cause).¹ The last inference is obvious from the terms of the problem.

The second thing Aquinas does (at the words, “such that the erasure does not affect,” *etc.*) is explain the sense in which the above-mentioned conclusion is to be understood. For it can be taken two ways: (1) as affecting the divine understanding itself, or (2) as affecting the things written up, as is clear in the text.

Doubts about the antecedent

iii. Doubt arises, however, about the antecedent upon which this whole discussion is based. A thing defined does not go beyond its correct definition; so either the book of life was badly defined in article 1 — which said it was the “muster of the predestined” — or else it is being badly extended in this article, where it covers “those related to eternal life,” whether they are predestined or not.

And the doubt gets worse. If the book of life is extended to cover all those related to eternal life, those “written” in it would be not only those currently in a state of grace but all Christians, and indeed all human beings; for they are all “related” to eternal life by the fact that they are rational, given Augustine’s statement in *De predestinatione sanctorum* [c.5], to the effect that “the potential to have ... love for God

¹ Grace is not a sufficient physical cause of eternal life. Grace is just the gift of God whereby its recipient can reach eternal life as a further effect of God’s bounty.

belongs to the nature of human beings.”

Response

iv. My response to this is that the definition given above was complete as it stood, inasmuch as it was giving the substantial features of the book of life: for what pertains to its substance is being “the muster of the predestined.” Being “the muster of those related to eternal life by current righteousness” stands as an accident to the book of life because it stands as a consequence of the substance. After all, the only reason such a muster pertains to the book of life is because it is the book of the life of glory, to which only the predestined are mustered. For, as it says in answer *ad* (3) in article 2, those currently in a state of grace pertain to the muster of the book of life just insofar as they now participate to some extent in that glorious life. Here it says (equivalently) that those currently in grace are mustered because they are going to have eternal life in its cause. From these points it is obvious that persons currently in the state of grace pertain to the book of life under the status of a consequence; and so their muster is outside the substance of the book of life. It should not be put into the definition, then, but deduced afterwards — which is precisely what the text does.²

The easy reply to the other objection is that those mustered in the book of life are not those related to eternal life in just any way but those so related as to be *worthy of eternal life*. In no sense or respect, then, are “all Christians” (in case there is one who was never in a state of grace at all, as could happen if someone approached baptism with feigned motives) or “all human beings” written in the book of life, even though they all have a very remote potentiality for eternal life.

How erasure affects the things known

v. As to the points made at the end of the text, you should know that being erased as it affects the things erased does not involve a cessation of writing but a change from being written up to being not-written-up. A person who was in grace yesterday (and so among those written up) and fell today has been changed by the stain of sin and has ceased to be among those written up. This is what is being called “being erased as it affects the things known,” as is clear in the text.

² In Aristotle’s account, the “substance” or “essence” of a thing was narrower than the set of traits without which the thing could not exist. It was just the subset of these traits from which the others could be deduced. Only the subset was expressed in a proper definition. This allowed the definition to be expanded gradually, as consequences of it were discovered or deduced.

Inquiry Twenty-Five: Into God's power

After looking into the divine knowing and willing, plus the topics pertaining to these, it remains to take up the divine power.¹ Concerning this, six questions are asked:

- | | |
|----------------------------|---|
| (1) is there power in God? | (4) can He bring it about that the past did not happen? |
| (2) is His power infinite? | (5) can He do more things than He is doing, or less? |
| (3) is He all-powerful? | (6) can He make things better than He is making? |

¹ The Latin word for power was '*potentia*', whose many uses created ambiguity in at least two ways. In one, a thing's '*potentia*' was either its broad possibility to *be* otherwise or else a narrower possibility to operate otherwise. In the other way, '*potentia*' was ambiguous as between an active power-to-do and a passive liability-to-be-done-onto or made-into (cf. 'vulnerability' and, in ordinary English, 'potentiality'). In all its uses, '*potentia*' was opposed to '*actus*', making the latter as ambiguous as itself. The burden of this inquiry is to establish an active operational sense of '*potentia*' in God and to exclude any passive sense.

article 1

Is there such a thing as "power" in God?

In I Sent d.42, q.1, a.1, 1 CG c.16; 2 CG c.7; De Potentia Dei q.1, a.1; q.7, a.1

It seems that there is no "power" in God.

(1) After all, primordial matter stands to potentiality as God (who is the first agent) stands to actuality. But primordial matter, considered just in itself, is devoid of all actuality. Therefore the first agent (God) is devoid of potentiality.

c.9, 1051a.4 (2) Besides, as Aristotle says in *Metaphysics IX*, an act-state is always better [*i.e.* more complete] than the potency to it. Form is better than matter, and an action is better than an active potency, since the act-state is the purpose of the potency to it. But nothing is better than what is in God, because anything in God is God, as shown above. So there is no power/potency in God.

q.3, a.3 (3) Also, a power [or faculty] is [defined as] the source* of an activity. God's activity is His essence, since nothing in God is accidental to Him. But God's essence has no source. Ergo, nothing in God has the defining makeup of a power [or faculty].

* *principium*
q.14, a.8; q.19, a.4 (4) Further [power is defined as the source of effects, and] it was shown above that God's knowing and willing cause things. A cause and a source are the same thing. There is no need, therefore, to attribute power to God — just knowing and willing.

Vg. Ps 88: 9 ON THE OTHER HAND, there is Psalm 89:8, "O Lord God of hosts, who is a strong Lord like unto thee, or to thy faithfulness round about thee?"

ANSWER: "power" is of two kinds: the passive kind [potency], which is not in God at all, and the active kind, which one should posit to be at its maximum in God. It is obvious, after all, that

- each thing *x* is an active source of some effect in just such respects as *x* is actual and complete, but
- each *x* passively undergoes [changes to itself] in just such respects as *x* is deficient and incomplete.

But it was shown above that God is pure actualness and is unqualifiedly complete in every respect. No sort of incompleteness has any place in Him. Hence He is maximally suited to be an active source and not at all suited to undergo [change to Himself]. Well, the defining makeup 'active source' belongs to active power. For "active power" is the source of acting-upon-another, while passive potency is the source of being acted-upon-by-another, as Aristotle says in *Metaphysics V*. The only alternative, therefore, is that active power is maximally present in God.

TO MEET THE OBJECTIONS — *ad* (1): active power is not contrasted with actuality but is based on it; after all, each thing acts insofar as it is in actuality. Rather, what is contrasted with actuality is passive power [potentiality]; each thing undergoes [change to itself] insofar as it is in potency. So it is this sort of potency that is excluded from God, not active power.

ad (2): whenever the act-state is a factor distinct from the potency to it, it has to be more noble [*i.e.* more complete] than the potency. But God's action is not a factor distinct from His power; both are identically the divine essence, because even God's existence is not a distinct factor from His essence. It does not have to be the case, therefore, that something is more noble than God's power.¹

¹ Being a distinct factor from (*esse aliud a ...*) is a matter of ontology here, and not just one of human thought or language. For purposes of our language and thought, a thing's power-to-do-*A* is obviously "other than" its doing *A*; and in the objects of our acquaintance, this difference is supported by the ontic difference between one second-order factor (a real potency or faculty) and another (its act). But as emerged in qq.3 and 13, such ontic differences tend to disappear in God's radically "simple" mode of being.

q.3, a.1;
q.4, aa.1-2

c.12,
1019a.19

ad (3): in created things, physical power is the source not only of action but also of effects. In God, this defining makeup of “power” is salvaged as far as being the source of effects is concerned, but not as regards being the source of action (which in God is His essence) — except in our mode of understanding, in which the divine essence (pre-possessing in itself any completeness found in created things) can be understood both under the account defining “action” and under the one defining “power,” just as the same divine essence can be understood both under the account defining “a nature” and the one defining “a referent with a nature.”

q.3, a.4

ad (4): power is not posited in God as something differing from His knowing and willing (unless you mean differing conceptually, *i.e.* insofar as “power” implies what it takes to be a source implementing what the willing commands and the knowing guides); all three [knowing, willing, and power] belong to God thanks to the same real factor. — Alternatively, one can say that God’s very knowing or willing, *qua* source of effects, has what it takes to be power. So in considering God’s case, studying His knowing and willing comes ahead of studying His power as [in the order of explanation] “cause” precedes “operation” and “effect.”

Cajetan’s Commentary

In the title question, ‘power’ means a source of *ad extra* or transitive operation, with the word ‘operation’ extended to cover both acting and undergoing.

Analysis of the article

ii. In the body of the article, the question is answered by drawing a distinction and reaching two mixed conclusions, one for each side of the distinction. The distinction is that ‘power’ is of two kinds, active and passive. The first conclusion is: passive power [potentiality] is not in God in any way. The second conclusion is: active power is at its maximum in God.

This second one is supported. [*Antecedent:*] Each thing is an active source insofar as it is in act and complete; so [*1st inference:*] God is maximally suited to be an active source; so [*2nd inference:*] active power is maximally present in God. The first inference is supported by the fact that God is pure act and complete in every respect. The second is right because what it takes to be an active source belongs to active power, as is clear from its definition in *Metaphysics V* and *IX, etc.*

The first conclusion is supported in the same way, by negation of the opposite. [*Antecedent:*] Each thing undergoes change to itself insofar as it is deficient and incomplete; so [*1st inference:*] undergoing such change does not suit God at all; so [*2nd inference:*] passive power [potency] does not suit Him either. — Drawing the inference is supported in the same way, *i.e.* on the ground that in God there is no incompleteness, *etc.*

Action vs. effect

iii. In the answers *ad* (2) and *ad* (3), very difficult things are said that need discussing. Three points are asserted about an action as opposed to an effect.

- (1) An action is such that, if it is distinct from the active power to do it, it is nobler than the power.
- (2) In creatures, an action has its source in a power-to-do.
- (3) Action so stands to active power-to-do that, if applied to God, the action has to be the divine essence.

All these points are transparently present in the text.

The reason for strong doubt, however, is this. Suppose the term ‘transitive action’ is applied to the case where *x* moves *y*, and is taken as distinct from the term ‘effect’ [which is *y*’s moving]. Then ‘transitive action’ either means just “motion from *x*” or else means something more. If it just means motion from *x*, the above three points have to come out true thanks to just the relation part [from *x*] or thanks to just the motion part, or thanks to the whole business, motion from *x*. But none of these would make points (1) and (3) true. None of these is more noble than the active power of [say, the angel who is] Saturn’s mover. And what is worse, none of these can be identified with the divine substance, if we take a case where God moves a body without any intermediary (as is not impossible). For in that case, as anyone can see, the motion cannot be identified with the divine substance; nor can the relation be identified with it. <since*> the relation will have to be non-real on God’s side, as shown above (q.13, a.7): so “motion from *x*” cannot not be identified with the divine substance either. — But if ‘transitive action’ means something more, all the points taught in *Physics III* come crashing down. The idea that an action resides subject-wise in the object undergoing it would also seem to collapse, and yet that idea seems to come from the same passage in Aristotle, as well as from *De Anima III*.

Solution, part I

iv. The thing to say, I think, is that, for St. Thomas, ‘transitive action’ means (beyond the object’s changing and the relation) something present subject-wise in the agent. I am going to support this, and then I am going to clarify the matter.* I am going to support it with a single argument, already alluded to [in § *iii*], which is convincing to me. It is an argument upholding both ways posited in the answer *ad* (4).

[*Major:*] ‘Transitive action’ means something existing subject-wise in a created agent and really identical with the substance in an uncreated agent.

* correction: read “*quoniam*” rather than “*quomvis*”

c.3;
202a 12ff

c.2;
426a 2

* below, § *iv*

[*Minor:*] But ‘motion from *x*’, as implying just the being moved and the relation, does not mean anything of the sort.

[*Concl.*] Ergo ‘motion from *x*’, as expounded above, is not all that ‘transitive action’ means.

The major premise is also found in 2 *CG* c.9, in the last argument; the second part of it is found in a thousand places where the talk turns to creation, governance, or any other divine actions and powers *ad extra*, as one sees here [in this article] as well. — But the minor is obvious by analysis.* For it is well established that if God or an angel moved something, the motion would not be [subject-wise] in either; and while the relation would be in the angel [subject-wise], it would not be in God in a real way because it would not be there by inherence nor by identity, as is proved to a faretheewell at the beginning of 2 *CG* c.12.

* *resolutivè*

v. Suppose one tries to rejoin by saying that the major of this argument is true not thanks to one factor but thanks to several. Suppose it is true of created agents because of the relation, which has to exist subject-wise in the agent, and true of the uncreated agent because of immanent action, which in God alone posits transitive action above and beyond the being-done and the relation. If a rejoinder like this were made (especially on the authority of St. Thomas in 2 *CG* c.23, argument 4), the difficulty would be evaded subtly enough, I am saying, but not effectively enough.

To see this, you need to know that, as the text of this article says in the answer *ad* (4), there are two approaches to affirming active power in God:

- on one approach, it is like the executive power of knowing and willing, and
- on the other approach, it is like the deliberated willing itself taken as efficacious *vis-à-vis* effects.

Should this second approach to affirming it be adopted (and it is perhaps the truer way), the nature of transitive action would pose no difficulty in this matter, because then transitive action would really posit nothing in God but an immanent action having efficacy for transitive ones, in line with the Psalm text, “He commanded, and they were created.” This is the line St. Thomas seems to have taken in the place mentioned [2 *CG* c.23] and also in c. 35, where he explicitly denies an intermediate action. But if the first approach is adhered to, then the difficulty I have brought up has force. And the rejoinder given above does not meet it, because it resorts to immanent action, along the lines of the second approach. After all, if power is posited in God as quasi-intermediate [between immanent action and outside effects], then transitive action has to be posited in God also and thereupon identified with His substance, as is clear here and

Ps. 148. 5

is explicit in 2 *CG* c.9, given that the same argument for identification with His substance is made for intellectual operations and for others. And since it is obvious in the text that St. Thomas is upholding both approaches to affirming it, it follows that his thought and doctrine is not sufficiently preserved simply by having recourse to the immanent actions. The only alternative, then, is that the major stated above is true thanks to just one and the same factor in every agent suited to “transitive action” (otherwise, it would not be a formal statement). Since ‘acts transitively’ is not verified in every case by the relation, nor by the object’s motion, the only alternative left is that ‘transitive action’ indicates something else in the agent. The citation in favor of the rejoinder from 2 *CG* cc.23 and 35 (and other places) can be understood as proceeding from the other approach to affirming active power in God; after all, the *Contra Gentiles* is seen to use all available approaches to getting what it is after.

Solution, part II

vi. This other factor is clarified by the fact that it was implicit even in *Physics III* and similar passages, thanks to the comparison they make between acting and undergoing. Of the latter, these passages say that it is “change into this,” parallel to the claim that action is “change from this.” Now just as it is well established that there are three factors in [the account of] an undergoing — a change, a relation of inherence which the change itself bears to its subject, and the foundation for this relation, which is the undergoing itself in its very essence (whether this last be a passive actuation of the subject, the existence of a transient form as actuating the subject, or anything else) — so also [the account of] an action does not just indicate a change and a relation; rather, the ‘from’ indicates first of all the very essence of the action, namely, *an operation in the agent for the sake of completing another thing*. But since we lack proper terms, we use relational words, *i.e.*, the prepositions ‘from’ and ‘into’, to mention the hidden factors (a common enough phenomenon).

On this view, all the texts come into harmony. For it is consistent with all the points just made to say that one and the same act-state is [the completion] of the transitive acting and of the passive undergoing, since such an action, *qua* transitive, is for the sake of completing the thing acted upon. And hence, by reason of that one act-state, the action itself is called “a completing of the thing acted on” and is said to “be in the thing acted on,” *etc.* — It does not seem necessary to say any more about this here, since the remarks already made suffice for present purposes.

Is God's power infinite?

*In I Sent. d 43, q 1, a. 1; 1 CG c.43, De Potentia Dei q 1, a. 2;
Comp. Theol. c.19, In VIII Physic., lectio 23, In XII Metaphys., lectio 8*

It seems that God's power is not infinite.

(1) Anything infinite [*i.e.* indefinite], after all, is incomplete, as Aristotle says in *Physics III*. God's power is not incomplete. Therefore, it is not infinite.

(2) Besides, every power is disclosed by an effect; otherwise, it would be pointless. So if God's power were infinite, He could make an infinite effect. Which is impossible.

(3) Moreover, Aristotle proves in *Physics VIII* that if the power of a given body were infinite, it would move things instantaneously. But God does not move things instantaneously; He moves spiritual creatures over time and corporeal creatures over space and time, according to Augustine's *Super Genesim ad litteram, VIII*. So His power is not infinite.

ON THE OTHER HAND, there is what Hilary says in *De Trinitate VIII* [c. 25], to the effect that God is "of measureless power, living, mighty." Everything measureless is infinite. Ergo the divine power is infinite.

A ANSWER: as I said before, active power is found in God insofar as He is in act. His being in act is limitless, since it is not limited by any receiving potency, as became clear above in dealing with the divine essence's infinity. It has to be the case, then, that God's power is infinite. For it is true of all agents that, the more thoroughly the agent has the form through which it acts, the greater is its power in acting. For example, the hotter something is, the greater power it has to heat things up; and it would have infinite power to heat things, if its hotness were infinite. So, since the essence, through which God acts, is infinite (as shown above), His power is infinite.

TO MEET THE OBJECTIONS — *ad* (1): Aristotle talks there about the "infinite" as it arises from matter left unbounded by a form [*i.e.* the "indefinite"]; such is the "infinite" that connects with quantity. The divine essence is not infinite in that sense, as shown above; hence His power is not infinite in that sense either. So it does not follow that His power is incomplete.

ad (2): a power displayed in full by its effect is that of a univocal agent; thus a man's reproductive power can do nothing beyond begetting a human being. But the power of a non-univocal agent is not displayed in full as it produces its effect: the power of the sun, for example, is not shown to its full extent as it produces an animal generated from rotting matter.¹ Well, it is obvious that God is not a univocal agent: no other can match Him in species or even in genus, as shown above. The only alternative, then, is that His effect is always less than His power. Thus God's infinite power need not be displayed by producing an infinite effect. — And even if He produced no effect, His power would still not be "pointless." For what is pointless is what is aimed at a purpose it does not achieve: God's power is not aimed at an effect, as though the effect were its purpose; the situation is rather the reverse: His power is the purpose of His effects.

ad (3): what Aristotle is proving in *Physics VIII* is that if a *body* had infinite power, it would move things in no time. But he also shows *ibid.* that the power of a planet's mover is infinite, because it can move that body for an infinitely long time. His intent, then, must be to say that a body would move in no time if it had a *bodily mover* of infinite power, not an *incorporeal* one of such power. The reason for this is that a body moving another body is a univocal agent. So the full extent of its power would have to be displayed in its moving something. So, since the greater the power of a motion-inducing body is, the faster it moves something, it has to be the case that if its power were infinite, it would move something quicker than any fraction [of a second], *i.e.* would move it in no time. But an incorporeal mover is a non-univocal agent. The whole extent of its power does not have to be shown in inducing motion, so as to do it in no time. This is all the more true because an incorporeal agent moves something according to the disposition of its will.

¹ On univocal and non-univocal causes, see q.4, a.2, fn. 3, and §§ iv-vi of Cajetan's commentary.

Cajetan's Commentary

In the title, 'infinite' means intensive infinity. — In the body of the article, a single conclusion answers the question with a yes: God's power is infinite. — The support is this. [*Antecedent:*] God's being is infinite; so [*inference:*] His active power is infinite. The antecedent is clear from q.7. The inference rests on the fact that active power belongs to God insofar as He is in act, *i.e.* is based on His act-state; and so-much power comes from so-much actualness. This in

turn is based on the universal point that the more fully an agent has the form through which it acts, the greater is its power, as one sees from power-to-heat, *etc.* — The text is clear.

ii. Re the answer ad (3), a lot would have to be said about infinity of power to move things: it is a long story, which I have discussed in a special inquiry.* So I think it can be passed over here.

* Cajetan, *De Dei infinitate intensiva*

Is God "all-powerful"?

3 ST q 13, a.1, *In I Sent.* d.42, q.2, a.2; *In III Sent.* d.1, q.2, a.3; 2 CG cc 22, 25; *De Potentia Dei*, q.1, a.7, q.5, a.3; *Quodl. III*, q.1, a.1; *Quodl. V*, q.2, a.1; *Quodl. XII*, q.2, a.1, *In VI Ethic.*, lectio 2

It seems that God is not all-powerful.

(1) After all, to change and undergo change is something all creatures can do. But God cannot: He is immovable [unchangeable], as said above. Therefore, He is not all-powerful.

q 2, a.3,
q 9, a.2

(2) Besides, sinning is doing something. But God cannot sin, nor "deny Himself," as it says in 2 Timothy 2:13. Therefore, God is not all-powerful.

(3) Moreover, God is addressed [in a collect prayer] as showing His omnipotence "most of all in sparing and having mercy." So the utmost thing that divine power can do is spare and have mercy. Well, there are much greater things than that, such as creating another whole world, or something else on a similar scale. Therefore, God is not all-powerful.

10th Sunday after
Pentecost

(4) Also, on 1 Corinthians 1:20 ("God hath made foolish the wisdom of this world") there is a gloss saying, "God has made worldly wisdom foolish by showing to be possible what it thought was impossible." So, it seems that what is possible or impossible should not be judged in light of lower causes, as this world judges it, but in light of God's power. Then if God is all-powerful, all things are possible. In that case, nothing is impossible. But as soon as the impossible is removed, so is the necessary (for the necessary is impossible not to be). Hence there will be no necessariness in things if God is all-powerful. But that is out of the question. Ergo, God is not all-powerful.¹

gloss from Ambrose, PL 17, 199

ON THE OTHER HAND, there is what Luke 1:37 says, "For with God nothing shall be impossible."

ANSWER: everyone generally admits that God is omnipotent. But the explication of omnipotence seems difficult. There can be doubt about what is being quantified over when it is said that God is "all" powerful.² But if one looks at the matter rightly, in light of the fact that "power" is affirmed in relation to "possibles," one will correctly understand "God is all-powerful" to mean no more than that He can do all possible things, and that this is why He is called omnipotent.

¹ This objection poses a dilemma: either God is not all-powerful, or else there is no necessariness in created things. Aquinas rejected this dilemma, as we shall see. But some nominalists took its second horn: necessariness was in God and pure logic, but all workings of nature became contingent.

² Aquinas saw that "God is omnipotent" is hard to explicate because the 'omni'-part of 'omnipotent' (like the 'all' in 'all-powerful') is a natural-language quantifier. A quantifier is taken in context to cover a certain class of items, over which it quantifies; and the difficulty here is to say what that class is. 'Omnipotent' means 'can do all' — but all of what?

The term 'possible', however, is used in two ways, as Aristotle says in *Metaphysics V*. In one way, it is used relatively to some power or potency; thus what human power covers is said to be "humanly possible." Now, it will not do to say that God is called all-powerful because He can do anything possible for a created nature (because divine power goes further than that), nor to say that God is all-powerful because He can do everything "possible" relative to His own power, because then the explication of omnipotence will be going in a circle; one will be saying that God is all-powerful because He can do everything He can do.

c.12,
1019b 34

The only alternative is to say that God is all-powerful because He can do everything *independently* possible, which is the other way of using 'possible'. A proposition is called possible or impossible independently [of any agent's power] on the basis of how its [subject and predicate] terms get along: it is

* *absolutè*

- independently "possible" in case the predicate does not conflict with the subject (e.g. 'Socrates is sitting');
- independently "impossible," in case the predicate does conflict with the subject (as in 'A man is an ass [literally]').

One needs to take into consideration, however, the fact that each and every agent yields something similar to itself; so there corresponds to each active power a [class of the] "possible" that stands as its distinctive object, because of the defining makeup of the act-state on which that active power is based. E.g. the power to heat-things-up relates to the "heatable" as its distinctive object. Well, God's act of being, on which His power is based, is an infinite act of being, not restricted to any one particular kind of being, but pre-possessing in itself the completeness of being as a whole. As a result, whatever can have what it takes to be a being at all counts among the "independently possible" items quantified over when God is called all-powerful.

Now, the only thing that conflicts with having what it takes to be ϕ is not-being- ϕ . So, what conflicts with what it takes to be an independently possible item covered by divine omnipotence is that which involves within itself both being- ϕ and not-being- ϕ at once. This is not covered by omnipotence, not because of a shortage of divine power, but because it cannot have what it takes to be makeable or doable. Thus any items not involving contradiction do count among the "possibles" with respect to which God is called all-powerful, but those that involve a contradiction are not covered by divine omnipotence because they cannot have what it takes to be possible. So rather than saying, "God cannot do them," it is more appropriate to say, "They cannot be done."

Luke 1: 37 This solution does not go against the angel's message saying, "For with God nothing shall be impossible" [*V.g.*: "no word shall be impossible"].³ What involves contradiction, after all, cannot be a [thing or] word, because no understanding can conceive it.

a.1 TO MEET THE OBJECTIONS — *ad* (1): God is called all-powerful thanks to active power, not passive power [potentiality], as already stated. So the fact that God cannot be moved or undergo change does not compromise His omnipotence.

ad (2): sinning is falling short of perfect action; so ability to sin = liability to fall short in acting, and *that* conflicts with omnipotence. God cannot sin *because* He is omnipotent.⁴ Admittedly, Aristotle says in *Topics IV* that "a god and a prudent person *can* do wicked things." But either this is meant conditionally, with an impossible antecedent, as in

c.5;
126a.24

God can do wicked things *if He wants to* (for nothing stops a conditional with an impossible consequent but an also impossible antecedent from being true, as in

if a man is [literally] an ass, he has four feet; or else it is meant in the sense that God can do things that now seem wicked, but which would in fact be good if He did them; or else Aristotle is speaking according to the belief system of the pagans, who imagined humans in the rôle of gods like Jupiter or Mercury.

q.24, a.1 *ad* (3): God's omnipotence is shown most of all in sparing and having mercy, either [a] because the fact that He freely forgives sins shows that God has supreme power (someone who is bound by the law of a superior cannot freely pardon violations), or [b] because by sparing people and having mercy, He brings them to share in infinite good (which is the ultimate effect of divine might), or [c] because God's mercy is the foundation (as I said above) of all His works: for the only reason any benefit is owed to anything is because of what God gave to it, unowed, in the first place. Herein is divine omnipotence shown most of all: that the inauguration of every good is His doing.

³ The Vulgate's use of 'word' ('*verbum*') for 'thing' was dictated by the policy of rendering the Greek literally. The Greek had '*rhēma*' (word) under the influence of a Hebraism; '*dābār*' in Hebrew meant both word and thing.

⁴ This argument will not sound persuasive, if one fails to think through the analogous way in which the talk of power is applied to God. In us, what corresponds to the word 'power' is a distinct *executive* ability, the ability to achieve what we wish, no matter how flawed the volition or reasoning behind the formation of that wish may have been. Hence we do not classify foolish or immoral choosing as a failure of *power*, but as a failure of more interior processes. In God, however, what corresponds to the word 'power' includes those interior actions, understanding and willing, whose exercise in God has (if He chooses) outside consequences; cf. q.25, a.1 *ad* 4. ("God's power" therefore includes non-liability-to-failure in the very places where moral failure would arise.

ad (4): the independently possible is not so called in light of higher causes, nor lower ones, but just because of itself. By contrast, what is called possible in relation to some power is so called in light of its proximate cause. Things naturally apt to be done directly by God alone (e.g. create, justify sinners, and the like) are called "possible" in light of the higher cause, while things naturally apt to be done by lower causes are called "possible" in light of lower causes. For an effect has contingency or necessariness because of the condition of its proximate cause, as I said above. The world's wisdom is called foolish insofar as it thinks that things impossible for natural forces are also impossible for God. Clearly, then, God's being all-powerful does not exclude impossibility and necessariness from things.⁵

q.14, a.13 *ad* 1

⁵ To make sense of this answer, the reader needs to realize that it employs a comprehensive semantics of the modal terms 'possible', 'impossible', and 'necessary'. The first move in this semantics is to draw the distinction mentioned by Aristotle, between two fundamentally different uses of 'possible'. Let us dub them 'possible₁' and 'possible₂'. In the latter, a state of affairs *SA* is called possible (*i.e.* possible₁) simply because an adequate statement of *SA* appears to be free of contradiction; this is called the independent use of 'possible', because the word is being applied without regard to the physical powers of any agent to make *SA* obtain, be it a First Cause or a secondary one. What agents spiritual or corporeal can do remains irrelevant until one switches to Aristotle's other use of 'possible'. In this use, *SA* is called possible (*i.e.* possible₂) because there exists at least one productive cause with the physical power to make *SA* obtain. When 'possible' is applied in the sense of possible₁, the difference between what a First Cause can do and what secondary causes can do becomes not only relevant but crucial, if normal usage is to be protected. Can a rocket reach the moon? Yes, we say: it is possible. Can an athlete jump there? No; not possible. Can a lion be kept healthy on a diet of hay? No; impossible. Can a 500° oven *not* burn one's hand? No; it is impossible that it *not*; so it is necessary that it will. These everyday judgments of what is possible₁ or impossible₁ or necessary₁ are true, says Aquinas, despite the miracle-making power of God. They are true because assignments of modality₁ are made on the basis of proximate causes: according to what known propulsion systems and leg muscles can and cannot do, what leonine digestive juices can and cannot dissolve, etc. Only a state of affairs expected to have no proximate cause but God will be assigned its modality₁ on the basis of what God can and cannot do. The result of this plausible analysis is that there are *two standards* for affirming modalities₁, one sound in light of secondary causes, one sound in light of the divine First Cause, having distinct zones of application. Thus even when divine power is made to cover all effects that are possible₂ (or, as we say today, "logically possible"), the physical modalities₁ of natural impossibility and natural necessity continue to have application in their proper zones. "This world's wisdom," missing the fact that there are two standards, failed to see that a state of affairs might be impossible₁ by the one standard but possible₁ by the other. The objector, missing the same fact, thought that statements true by the divine standard should falsify statements made by the other. For a previous discussion of the same two standards, see q.19, a.7 *ad* 2 (with footnote 1) and, at greater length, the appendix to q.1 above, p. 47, fn. 19.

Cajetan's Commentary

In the title-question, 'all-powerful' can be taken as quantifying two ways: over all powers, and over all possibles. The question here is not whether God is all-powerful in the sense of *having every power*, because it was already established in article 1 that there is no passive power [potentiality] in God. Rather, the question is whether He is all-powerful in the sense of being *able to do every doable thing*.

Analysis of the article

ii. In the body of the article, Aquinas does two main jobs: (1) he says what is clear on this topic and what is in doubt; (2) he clears up the area of doubt, beginning at the words, "But if one looks at the matter rightly ..."

iii. For main job (1), he says two things. (a) The affirmative answer to the question is admitted by all [as a creedal truth]. (b) The definition of 'all-powerful', which should be the proper means of supporting the admitted conclusion, is difficult to get right, because there is doubt about what 'everything' quantifies over in the sentence, 'God can do everything'.

iv. For main job (2), he says three things. (a) The 'all' [in 'all-powerful'] quantifies over the things independently possible. (b) 'Independently possible' designates whatever has what it takes to be a being in act or potency, beginning at the words, "One needs to take into consideration, however ...". (c) He excludes from the range of 'all' and from the extension of 'independently possible' only what involves contradiction, in the ¶ beginning, "Now, the only thing that conflicts ..."

Point (a), namely, that 'all' ranges over the independently possible, is supported by distinguishing 'possible' into two uses — in light of some power, or independently of any power — taken from *Metaphysics V*, and by eliminating the first use, because 'God can do everything possible' cannot be construed as using 'possible' in the first way. It cannot mean everything "possible in light of a created power," because divine power would exceed that object, nor can it mean everything "possible in light of uncreated power," because such an explication would be circular. Aquinas then uses disjunctive inference to say that 'God can do everything possible' is taken to use 'possible' in the second way,¹ and he explains what 'independently possible' means, namely, that it is a matter of the relation between a proposition's terms, *etc.*

Point (b), *i.e.* that 'independently possible' designates whatever can be, is supported as follows. [*Antecedent:*] Every agent cause yields something similar to itself: so [*1st inference:*] to each active power [to do ϕ] there corresponds, as its distinctive object, what is possible thanks to the act-state which is the basis for acting [ϕ -wise]; so [*2nd inference:*] to God's active power there corresponds what is possible thanks to [the act-

state which is] the basis for being. — The first inference is illustrated with the power-to-heat-things and its object [the heatable]. — Drawing the second inference is supported on the ground that God's act-of-being, which serves as the basis on which He acts, is an act-of-being pre-possessing in itself the completeness of being as a whole, not just that of being-thus-or-such according to particular category or kind of being.

Point (c) above contains two claims. The first is: whatever involves no contradiction is covered by omnipotence. The second is: whatever does involve a contradiction is not covered by omnipotence. — Aquinas first supports the two together, thus. [*Antecedent:*] Nothing conflicts with what it takes to be ϕ except not-being- ϕ ; so [*1st inference:*] nothing conflicts with independent possibility except what involves being- ϕ and not being- ϕ at once; hence [*2nd inference:*] only what involves a contradiction fails to have what it takes to be [independently] possible; ergo [*3rd inference:*] what involves [a contradiction] is not covered [by omnipotence], and what does not involve it is covered. — Then Aquinas teaches the right way to talk about the items not covered by omnipotence. — Lastly, he shows that the non-coverage is not against the angel's authoritative statement, as is clear in the text.

What is the object of 'God can do ...' ?

v. On the above-mentioned object of God's power, doubt arises. If every independent possibility and every item whose being does not involve a contradiction is covered by omnipotence, then God falls under His own omnipotence, since He is obviously one of the above.

The ANSWER to this and similar doubts is that the current discussion is about factive omnipotence; so, when we say 'everything possible' or 'every being' or 'whatever does not involve contradiction', we are always meaning what is causable as an effect. Thus we are excluding both divine things and sins and whatever belongs to the passive and incomplete powers [potencies] *qua* so belonging.

On the second inference under point (c)

vi. Doubt arises about the support for the second inference; it does not seem to yield the point sought. From the premise that God's active power is based on an act-of-being that is infinite and all-around complete, Aquinas should have inferred that the object of God's active power is what can be infinitely and all-around complete — just as he inferred from

power to heat-things-up
the object which is
what is heatable.

But this is not what the text does. Rather, the object inferred is

whatever can be,
without any further support.

¹ Disjunctive inference, known to the Medievals as the *locum a divisione*, is the schema: $(p \vee q) \ \& \ \sim p \ \supset \ q$.

The ANSWER to this comes from the previous article [a.2 ad 2], namely, that there is the following difference between a univocal and an equivocal cause:

to a univocal cause there corresponds in its effect some equivalent object;² to an equivocal cause, there does not.

It therefore follows that, since God's act-of-being meets two conditions relevant to this topic, *i.e.*, that it transcends the categories and is all-inclusively complete, and since one cannot even imagine something that would meet these conditions *as a concrete individual* that could be caused-to-be, it follows that what God causes meets these conditions in a *general feature* it has. Such a general feature is "being" [*esse*]; for it is not limited to any one category, and it extends to all the ways of being complete. Hence the text was being quite subtle when it assigned to God's power, by analogy to what it assigned to univocal powers, the object: "whatever can have what it takes to be a being at all" [*quidquid potest entis rationem habere*].

On not-being

vii. Doubt arises about the support for point (c); not-being seems to have been skipped over. From Aquinas' premise,

Nothing conflicts with being except not-being, what he should have inferred was

(α) not-being conflicts with independent possibility, because it conflicts with being.

He should not have drawn the narrower inference that

(β) whatever involves both being and not-being at once conflicts with possibility.

And the answer cannot be that the text was implicitly drawing both inferences. For as it says on its face, the point inferred is that *only* what involves a contradiction conflicts with being possible (and of course not-beings come to mind that do not involve contradiction). So the doubt remains: with (α) omitted, how does the argument manage to jump to (β)?

The ANSWER, as seen in *Metaphysics V* and in *Physics II*, is that the active cause of an object is the same as the active cause of its opposite, but on a different footing: the active cause yields its distinctive object by *doing* and its opposite by *not doing*, as one sees by the example of the helmsman in those same

passages.³ So there was never any doubt that the active power whose assigned distinctive object was being (the active power of God) also covers not-being; it has to bear upon being *by doing* and upon not-being *by not-doing*. And since many non-beings manage not to be without involving a contradiction (as one sees in contingent matters), it follows that not-being was not jumped over but included in "what does not involve contradiction." Thus, no "jump" was made in the text. Rather, from the fact that

only not-being conflicts with being,

plus the well-known fact that

the conflict does not emerge in disjunction but in conjunction in the same subject, about the same trait, towards the same *relatum*, *etc.*,

the text optimally inferred

(β) whatever involves both being and not-being at once conflicts with possibility.

The text should not, and could not, have inferred

(α) not-being conflicts with possibility,

because not-being obviously does *not* conflict with being, except under the conditions that give rise to contradiction.

viii. In the position Aquinas has thus staked out, notice that it suffices for present purposes that

whatever involves contradiction, as so doing, is excluded from [what] omnipotence [can do],

and there should be no doubt about that. But whether this or that state of affairs does involve a contradiction is another topic. Likewise irrelevant is whether there is just one way to involve a contradiction, or many. But every state of affairs that does involve contradiction intrinsically cannot possibly be made to obtain, not even by God. Thereby one sees how to answer the arguments advanced by Aureol, reported by Capreolus on *I Sent.* d.42, q.1.

This world's wisdom

ix. In the answer *ad* (4), be aware that what we mean by 'the wisdom of this world' is not philosophy as such (for this does not make the false judgment) but philosophy as used by worldly people; out of their [understanding's] defective light comes the rash thinking in which things impossible for secondary causes have been written off as impossible independently [*i.e.* absolutely], such as God's becoming incarnate, *etc.*

c.2; 1013b 11
c.3; 195a 11

² The "object" of a type of cause was what it caused, *i.e.* a feature that appeared in what such causes acted upon because of their action. The "equivalent object" of a type of cause, *C*, was a feature *F* meeting the condition that, for any *x*, (*F* appears in *x* \supset a *C*-type cause is acting upon *x*).

³ In Aristotle's example, the active cause was a ship's helmsman, and the relevant opposites were safety and shipwreck: we ascribe the former to a helmsman *qua* there and doing his job, the latter to him *qua* absent or not doing his job.

Can God bring it about that the past did not happen?

272 ST q 152, a.3 ad 3; In 1 Sent. d.42, q.2, a.2; 2 CG c.25,
De Potentia Dei, q.1, a.3 ad 9; Quodl. V, q.2, a.1; In VI Ethic., lectio 2

It looks as though God can make the past not have happened.

(1) After all, what is impossible in itself [*per se*] is more impossible than what is just impossible under the circumstances [*per accidens*].¹ But God can do things that are impossible in themselves, like make the blind see or the dead rise. *A fortiori* He can do what is impossible under the circumstances. Well, that past events not have taken place is just impossible under the circumstances. Socrates' not running is only impossible thanks to the circumstance that it is past. So, God can bring it about that past events did not happen.

(2) Besides, whatever God could have done. He can do, since His power is undiminished. But before Socrates ran. God could have brought it about that he didn't run. Therefore, after he has run, God can bring it about that he didn't.

(3) Also, love for God is a greater virtue than virginity. God can repair one's loss of love for Him. So He can repair one's loss of virginity. Ergo He can bring it about that the degraded has not been degraded.

ON THE OTHER HAND, there is what Jerome says: "while God can do all things, He cannot make an uncorrupted woman out of a girl who has been corrupted." By the same argument, He cannot undo any other past event.

ANSWER: as I just said [in article 3], God's omnipotence does not cover any situation which involves a contradiction. The situation that past events have not happened involves a contradiction. Here is why. Just as there is a contradiction in saying,

Socrates is sitting and is not sitting,
there is a contradiction in saying,

Socrates will have sat and will not have sat.
Well, saying

Socrates will have sat
is saying that [as of a future time *t'*] his sitting is a *past event* [i.e. *did happen*], and saying

Socrates will not have sat
is saying that [as of the same *t'*] it *did not happen*. So making past events not have happened [involves con-

tradition and] is not within the scope of divine power. This is what Augustine is saying, too, in *Contra Faustum XXVI*: "Anybody who says, 'If God is omnipotent, let Him make things done not have been done,' fails to see that what he is really saying is this: 'If God is omnipotent, let Him make points that are true be false in the sense in which they are true'." And Aristotle in *Ethics VI* approves the lines:

This alone must even a god forgo:
To make undone what hath been done.

TO MEET THE OBJECTIONS — *ad* (1): let it be granted that "the past did not happen" is impossible "circumstantially" from the point of view of the *event* that happened (say: Socrates' running); but from the point of view of the past under its defining makeup *as past*, 'the past did not happen' is impossible not only in itself but also independently [absolutely], since it involves a contradiction.² Thus it is more impossible than 'the dead rise again', which does not involve contradiction, and which is called impossible only relative to a particular power, the power of nature. Such impossibilities lie within the scope of divine power.

ad (2): in light of the fact that divine power is complete, God can do all things; but some items are not within His power because they lack what it takes to be possible. In just the same way, in light of the fact that divine power is changeless, God can do all He could do; and yet some items that once had what it takes to be possible (when events were yet to happen) now lack what it takes to be possible (when the events have occurred). Thus it is said that God "cannot bring them about" because *they* cannot be brought about.³

ad (3): God can remove from a corrupted woman every degradation of mind and body; but this cannot be done in such a way that she will have been "never corrupted." Similarly for any other sinner: the sin cannot be taken away in such wise that [at a future time *t'*] it was not committed, and love for God was not lost.

² In its makeup as an event, Socrates' running is contingent in nature; it need not happen, and so it need not have happened; but in its makeup as past, there is a time *t'* later than *t* such that the tenseless 'Socrates runs at *t'*' is true at *t'*. So, to make "the past" not have happened is to make the same tenseless point true at *t'* and not true at *t'*.

³ An undated event, like Socrates runs, never loses its independent possibility. But a dated event does. If Socrates runs at *t*, then at every time *t'* later than *t*, his not-running-at-*t* has lost what it takes to be independently possible, *qua* dated to the past of *t'*.

¹ The objector is hoping to get mileage out of a different way of classifying modalities. It is impossible "in itself" for Nicolai Gedda to sing at La Scala the rôle of Violetta in *La Traviata*. For Ms. Contrubas to sing it is not impossible "in itself" but will be impossible "under the circumstance" that La Scala has engaged another soprano for the production. Similarly, it is possible for her to sing the rôle "for the first time," but not under the circumstance that she has sung it before.

c.3,
PL 42, 481

c.2,
1139b 10

 Cajetan's Commentary

Re the title question. be aware that 'the past' is used two ways, formally and denominatively, *i.e.*, for the very status of being past, and for what has that status. In this case, either use would do, but the word is being used directly and first-off for what has the status. So the sense of the question is this: Can God strip away the pastness from what is past? For this is making it "not have been." Similarly, we ask whether God can strip a substance of its quantity; doing so would be making a sized substance size-less.

Analysis of the article

ii. In the body of the article, a single conclusion answers the question with no: To make the past not have been is not within divine power. — First this is supported by argument. [*Major:*] God's omnipotence does not cover what involves contradiction; [*minor:*] for the past not to have been involves contradiction; ergo. The minor is supported thus. [*Major:*] To say that Socrates will have sat and will not have sat involves contradiction, just as much as saying that he sits and doesn't sit; but [*minor:*] this is what it is to say that the past has not been; ergo. — Then the conclusion is confirmed by the authorities of Augustine and Aristotle.

On the contradiction

iii. Notice here that the past is indicated in signified act by [the noun] 'past' and in exercised act by past-tense verbs, like 'has been', 'did run', 'sat', *etc.* So the signified act is clarified in the text by the exercised act. Once the argument given here has been picked over diligently, all the objections brought forward by Grego-

ry [of Rimini] and reported by Capreolus on *I Sent.* d. 42 fall to the ground. For from this argument it becomes clear why God cannot strip Adam of pastness. For this would be to strip him of *having been*; and since one side or the other of a contradiction always has to be true, if Adam were now despoiled of having been, it would be made true of him that he has not been. Thus he would have been and not been:

- he would have been, because, thanks to the fact that he was once vested with having been, he really was,
- and yet he would not have been, because he would have been despoiled of precisely having been.

And thus two contradictory claims would both be true at once, which is unintelligible.

iv. From this it also becomes clear that the situation is not altered by the fact that [the tense status] "to have been" is accidental to Adam, as is "to be" and "to be going to be." For [suppose we take a non-accident:]

'Socrates is a man' and 'he is not a man' are not "more contradictory" than 'Socrates is running' and 'he is not running'

nor than 'he will run' and 'he will not run'

nor than

'he has run' and 'he has not run'.

It is irrelevant to contradiction whether the topic is necessary or contingent. So the answer *ad* (1) touches on both: the accidentality [of "having been" to a contingent event], and the absolute impossibility that goes with involving a contradiction.

Can God do things He is not doing?

In I Sent d 43, q.2; 2 *CG* ec 23, 26-27; 3 *CG* c.98; *De Potentia Dei* q.1, a.5

It looks as though God cannot be doing anything but what He is doing.

(1) After all, God cannot do what He did not foreknow and foreordain Himself to do. But He neither foreknew nor foreordained Himself to do anything but what He is doing. Ergo, He can only be doing what He is doing.

(2) Besides, God can do only what He ought to do and what is right. But it is not the case that God ought to be doing what He is not doing; nor is His doing what He is not doing “the right thing.” Therefore, God cannot do what He is not doing.

(3) Moreover, God can only do what is good and suitable for the creatures that have been made. But being otherwise than they are is neither good nor suitable for these creatures. Therefore, God can only do what He is doing.

ON THE OTHER HAND, there is what Matthew 26:53 says: “Thinkest thou that I cannot now pray to my Father, and He shall presently give me more than twelve legions of angels?” But Christ was not actually asking, nor was the Father in fact providing the help to ward off the Jews. Therefore, God can do what He is not doing.

ANSWER: on this topic, certain writers have gone wrong in two ways. Some have claimed that God acts out of natural necessity, as it were, so that just as the actions of natural things can only have the results they do have (as human seed yields only a human baby, and an olive pit yields only an olive tree), so also the results of divine activity could not be other than they are now, nor otherwise ordered. But we showed above that God does not act as if by natural necessity, but that His volition is the cause of all things, and that His volition is not determined by nature and necessity to will just these things. In no way, then, does the actual course of events proceed from God with such necessity that no other course of events could proceed from Him.

Other writers, however, have maintained that divine power is limited to just this course of events on account of their relation to God’s wisdom and righteousness, apart from which He cannot act. But since God’s power = His essence = His wisdom, it is fair to say that there is nothing in God’s power that is not in right relation to His wisdom; for His wisdom comprehends all that His power can do.* Yet the plan that divine wisdom imposes on things (a plan in which the requirements of righteousness are met, as I said above) is not so exhaustive of God’s wisdom that His wisdom is limited to this plan. After all, take the plan which a wise man imposes on the items he produces; the whole explanation for it is drawn, obviously, from

the man’s purpose. Therefore, when his purpose is [a good that is] “in proportion” to the items produced for its sake, the man’s wisdom is constrained to this particular and definite plan. But [God’s purpose in producing things is His own Good State, and] God’s Good State is a purpose that exceeds created things beyond all proportion.* The result is that divine wisdom is not constrained to adopt one, definite plan-of-things, such that no other course of events could flow out of it. So, the thing to say is that, unqualifiedly, God can do other things than those He is doing.

TO MEET THE OBJECTIONS — *ad* (1): in our case, where power and essence are something other than our will and intellect, and our intellect in turn is other than our wisdom, and our will is something other than our virtue, there can be a thing in our power that cannot be in an upright will or in a wise intellect. But in God’s case, His power and essence and will and intellect and wisdom and righteousness are all the same thing. So, nothing can be in God’s power that could not be in His upright will and His wise intellect. Still, since His will is not necessarily determined to these or those options (unless it be in consequence of a prior free choice, as I stated before), and since His wisdom and righteousness are not constrained to adopting this particular plan, as I said just now, nothing prevents there being something in God’s power which He does not will to do, and which is not included in the plan He has actually made for things. Now, since power is understood as what carries out a project, willing as what commands it, and intellect-plus-wisdom as what directs it, what is attributed to power taken just in itself is called what God can do “by independent power”[†] (*i.e.* everything that satisfies what it takes to be a being at all, as stated above.) But what is attributed to divine power as carrying out the command of His upright will is called what God can do “by ordered power.”[‡] With these terms, one says that God can do out of independent power things other than what He has foreknown and foreordained Himself to do, even though He cannot do anything He didn’t foreknow and ordain Himself to do).² For the *doing* is subject to foreknowing and fore-ordaining, but the *power to do* is not, because it is na-

* *improportionabiliter*

q 19, a.3

† *potentia absoluta*

q.25, a.3

‡ *potentia ordinata*

q 19, aa.3-4

* *totum posse potentie*

q.21, a.4

¹ This is ambiguous. Is God’s power “ordered” when commanded by His antecedent will, or by His consequent will? If by antecedent willing, the “ordered power” is only a little narrower than the “independent,” since it covers everything that is both non-contradictory and morally acceptable. But if it is commanded by consequent willing, the “ordered power” is much narrower. It covers only what is consistent with (and morally good in) the *de-facto* plan God has chosen to realize.

q.19, a.6 *ad* 1

² What is constant across all possible world-plans is the mere fact that what God would produce in each is what He

tural [to God]. The reason God does something is “because He chooses to”; but the reason He *can* do it is not “because He chooses” but “because He is thus-and-so in His nature.”

ad (2): God has no source but Himself of what He “ought.” So when someone says, “God can do only what He ought,” the remark has no other meaning than that He can do only what is suitable and right for Him. But this clause, ‘what is suitable and right’, can be understood two ways. In one, ‘suitable and right’ is taken as first controlled by the verb ‘is’, so that the clause is restricted to talking about present arrangements, and then, as so restricted, is attached to ‘can do’. So taken, the whole claim is false; for the sense

of it is that God can do only what is *de facto* suitable and right. But if ‘suitable and right’ is first controlled by the verb ‘can do’, which has a broadening effect, and then by ‘is’, what will be indicated are “present arrangements” taken vaguely, and the whole claim will be true; the sense will be: God can do only what should He be doing it, would be suitable and right.³

ad (3): even if this course of events is uniquely right* for the creatures now existing, it is still not the case that divine wisdom and power are limited to it. For even if no other course would be good and suitable for the creatures now existing, God could have made other creatures and could have arranged them in a different order.

* *determinatus*

would foreknow and foreordain Himself to produce there. But the content produced is not constant, and so neither is the *content* of foreknowledge and choice. What has confused the objector, probably, is the fact that the content of divine foreknowledge and volition (being eternal) is constant across *all times*. He thinks this makes it constant across all possible worlds, and he is wrong.

³ A coherent world-plan consistent with God’s antecedent will is divinely eligible. What is constant across all divinely eligible world plans is the mere fact that what God would produce in each is suitable and good there. But the content produced is not constant. In other words, the total set of moral norms applicable to world-making underdetermine which world God should make.

Cajetan’s Commentary

The title-question is clear. — In the body of the article, Aquinas does three jobs: (1) he handles a certain opinion; (2) he handles another one, and (3) he answers the question.

ii As for job (1), the erroneous opinion takes the negative side [God *can’t* do other than He does], because it holds that God acts out of natural necessity. The idea is illustrated by analogy with the action of natural agents. Then the opinion is rejected as resting on a false basis, as is clear from the remarks made in q. 19, where both sorts of natural necessity (the sort pertaining to [any] nature, and the sort pertaining to a will) were excluded from divine action.

iii. As for job (2), Aquinas does three things in order. First, he sets forth the opinion itself, which also takes the negative side, but for a different reason. It is: [*1st premise:*] God cannot do anything that is not in proper relation to His wisdom and righteousness, and [*2nd premise:*] the things bearing said relation do not extend beyond the ones that are actual at some time; ergo.

Second, Aquinas examines the first premise of this argument and approves of it, on the ground that God’s power extends as far as His wisdom does, and *vice-versa*, because of their identification with each other.

Third, he examines the argument’s second premise and rejects it by upholding its contradictory (divine wisdom is not constrained to adopt the plan currently in force) with the following argument. [*Antecedent:*] The whole explanation for the plan which a

wise man imposes on the things he produces is drawn from his purpose; so [*1st inference: 1st part:*] by a purpose “proportioned” to the things produced for its sake, the producer’s wisdom is limited to a definite plan; and [*2nd part:*] by a purpose exceeding “beyond proportion” the things made for its sake, his wisdom is not thus limited; so [*2nd inference:*] divine wisdom is not restricted to any one plan of things such that no other can flow from His wisdom. — The antecedent is obviously true, as is the first inference, the second part of which I attached because it is only implicit in the text, and yet the force of the argument turns on it. The second part has to have been understood as implicit, because of the familiar rule from *Posterior Analytics I*: “if the affirmation of [predicate] ϕ explains the presence of [predicate] ψ ,” etc.¹ For if the commensurateness of the purpose explains one’s limitation to a given plan, because the whole explanation of a plan is drawn from the purpose, then the incommensurateness of the purpose by excess explains one’s non-limitation, on the same basis. — The second inference is supported on the ground that God’s Good State, which is the [ultimate] purpose of all things, exceeds beyond pro-

c 13;
78b 23

¹ This is a rule of Aristotle’s about reasoning with co-extensive terms: $(\phi x = \psi x) \supset (\sim \phi x = \sim \psi x)$. Cajetan has quoted the first half of it. The other half says, “then the absence [or negation] of ϕ explains the absence of ψ .” The rule is obviously invalid unless $\phi x = \psi x$. Here, of course, the rule is being applied to ideas far too complicated to be captured by this simple, one-place functional notation.

portion any one established arrangement of things.²
iv. As for job (3), the conclusion answering the question is this: God can do things other than what He is doing. This conclusion is not supported otherwise [than already discussed] because, in examining

² This argument, both as stated by Aquinas and as paraphrased by Cajetan, needs a lot of work. The key idea of "proportion" or "commensurateness" between a purpose and what is done or made for its sake is too vague to support much. But it is easy to think of examples that help. If profit is a purpose "proportionate" to raising crops, and you are raising cabbages for profit, it does seem true that the relevant agricultural facts and market projections put tight constraints on your practical reasoning. There are not many wise ways to go about it. But if you are raising cabbages just for personal fulfillment, the constraints vanish. Well, God's case is more like the latter. Fortunately, the main conclusion this argument was supposed to buttress — that if God creates a universe, He has more than one wise way to populate and arrange it — hardly seems doubtful.

the opinions put forward, any and all causes that would restrict God's power to doing what He is in fact doing have been eliminated. For since the object of His power, as was said above [in a.3], is the independently possible, and since there are no impediments or indispositions in God, if His power were restricted to the possible items He is in fact realizing, the reason would be

- either because of the agent's nature,
- or else because of His quasi-faculties,
- or else because of quasi-virtues [*habitus*].

All of these have been eliminated in the text:

- in the first opinion, nature and will (and by implication, intellect);
- in the second opinion, virtues, *i.e.*, wisdom and righteousness.

So with all sources of restriction eliminated, the scope of divine power continues to range over the full extent of the independently possible.

Can God make things better than He is making?

In *I.Sent.* d.44, aa.1-3

It seems that God cannot make things better than He is doing.

(1) After all, God does whatever He does with maximal might and wisdom. But the better a thing is made, the more might and wisdom it takes. So, God cannot make anything better than He is doing.

(2) Augustine argued in *Contra Maximinum* as follows: "If God could have begotten a Son equal to Himself, but didn't want to, He was malevolent." By the same token, if God could have made better things than He has, but didn't want to, He was malevolent. But malevolence is utterly foreign to God. So, God made each thing the best it could be. Ergo, He cannot make anything better than He is doing.

(3) Besides, what is maximally good and very good cannot be made better, because nothing tops the maximum. Well, as Augustine says in the *Enchiridion*, "the individual things that God made are good, but the whole universe is very good, because the wonderful beauty of the whole ensemble arises from all the individuals." Therefore, the good which is the universe cannot be made better by God.

(4) Also, Christ as man is full of grace and truth and has the Spirit beyond measure; so He cannot be better. Our fulfillment* is called our highest good; so it cannot be better. The blessed Virgin Mary is exalted above all the choirs of angels; she cannot be better. So not everything God made can be made better.

ON THE OTHER HAND, Ephesians 3:20 says that God is "able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think."

ANSWER: a thing has two measures of goodness. One is the goodness that comes from its essence, as being rational comes from man's essence. In terms of this goodness, God cannot make a thing better than it is, though He might make something else better than it. In the same way, He cannot make four greater than it is; for if it were greater, it would not be four, but another number. (In defining things, adding a substantial difference is like adding a one to numbers,

as Aristotle says in *Metaphysics VIII.*) The other goodness a thing has is outside its essence, as being-virtuous or being-wise is a human being's goodness. In terms of this goodness, God can make better the things He has made. But to speak in unqualified terms: for anything God has made, He can make something else that is better.

TO MEET THE OBJECTIONS — *ad* (1): take the sentence, 'God can do something better than He is doing'; if 'better' is an adjective [modifying 'something'], the statement is true: God can do or make another thing better than any given thing. (As for one and the same thing, in one way He can make it better, and in another way, not, as I already said.) But if 'better' is an adverb giving the how of the action on God's part, then God cannot do better than He is doing, because He cannot act out of greater wisdom or goodness. If the adverb is giving the how of the action on the part of the thing made, then God can do better, because He can give the things made by Him a better mode of being in accidental (though not essential) respects.

ad (2): it is part of the definition of a "son" that he should equal his father when grown up; but it is not part of the definition of any creature that it should be better than God made it. So the case is not similar.

ad (3): given just these component things, the universe cannot be better, on account of the maximally fitting arrangement given to these by God — the arrangement in which the good of the whole is found. If one of the component things were better, the proportion of the arrangement would be ruined, as a guitar melody is ruined if a chord is held too long. But God could make other things (or add others to the ones made), and the resulting universe would be better.

ad (4): Christ's humanity (thanks to being united to God), our fulfillment (thanks to being an enjoyment of God), and the Blessed Virgin (thanks to being the Mother of God) have each a certain infinite worthiness, thanks to the infinite good that is God. And in *this respect*, nothing can be made better than they are, just as nothing can be better than God.

c 3,
1044a 1

II, c 7;
PL 40, 262

c 10;
PL 40, 236

* beatitudo

Cajetan's Commentary

In the title, two questions are contained. One is posed formally: Can God improve the things He has made? The other is posed virtually: Can God make other things that are better than the ones made? The second is included in the first because of the primary thing which is made, the universe: for improving the universe depends on making other things, as it says in the answer *ad* (3).

ii. In the body of the article, both questions are answered by drawing two distinctions and three conclusions. The first distinction is an explicit one about goodness, *i.e.*, that it is substantial or accidental. The second distinction is drawn implicitly: one and the same thing *vs.* different things. Conclusion (1) is: One and the same thing cannot be made better substantially. This is supported on the ground that a substantial dif-

ference is like a unit among numbers, etc. — Conclusion (2) is: One and the same thing can be made better accidentally. — Conclusion (3) is: God can make another thing, better than any given thing already made.

These conclusions are not further supported here, because they follow from points already made [in article 3]. For if the object of divine power is the independently possible, and these improvements are among such possibles (as can be seen from the fact that no contradiction appears in them), it follows that God can make these improvements.

Doubts about conclusion (3)

iii. Upon conclusion (3), doubt has been thrown by Scotus and by Aureol. When Scotus comments on *III Sent.* d.13, q.1, he implicitly holds the opposite, for the following reason. Take any creature you like as the bottom of a given line of improvement; call this creature *A*. As we go up this line, we reach an ameliorated creature *Z*. Either the line stops here or it does not: if it stops, it is because *Z* is the top of the line — in which case, we have the opposite of Aquinas' conclusion (3); if it does not stop, then the line of improvement goes on to infinity. In that case, Scotus reasons as follows. The more a given creature exceeds *A*, the more perfect it is; hence a creature that exceeds *A* infinitely is infinitely more perfect than *A*; and thus it will be intensively infinite in itself, which is impossible [since such infinity is unique to God]. [Ergo, no line of improvement goes on to infinity, and again we have the opposite of Aquinas' conclusion (3).]

iv. Aureol, meanwhile, as reported by Capreolus on *I Sent.* d.13, q.1, brings no less than six arguments to bear against our conclusion (3), each of them very long-winded. I shall give just the gist of them.

Aureol (a). If one could progress to infinity in perfective traits constituting a species, each higher trait would be a certain totality of the perfection lower than it; and so [*1st consequence:*] there would be a species-making trait that contained the perfections of all other creatures; so [*2nd consequence:*] there would be a [creatable] trait of infinite perfection, which is impossible. — The first consequence holds because a higher trait contains the perfection of the lower and then some. The second consequence holds because, according to Thomists, such perfective traits are infinitely many.

Aureol (b). A progress that rises to a limit* is finite; [*inference:*] so progress to a higher trait among the perfective traits that constitute species is finite.

* *ad mensuram*

c.1:
1053a 24ff

Aureol (c). The set of creatable species is as far from the divine perfection as the finite is from the infinite; so the set of creatable species is of finite perfection; so it is impossible to ascend to infinity within that set. — The consequence is obvious, because a

progress in perfection to infinity goes beyond every finite perfection.

Aureol (d). A progress to oneness and totality is finite; so, the progress in question here is finite. — The inference rests on the ground that the progress in question is to the oneness and totality of the universe.

Aureol (e). [*Antecedent:*] In a descending progress from God, that at which the progress stops must exist; [*inference:*] so the ascending progress cannot go on to infinity. — The point inferred is well known. And the antecedent is from a general principle laid down by Denis: "lowest things are joined to highest things through intermediate things, such that the top of the low touches the bottom of the high," etc.

Aureol (f). take God and the lowest creature as two extremes; they are not infinitely distant by way of interpolated grades but thanks to the infinite character of the one extreme; ergo, there cannot be infinitely many middle grades between them.

Response

v. To clear these doubts away, you need to realize that, since the only topic under discussion here is the power of God and the independently possible, our claim that

for any given creature, a better one than it can be made

is not talking about any potency in creation towards a further creation (as happens with numbers); rather, it is talking about the inexhaustibility of the independently possible. For the independently possible is infinite after the fashion of a material infinite, where, no matter how much has been taken, there remains yet more to take. Our claim is also talking about the inexhaustibility of divine power; for God's power is of infinite actualness, unqualifiedly, so that it is not exhausted by any participated act but always remains as more act yet to be exhausted.

vi. Thus Scotus' argument is easily answered. We concede that the progress goes to infinity; we deny that it follows that there is some creature infinitely exceeding the bottom creature [*A*]. For between the bottom and any other specifiable grade, there is always a finite distance, as is obvious in the case of numbers. Indeed, all of the objections brought forward, or many of them at least, go wrong in just precisely this: they do not distinguish between

- (1) "a progress to infinity," *i.e.* to some one thing infinite in number, and
- (2) "a progress to infinity," *i.e.* one which never comes to a last but always to something beyond which there is more.

If we look carefully, in the first sense 'infinity' names a *terminus ad quem* and has the force of a noun; but in the latter sense, 'infinity' has the force of an adverb and means the *how* of the progress itself. We Thomists use 'progress to infinity' in the second sense, because one should use words in their accepted sense [*ut plures*

De divinis nominibus, c.7. PG 3, 872

c 6;
206a 20ff] *utuntur*], and *Physics III* makes it obvious that this is the accepted sense. But whether implicitly or explicitly, our challengers take ‘progress to infinity’ in the first sense. This we never dreamed of doing, and their sense does not follow from a progress to infinity such as we posit.¹

vii. Against *Aureol* (a), the response is that his argument sins in three respects. (1) It goes wrong in the respect just discussed. (2) It makes a bad interpretation of the dictum that “a higher perfection includes the lower and then some.” This is not true of the perfections posited by ultimate differentiations; no angel’s perfection virtually contains the positive perfection (whatever it is) posited by the ultimate difference of a cow; for this [containing in a higher way every lower perfection] is unique to God, as we shall see elsewhere. (3) The argument fails to distinguish between being of infinite perfection *across the board** and being of infinite perfection *within a genus or ca-*

q 5, a.1
* *simpliciter*

¹ Cajetan is absolutely right about two things. First, from the adverbial idea of infinity, the noun idea of it as a *number* does not follow. A mathematician can accept the former and reject the latter, as the Intuitionist school has shown quite rigorously. Second, if each step in the metaphysical amelioration of the universe from a lower grade of “perfection” to a higher grade is analogous to an addition in arithmetic, taking us from a lower natural number to a higher one, then each step up is a step to a *finite grade*, as every addition of 1 to a finite cardinal number is another finite cardinal number. And there is *no limit* to the number of steps. So, above each finite grade of perfection, there is a higher but still finite grade which God could produce, exactly as Aquinas’ conclusion (3) said. For as there is no highest or last finite cardinal, there is no “step” to an *infinite cardinal number*. This is what Cajetan was insisting upon, and this is what mathematicians mean today by saying that the first infinite number, \aleph_0 , is an “inaccessible” cardinal.

Of course, mathematicians today (apart from the small party of Intuitionists) also use ‘infinity’ as a noun, denoting \aleph_0 or a larger transfinite number. Scotus’ argument can be read as an early step towards conceiving of \aleph_0 . It is true that, if we start with 1 and add another 1 *infinitely many times*, the “result” is an infinitely bigger number. But what Scotus seems to have overlooked (and mathematicians today do not) is the fact that the ‘how many’ in ‘how many times we add’ exhibits the same problem of inaccessibility. We cannot add *another* time to the times we have added already and thereby reach “infinitely many times” — not unless we started with infinitely many. This is the oddity of an inaccessible cardinal: one can *start* with that many (at least in a thought experiment), but one cannot *reach* that many.

This last point requires a remark about Leibniz. Unlike the medieval schoolmen, who thought God had made a universe of *finite* perfection, complexity, etc., Leibniz thought God had made a universe of infinite perfection, etc., and *therefore* could not make a better one. Today, most mathematicians disagree. Even if the actual universe were infinite, Leibniz would only be correct if there were no inaccessible cardinal larger than Leibnizian infinity (which seems to have been \aleph_0 or \aleph_1). But most likely, it is better mathematics to posit such larger cardinals. For an introduction, see Akihiro Kanamori, *The Higher Infinite* (Berlin: Springer, 1994).

*tegor*y. (Aureol’s argument (c) also went wrong in this way.) After all, if the whole set of creatable things existed, there would be infinitely many specific perfections, but there would not be an infinite being: for both singly and collectively, all the creatable things would be beings-by-participation. Likewise, if there were some one creature whose perfection equaled that of all the rest of them combined, that creature would not be of infinite perfection across the board, but in a genus or category. E.g., if there were infinitely many animals, or one animal worth the lot, nothing would follow but infinite perfection within the genus *animal*; and so the least of the angels, being a pure form of higher order, would be more perfect than all of them *qua* contained in the genus *animal*.

Against *Aureol* (b), the response is that it, too, sins in three ways. First, the progress under debate here is not “to a limit*,” since it is not towards any terminus. Second, argument (b) does not distinguish between the total progress (which is what the whole debate is about) and the individual steps which form its parts (which are not under debate, because each one is obviously finite and materially to a measure, *i.e.* each is a step to a thing which, if it existed, would be the step’s measure). Here, too, is the third mistake: the argument does not distinguish between a progress that is to a limit materially and in potency (not natural potency, but logical possibility and divine power) and a progress that is to a measure in act and as such.

Aureol (c) also goes wrong in three ways. (1) It thinks the whole set of creatable things is more capable of being taken in act than the whole set of numbers. (2) It equivocates in the way already mentioned on “infinite perfection.” (3) It fails to see that, short of what is finite in overall terms but infinite within a genus, there can be an unqualifiedly infinite progression.² Which is the point we were after.

Aureol (d) sins in the same ways as (b). For one thing, the whole progression in question is not towards the unity and totality of the universe, because it has no terminus†, as I already said. For another thing, the individual steps are only to the unity and totality of a universe in potency (in the “potency” of logical possibility and divine power). And for a third thing, each step is to such unity and totality materially and not formally; for there is no contradiction in the idea that more creatures are made without any “universe” as such resulting from them.³

To *Aureol* (e) the obvious answer is that Denis’s dictum is understood to be about creatures connecting among themselves: it is not about a connexion between creatures and God. So there is no “first possible” crea-

² Suppose there were an infinite fire. It would still be just a fire, contained within its species as an element. Now start with a finite fire and imagine additions to it. From the finite start, there would be an open-ended progression of sizes such that, for any size, there could be a larger.

³ Perhaps the idea is that a “universe” involves some sort of tight organization.

* *ad mensuram*

† *mensuram*

ture coming down from God, and there is no "last" as we rise up towards Him. And so it is pointless to ask whether this [first or last possible] is finite or infinite. *De facto*, of course, there is always a first thing made, which is of finite perfection.

Finally, *Aureol (f)* destroys itself. For from an infinite distance due to the infinity of one extreme, one

necessarily infers infinitely many intermediate points, if not in act, then at least in potency, as is obvious in continuous quantity; for it is unintelligible to suppose that, between an infinite line and a foot-long line, there would not be infinitely many lines of intermediate length, *i.e.* a two-foot line, a three-foot line, and so on to infinity. So the inference drawn is worthless.



Inquiry Twenty-Six: Into God's total fulfillment

Finally, at the end of the topics pertaining to the singularity which is the divine essence, one must take up God's total happiness or fulfillment [*beatitudo*].¹ Concerning this, four questions are asked:

- (1) is fulfillment compatible with being God?
- (2) in what respect is God said to be fulfilled? Is it thanks to His act of understanding?
- (3) is God in His own essence the fulfillment of every blessedly fulfilled being?
- (4) is every sort of fulfillment included in God's fulfillment?

¹ The Latin word '*beatitudo*' has several eligible translations. In purely theological contexts, the best choice is probably 'blessedness', because it refers to the blessed state of God and His saints in glory. But the word was also used in everyday contexts and in philosophy, where the usual translation has been 'happiness'. This choice was awkward for two reasons. First, '*beatitudo*' never meant a partial or fleeting happiness but only a total and permanent one. Secondly, '*beatitudo*' did not mean a subjective state of being pleased with one's condition; it meant an objective state of complete well-being plus the awareness and subjective satisfaction of being in it. In current English, the word that comes closest to expressing such a state, both objective and subjective at once, is 'fulfillment'. Hence, I have favored this translation, often with an extra adjective, such as 'total' or 'blessed'.

article 1

Is fulfillment compatible with being God?

In II Sent. d.1, q.2, a.2 ad 4, I CG e.100

It looks as though fulfillment does not befit God.

PL 63, 724 (1) According to Boethius in *The Consolation of Philosophy III* [prosa 2], fulfillment is "the state made complete by compresence of all the goods." But there is no room in God for a "compresence" of goods, for the same reason as there is no room in Him for composition. Hence fulfillment does not suit God.

(2) Besides, fulfillment [*beatitudo*] or happiness [*felicitas*] is "the reward of virtue," according to Aristotle in *Ethics I*. But a reward is not a suitable thing for God, just as merit is unsuitable. Therefore, fulfillment is not suitable either.¹

c.9;
1099b 16

ON THE OTHER HAND, there is what the Apostle Paul says in 1 Timothy 5:15, "Which in His times He shall shew, who is the *blessed* and only Potentate, the King of kings and Lord of Lords."

ANSWER: fulfillment is supremely compatible with God. For what we mean by the word 'fulfillment' is

¹ Reward and merit are not suitable for God in that, being good by nature, He does not have to merit anything; and being the source of all rewards, He is not a recipient of them.

nothing but complete good for an intellectual nature — *i.e.* for a being whose nature is such as to allow it to

- know when it is satisfied in the good it has,
- and to experience something as turning out well or badly,
- and to have control over its own doings.

These traits are ways of being complete and cognizant, and each fits God to the highest degree. Therefore, fulfillment is supremely suitable for God.

TO MEET THE OBJECTIONS — *ad* (1): a compresence of the goods is in God not in the fashion of a composition but in the fashion of a single, uncomposed reality [*simplicitas*], because goods which are manifold and multiple among creatures pre-exist in God as one, simple good, as was said above.

ad (2): being a reward of virtue is incidental to fulfillment or happiness, arising from how one has acquired it; in much the same way, terminating *x*'s coming-to-be is incidental to *x*'s existing, arising from the fact that *x* goes from potency into act. So, just as God exists though He does not come-to-be, so also He has fulfillment though it is not merited.

q.4, a.2 ad 1
q.13, a.4

Cajetan's Commentary

The title is clear. In the body, one conclusion answers the question with yes: fulfillment suits God supremely. The support is this. [*Antecedent:*] Fulfillment is the complete good of an intellectual nature; [*inference:*]

hence it suits God above all.

The antecedent has two parts: fulfillment is complete good, and it belongs to an intellectual nature. The first part is left as if self-evident. The second part,

however, is supported by the makeup of three traits had by an intellectual nature, *i.e.*: knowledge of having enough, capacity for [experiencing] good or bad, and control over activities; the second of these addresses

the 'good' [in 'complete good'], while the first addresses the 'complete', and the third addresses both. Making the inference is supported on the ground that both parts of the antecedent are found supremely in God.

Is God called fulfilled thanks to His understanding?

In II Sent. d.16, a.2, In I Tim. c.6, lectio 3

It does not seem that God would be called fulfilled thanks to understanding.

(1) After all, fulfillment is the highest good. But God is spoken of as good thanks to His essence, because 'good' applies to how a thing is according to its essence, as Boethius says in *De Hebdomadibus*. So, God is also spoken of as fulfilled thanks to His essence, and not thanks to His understanding.

PL 64, 1314

(2) Besides, fulfillment meets the definition of a purpose or goal. But a purpose or goal is an object of the will, as is the good. Hence, God is called fulfilled thanks to His will, not His understanding.

ON THE OTHER HAND, there is what Gregory says [on Job 40:10, "array thyself with glory"] in the *Moralia XXXII, Pl. 76, 639*

lita: "The glorious one is he who, while rejoicing in himself, has no need of additional praise." Now 'is glorious' means 'is fulfilled'. So since [rejoicing in God is our reward, and] we rejoice in God through understanding Him (because the Vision is "the whole reward," as Augustine says), it seems that fulfillment, in God's case, is thanks to understanding.

Enarratio. in Ps. 90: Pl. 17, 1170

ANSWER: 'fulfillment' means complete good for [a thing of] intellectual nature. This is why a [thing of] intellectual nature seeks by its nature* to be fulfilled the way everything seeks its own completeness [*i.e.* by abounding in the most complete activity in its nature]. But the most complete one in an intellectual nature is its operation of understanding, by which it somehow "takes in" everything. So, where any created intellectual nature finds its fulfillment is in the exercise of understanding.¹ In God, however, existing and understanding are not distinct factors in the

* *naturaliter appetit*

¹ I shall discuss below the structure of this argument. Here I call attention to its conclusion. It is borrowed partly from Aristotle's biology and partly from his ethics. In biology, the Stagirite thought each species was present in nature for a purpose, and that its members found their satisfaction in *doing* what achieved it (not in relaxing from it). To discover what the purpose was, one had to look at the highest activity distinctive of the species. Man's highest was understanding, and the same could be said for any intellectual being. Hence the conclusion here that any being of this nature finds its fulfillment in understanding.

The reader needs to notice that this conclusion is ambiguous as between two quite different claims which I shall call (A) and (B). Claim (A) says that, of all the activities

real but differ only in how understanding is defined. Therefore, when fulfillment is attributed to God, it should be ascribed to Him thanks to His understanding, as it is ascribed to other fulfilled beings, who are called fulfilled by assimilation to His fulfillment.²

TO MEET THE OBJECTIONS — *ad* (1): the argument supports the point that God is fulfilled thanks to His essence [in real terms] but does not sustain the [more technical, "formal"] claim that fulfillment suits Him thanks to the account defining 'essence' rather than the one defining 'understanding'.

ad (2): since fulfillment is a good, it is an object of the will. But prior to the will's acting, its object is understood. So divine fulfillment *qua* involved in His understanding is prior to His will's act of resting in it. And this [involvement in understanding] can only be His act of understanding. This is why fulfillment is looked for in the act of His understanding.

whose successful exercise contributes to one's fulfillment, understanding is the most important. Since understanding is highly relevant to doing anything well, and since understanding one's options is crucial to making good choices, it is easy to see that claim (A) is plausible.

Claim (B), however, says that the only truly fulfilling life is one devoted to a special employment of understanding. In his ethics, Aristotle seemed to say that fulfillment is found in the mind's best employment, which is understanding the deepest things — primordial causes and ultimate ends — and these he called "divine things." (Other duties could rightly call one away from such a life, but intrinsically the life of high thought was best.) Needless to say, Christian readers of Aristotle were to be delighted with the conclusion that true happiness lay in the contemplation of divine things, because both meditation on the Faith in this life and seeing God "as He is" in the next would count as contemplating "divine things." Thus a definite synthesis of faith and philosophy, easier than what could be worked out from claim (A) alone, was made possible by claim (B), and this latter is included in what Aquinas is asserting here: God is fulfilled *precisely* in His understanding of divine things, *i.e.* in the self-understanding connatural to Him. See next note.

² According to claim (B), created intellectual beings (angels and humans) also find fulfillment *precisely* in understanding divine things, either in the created fashion natural to them (*e.g.* by philosophizing) or in the higher, supernatural fashion gifted to them in the Beatific Vision (as Scripture reveals). Both could be called an "assimilation" to, or copy of, how God Himself is fulfilled (the former a distant copy; the latter, closer).

Cajetan's Commentary

The title-question is to be taken in its formal sense, so that 'understanding' is construed to mean God's understanding as having a distinct formal account from His substance and will. Since the same argument applies (as the text says) to the saints' fulfillment, this article is relevant to the broad and well-worn question of whether fulfillment is found in an act of intellect or an act of will. For the fulfillment of everyone else is a copy of the divine fulfillment.

Analysis of the article

ii. In the body of the article, a single conclusion answers the question with yes: Fulfillment is to be attributed to God and other blessed beings thanks to understanding. — This conclusion is both supported and clarified. The support goes thus. [*Antecedent:*] Fulfillment is the complete good of an intellectual nature; so [*1st inference:*] it is the most complete state of an intellectual nature; so [*2nd inference:*] it is found in the exercise of understanding; ergo [*3rd inference:*] both God and the others are fulfilled thanks to understanding. — The antecedent is clearly right from points already made [in a.1] and is also shown from an effect, namely, the fact that an intellectual nature seeks naturally to be fulfilled, just as each and everything seeks its completeness. — The first point inferred is not explicit in the text, but I have put it in for clarity of teaching, and it is obvious of itself. — Making the second inference is supported on the ground that the most complete thing in any intellectual nature is its intellectual operation. This in turn rests on the fact that it is by its intellectual operation that an intelligent being takes in everything in some sense or fashion.¹ — The last inference is obvious of itself and, for the other fulfilled beings, is supported on the ground that they are called fulfilled by assimilation to God's fulfillment.

The conclusion is clarified by a remark on 'understanding' as applied to God. For while existing, willing and understanding are the same real act in God, they still differ in the accounts defining them;

¹ Cajetan construes the argument thus. Fulfillment is the most complete state of an intellectual being. Understanding is the most complete doing of such a being. Ergo, its fulfillment lies in understanding. Does this follow? Grant the first premise. Grant the second also (on grounds set out in q.14, a.1: an intellectual operation is the "most complete" kind because it exercises an intellectual being's remarkable openness to take in the forms of other things without losing its own). But what follows? That an intellectual being's most complete state is its most complete doing? (Surely not. For every such being has an appetitive act or faculty [q.19, a.1] which must also be satisfied in the being's most complete state.) That the being's most complete state includes its most complete doing? Fine. But "includes" it how, as a part or as a presupposition? If understanding needs to be included only as a presupposition, fulfillment can "lie" in an act of the will. In sum, the argument needs a lot of work; Cajetan will soon outline the further debates in which some of the work was done.

so, when speaking formally according to these accounts, it is right to say fulfillment is attributed specially to God's understanding.

Relevant debates

iii. Concerning these remarks, there are three debates. The first is whether fulfillment is sought with natural seeking. The second is whether the operation of understanding is the most complete operation of all, and how much Aquinas' argument for this is worth. The third is whether his conclusion here is true. All of these debated points are stated in the text, and each has been subject to diverse opinions.

iv. The first of these debates is going to be treated below in q.82, and so it will suffice here to be aware that an intellectual nature "naturally seeks" fulfillment in three senses:

(1) with 'seeks' in the sense of *natural inclination*, and in this sense our claim holds in every case;

(2) with 'seeks' in the sense of an *act of appetite which is natural in all respects*, and in this sense our claim is true of God and the blessed;

(3) with 'seeks' in the sense of an *act of appetite which is natural as to its specification but free as to its exercise*,

and in this sense our claim is true for human beings [in this life].² We experience for ourselves, after all, that where our own fulfillment is concerned, we cannot have a counter-will towards it [*i.e.* we cannot will to not-be-happy], but it is in our power freely to be doing or not doing any willing about it here and now. Wider discussion of all these points is coming up.

v. The second debate will also be treated thematically below in the same q.[82]; so it can be passed over for now. But as to the value of the argument

² All three of these senses concern seeking "fulfillment" in the sense of what formally is fulfillment, namely, the "complete good" which is (as Boethius said) the *complement set* of goods to which an intellectual being is naturally inclined — goods like life, friendship, and knowledge of the truth. The three senses do not concern seeking "fulfillment" in the material sense of where complete good is to be found. It is to be found, says the Gospel, in God (*i.e.* in enjoying the Vision of God in the bliss of Heaven). A creature's "natural seeking" in sense (1) cannot be for God, because God is not an object of natural inclination in any being but God Himself. Senses (2) and (3) concern elicited acts of willing. (The distinction between inclinations and elicited acts was explained in section vi of Cajetan's comment on q.19, a.1.) In an elicited act, one distinguishes the specification of the act (the object being willed) from the exercise (the very doing of the act). The specification is natural when the object is provided by the willer's consciousness of the inclinations in his or her nature. "Having complete good" meets this test, to verify senses (2) and (3): "having God," an object provided by revelation and grace, not nature (in any being but God), does not. The exercise is natural when the will cannot fail to act. In this life, we can fail to will complete good (sense 3); but when we are seeing God as complete good, we cannot fail to will it (sense 2).

a.1

a.3 and a.4 ad 1

used here, please observe that our claim, understanding ranks above other acts, is not being supported by appeal to the object understood (as will be done later) but by appeal to the *manner* involved in understanding. Understanding comes about by “taking in” what is understood (and this covers everything), while loving (and willing in general) does not come about by taking in what is loved — rather the reverse. When the mind understands, it has the object understood within itself; but when the will loves, it goes out of itself, so to speak, towards the object loved. And since, other things being equal, it is more noble to have something than to tend towards it, understanding is nobler than any other operation, thanks to its distinctive *manner qua* intellectual. Thus, since God has His own essence as the object both of His understanding and of His willing, and the act of understanding is the nobler thanks to its manner, God is rightly called fulfilled thanks to His understanding.³ The same holds good for the others who are blessedly fulfilled, since as far as the object [understood] is concerned, they are all the same.

The third debate: enter Scotus

vi. Coming down, then, to the third debate, you need to know that Scotus holds the opposite (in his comments on *IV Sent.* d.49, q.4). Scotus wants fulfillment to be found primarily in an act of willing — not, indeed, one of delighting-in* but one of loving. He gets the conclusion sought by three arguments.

* *delectatio*

Scotus (a). An act of willing tends without any further act intervening towards God as ultimate purpose; hence an act of willing bears on the ultimate purpose (thus on the first object-for-desire) more immediately than the act of understanding does.

Scotus (b). Either willing is for the sake of understanding, or *vice-versa*, or neither is for the sake

³ Again, the last move in the argument does not seem to follow closely from the premises. Suppose it is broadly true, other things being equal, that having something is nobler than tending towards it, and that this is why, in general, acts of understanding are nobler than acts of willing, when the two sorts are isolated and compared. The fact remains that having *x* as an intentional object is a very thin sort of having, and tending towards *x* as a reality loved is a very rich sort of tending (indeed, a tending that springs from understanding). So it does not follow that the act which is merely understanding *x* is nobler than the particular will-act which is loving *x*, especially since the latter presupposes the former, builds upon it, and thus (in a way) includes it. Next, even if mere understanding is the nobler, it is still not clear why fulfillment should “therefore” be said to lie more exactly in the nobler act. Fulfillment is an integral state of well-being. It involves the success of understanding *and* willing (and other kinds of acts in creatures) because it is the best state of the whole. So why should fulfillment be a matter of (*consistere in*) any part? Perhaps *beatitudo consistit in intelligere* and *beatitudo consistit in velle* are alike senseless, because in fact it *consistit* in the being itself as a whole (*in ipso enti ut toto*) and as completed by sought goods (*et ut ab appetitis completo*).

of the other. The first alternative is perverse, as Anselm says in book II of *Cur Deus homo* [c.1], and the third is obviously impossible, leaving only the second. Therefore, loving is the purpose of understanding and hence is the more noble.

Scotus (c). [*Antecedent:*] Among interior states, the one most to be desired is willing something; so [*inference:*] fulfillment lies in willing something. The antecedent is proved both from the case of natural seeking (inclination) and from the case of free, upright appetite because [in both] the will is striving more for its own completion in [reaching] the ultimate purpose than for the intellect’s completion.

Many other arguments are also launched against our conclusion, reported by Capreolus in discussing *IV Sent.* d.49, q.2, which I am omitting for the sake of brevity, and because everything will become clear in the remarks to be made on q.82 and the solutions to be given here.

a.2, *contra conclusiones* 1, 2

Answering Scotus

vii. Notice that comparing the understanding and love of a fulfilled person is very different from comparing those of one still *en route* to fulfillment. Notice, too, that comparing understanding and love as unqualified terms is very different from comparing them as taken in this or that respect (*i.e.* by this or that classification). Both in unqualified terms and in a fulfilled person, understanding is the better and is the purpose of volition. But in a person still *en route*, love is preeminent, because it tends toward God in Himself [*secundum seipsum*].⁴ Likewise, in a certain respect, *i.e.* in its makeup as a change-agent, love holds first place. This is why our will is the reason we are called good or bad persons, and why the will’s act is called the best or the worst, and why the will tends towards God as the noblest kind of cause (I mean as a purpose-cause; for it belongs to a purpose to move a change-agent), and why the will is our mistress and is formally free. *etc.* But all these points pertain to being noble “in a certain respect.”

Point-by-point replies

viii. So, then, the answer to *Scotus (a)* is obvious. It goes wrong by mistaking a non-reason for a reason. To draw a conclusion about the fulfillment found in the utterly most perfect thing, one must be talking about being conjoined to that best thing [God, complete good] in itself [*absolute*], and not as a purpose.⁵

⁴ Hence the primacy of *caritas* in this life.

⁵ Scotus assumed that one act would be more noble than another *because of* proximity to the ultimate purpose. Cajetan denies that this is the reason and so accuses Scotus of mistaking a non-reason for the reason. But Cajetan is saying this on a subtle ground. He is not rejecting the general rule that, among acts bearing on a purpose *P*, those closer to *P* are nobler than those more remote. He is just insisting that the relevant closeness is not to *P qua* purpose but to *P qua* achieved reality. Now let *P* = man’s ultimate fulfillment as explained by Augustine and accepted by Scotus; then *P* is “having God” by “seeing Him,” and the intellectual act of “seeing” is the closer to *P* as an achieved reality.

The answer to *Scotus (b)* is also obvious: Anselm should be read as talking about love in a person still *en route*.⁶

The response to *Scotus (c)*, however, is that it is entirely worthless. For one thing, as the will with its natural seeking is more after volition, so also the intellect, with its natural seeking, is more after understanding. Every faculty tends with that sort of seeking to its own act, first. For another thing, it is false that, when doing free willing, the will seeks its own good more than the intellect's. Elicited act has been given by the Creator to the faculty of animate seeking for this purpose: that it should seek first the

⁶ This reading of Anselm may be correct, and so Cajetan's rebuttal may be off to a good start. But one would love to know what happened to the third alternative — that understanding and willing are so related that neither is for the sake of the other. No doubt, Cajetan did not have to eliminate it, because Scotus himself had rejected it as "obviously impossible." But why is it impossible? Take understanding and willing first as faculties. Are not both faculties "parts" of an intellectual being? And *qua* parts, are they not both "for the sake of the whole"? Now take understanding and willing as natural inclinations. Are they not again parts and thus both "for the sake of the whole"? Finally, take understanding and willing as acts, go back to the text and read Cajetan's response to *Scotus (c)*.

good of the living being as a whole. So if understanding is a greater completion of the living being as a whole than volition is, an upright will prefers understanding over volition.⁷

⁷ There we have it. As an elicited act, willing is for the sake of the overall good of the whole being. It is not for the sake of that being's intellectual act, however noble the latter may be. Of course, when the overall good of the whole being is understood to be securable by an act of understanding, an upright will desires that act above all. And such is the situation in Augustine's account of our fulfillment: complete good is secured by the intellectual act of "seeing God." That idea of Augustine's has dominated Aquinas' thought throughout this article (and will dominate it in q.82, in 2/1 q.3, and elsewhere). The Vision is "the whole reward;" ergo, as the Vision is our fulfillment, and ours is a copy of God's, God's fulfillment is His self-Vision.

Everything in this article would have been different if Aquinas had thought of God's fulfillment as His *integral* self-possession (which we distinguish conceptually into the intellectual, the volitional, and the essential). Then our fulfillment would have been a copy of *that*; and if the Vision remained "our whole reward," it would not have been so merely *qua* intellectual, but *qua* its whole self as a mysterious experience touching every faculty in us, glorifying eventually even our bodies. After all, when I am seeing God as my complete good, I am not just delighting in understanding Him, but also in willing as *He wills* and doing as *He does*.

Is God Himself the fulfillment of every blessedly fulfilled being?

2/1 *ST* q.3, a.3; In *IV Sent.* d.49, q.1, a.2, qu¹

It seems that God Himself is the fulfillment of every fulfilled being.

(1) After all, God is the highest good, as shown above, and it is impossible for there to be more than one highest good, as also shown above. So, since fulfillment is defined as the highest good, it looks as though fulfillment is nothing other than God.

(2) Besides, fulfillment is the ultimate purpose of rational nature. But being the ultimate purpose of rational nature belongs only to God. Therefore, the fulfillment of any fulfilled being is God alone.

ON THE OTHER HAND, one person's fulfillment is more than another's, according to 1 Corinthians 15: 41, "star differs from star in brightness." But there is no "more" to God. Therefore, fulfillment is something other than God Himself.

ANSWER: the fulfillment of an intellectual nature is found in an act of understanding. In that act, there are two things to consider: its object (what can be understood), and the act itself, which is understanding. If

fulfillment is looked at in terms of its object, then God alone is fulfillment; for by this alone is anyone fulfilled, namely, that he understands God. So says Augustine in the *Confessions*, book V: "Blessed is he that knoweth Thee, though he be ignorant of all else." But if looked at in terms of the act of understanding, fulfillment is a created item in fulfilled creatures. In God, however, it is uncreated, even as an act.

TO MEET THE OBJECTIONS — *ad* (1): as far as the object is concerned, fulfillment = the highest good of all; but as far as the act is concerned, in fulfilled creatures, it is not the highest good of all but the highest among those in which a creature can share.

ad (2): as Aristotle says [in *De Anima II*], 'purpose' is used for two items, *i.e.*, the thing for which one acts plus the [act] whereby one has or uses that thing. Thus a greedy man's purpose is money plus the acquiring of money. For a rational creature, therefore, God is indeed the ultimate purpose in the "thing" aspect; but created fulfillment is the ultimate purpose in the aspect of the "use" (or better: enjoyment) of the thing.

c.4;
PL 32, 708

c.4;
415b 20

Cajetan's Commentary

In the title question, 'fulfillment' is not to be limited to God's fulfillment but is to be taken unqualifiedly and across the board, for that of any fulfilled being.

ii. In the body of the article, two distinctions are drawn along with three conclusions. The first distinction is between fulfillment taken object-wise and taken form-wise (which is the act itself). The second is between God as a fulfilled being and fulfilled creatures. Conclusion (1) is: God is the object-wise fulfillment of all fulfilled beings. Augustine's authority is cited for this. Conclusion (2) is: God is not the form-wise fulfillment of fulfilled creatures. (3) is: God is the form-wise fulfillment of Himself. The only basis on which these last two are supported is the ground that a creature's act of understanding is something created, whereas God's is uncreated.

iii. *Re* conclusion (2), be aware that some authors, reported in Capreolus on *II Sent.* d.3, q.2, have attacked it. They were moved (a) by the perpetuity and infinity of the beatific Vision, (b) by the natural impossibility of infinitely many species being present intensively in one and the same created intellect. (c) by the possibility of the opposite affirmation, *i.e.*, that God's Act of understanding can be just as present to a created intellect as a created act can (and just as intimate to it) and (d) by authorities (Augustine and some philosophers).

iv. But these points are worth very little. The saints'

beatific Vision is something created, of finite perfection overall, though infinite in one respect, *i.e.*, object-wise. It is also invulnerable to cessation, even in terms of natural potency, because neither on the side of its subject, nor of its object, nor of their conjunction, is there any potentiality for it to break down. — Nor does it follow from this [finitude over-all] that the soul cannot receive so many intensive species at once, without there being many [species]. In the first place, the beatific Vision does not count as just another act of understanding: it belongs to a vastly more general and higher order.¹ Secondly, there is room [for many] among species to which there is natural potency, and in particular natural potency for many species in act at once, as will become more clear below in the treatise on the angels. — Also, it is impossible that my *living* operation should not arise from what is intrinsic to me, since the defining makeup of my being alive is found in this [in my doings' arising from me]; otherwise, the operation would be at once living and non-living. So, since fulfillment is a *living* operation of the fulfilled persons, it implies that the divine essence is not that [operation]. The antecedent is either false or else a figure-of-speech fallacy [taking what is understood for whereby] arising from things being equally present but in different ways. — The authorities have to be taken as speaking object-wise, if they are to be cited correctly.

¹ So the Vision is only *analogous* to "understanding."

Is every fulfillment included in God's fulfillment?

1 CG c.102

It seems God's fulfillment does not include every sort of fulfillment.

(1) After all, there are false fulfillments. Nothing can be false in God. Therefore, the divine fulfillment does not include every sort of fulfillment.

(2) Besides, according to some people, a certain fulfillment is found in bodily things — in pleasures, riches, and the like. These cannot pertain to God, since He is incorporeal. Therefore, His fulfillment does not include every sort of fulfillment.

q.4, a.2 ON THE OTHER HAND, fulfillment is a completeness. As already shown above, the divine completeness includes every completeness. Therefore, it concludes every sort of fulfillment.

ANSWER: whatever is desirable in any fulfillment, true or false, wholly pre-exists in a higher fashion in God's fulfillment. Take the happiness of contemplation: God has continual and utterly sure contem-

plation of Himself and everything else. Take the happiness of active life: God governs the whole universe.

Take the earthly happiness that lies in pleasure, wealth, power, social standing, and fame (says Boethius in *The Consolation of Philosophy III* [prosa 2]): for pleasure, Pl. 63, 724 God has joy about Himself and everything else; for wealth, the all-around sufficiency that riches promise; for power, omnipotence; for social standing, sovereignty over everything; for fame, the wonder of every creature.

TO MEET THE OBJECTIONS — *ad* (1): a case of fulfillment is false insofar as it falls short of the definition of genuine fulfillment, and to that extent it is not in God. But anything in it that bears a resemblance to fulfillment, however remote, pre-exists in its totality in the divine fulfillment.

ad (2): goods that are in bodies bodily are in God spiritually, in keeping with His mode of being.

These remarks suffice to cover the topics which pertain to
God's oneness of essence.

Cajetan's Commentary

In the title-question, 'every fulfillment' is quantifying over every *sort* of fulfillment. The phrase 'in God's fulfillment' does not mean His substantial or unqualifiedly first fulfillment (which the previous two articles were about), but His fulfilled *state* (which was the topic of article 1).¹ Thus the sense of the question is this: Is God in such a state of fulfillment as to have every kind of happiness and completeness?

ii. In the body of the article, a single conclusion answers the question: Whatever is desirable in any fulfillment, genuine or supposititious, pre-exists in the divine fulfillment in a higher manner. — This is supported case-by-case for the three kinds of happiness, contemplative, active, and earthly (the latter found in five things); all points are clear in the text.

iii. *Re* contemplative happiness, be aware that some readers take from Aristotle's words in *De Anima III*, "theoretical understanding says nothing about avoiding or pursuing," the idea that contemplative happiness is devoid of all delight and love (whereupon they gloss as best they can the talk of "marvelous pleasures" in *Ethics X*).
c.9; 432b.27
c.7; 1177a.26

But they have gone visibly wrong. Generally speaking, after all, intellectual pleasure follows upon contemplation of high things as a natural result, since pleasure necessarily follows upon optimal operation conjoined to its most natural object, as one sees from the account of pleasure in *Rhetoric I*. And the quote from *De Anima III* is not against this, because it is talking about animate appetite, not natural consequence, that is, it is talking about an appetitive act as chooseable, not one that comes as a natural consequence, as is the case here. — But coming down to the case at hand, there is no room for doubt here, because the beatific Vision is neither practical nor theoretical but of a higher order, pre-containing both in a higher manner.

Re the happiness of active life, be aware that some writers, having little penetration into the perfections of things and so not noticing that the completion of our active part lies in *doing*, have said practical happiness is found in an act of the will. But the text, for the reason stated, locates it in executive action, but of broad scope, *i.e.* the management of the universe. And rightly so; for the purpose of the practical is *doing*.

fulfillment as an overall state (nor about ours as such a state), but is only about His "first" or "substantial" fulfillment. Presumably, this means only to say that the act of understanding is where an intellectual being's fulfillment *starts* and is just the part of its overall fulfillment that is the core of it.

¹ Here is a distinction that the reader needed to have in view back in article 2. There we were told that God found fulfillment in understanding (as does any intellectual being). Now we are told that this claim is not about His ful-