

FOURTH QUESTION

On the principle of individuation¹

Having learned what body is with respect to its essence and with respect to its properties, another somewhat difficult question arises: how corporeal substance is individuated.

Because the solution to this question depends on the notion of matter and quantity, it is more fitting to discuss the matter here, after having discussed matter and quantity. The question really concerns the individuation of corporeal substances; but for the sake of the connection of this doctrine with others, we add a few things concerning the individuation of the human soul and of accidents.

FIRST ARTICLE

On the individuation of bodies

I. – THE STATE OF THE QUESTION IS EXPLAINED. In things that are composed of matter and form we see many things that coincide in species but differ in number; the whole and entire *ratio* of a species is in each, and nonetheless, whereas the individuals are multiplied, the species is not thereby multiplied. It is asked, therefore, how it is so that there are many substances without the species being multiplied such that there are many individuals that are substantially distinct but nonetheless coincide in the same nature. This is the celebrated and difficult question on the principle of individuation which seemed irresolvable to Bossuet.² And it is of great importance since it is, above all, convenient to discern the *ratio* and the properties of individuals from the *ratio* and properties of the species.

The individual is the primary substance itself, which the Philosopher calls *this something* (*hoc aliquid*, τὸδε τι) Now, four things pertain to the *ratio* of an individual. It is required that it: (1) be undivided in itself; (2) be divided from others, if there be any individuals that exist or are able to exist in the same species; (3) not be communicable in the same way in which a universal is attributed to singulars; (4) be something demonstrable and determinate to here and now.

And so the principle of individuation is that whereby nature is first rendered incommunicable and whereby it is distinguished from others of the same species. Now, individuals are distinguished intrinsically and substantially from each other. Therefore, that whereby they are first distinguished must be an intrinsic and substantial principle. For this reason the principle of individuation can be defined as: “A principle, not efficient but intrinsic and substantial, whereby a substance is *FIRST* multiplied without the species being multiplied; whereby nature is *FIRST* rendered incommunicable, and whereby it is *FIRST* distinguished from others of the same species” (*Principium, non quidem efficiens sed intrinsecum et substantiale, quo PRIMO fit ut multiplicetur substantia non multiplicata specie; quo*

¹ On the principle of individuation, see Aristotle, *Metaphysics* Book XI, ch. 8; St. Thomas, *ST* I.50; *Commentary on Boethius' De Trinitate* q. 4, a. 2; *On Being and Essence*, ch. II; the opusculum *De principio individuationis*; the opusculum *De natura materiae*, Ch. III; *Quodlibetal Questions* II, q. II, a. 4; Scotus, *2 Sent.* dist. 3, q. 1; Capreolus, *In Sent.* dist. 3, q. 1; Cajetan, *Commentary on Aquinas' On Being and Essence*, ch. 2, q. 5; Suarez, *Disput. Metaphys.*, disp. V; John of St. Thomas, *Phil. Nat.* q. IX, aa. III-V; Salmanticenses, tom. I, *De principio individuat.*; De Maria, *Ont.* Tract. II, q. III, a. V; Mercier, *Ont.* nn. 36ff; Nys, *Cosmologie*, nn. 211ff.

² Cf. *Logique*, liv. I, c. XXXIII.

PRIMO *natura redditur incommunicabilis, et PRIMO distinguitur a caeteris ejusdem speciei*).

Hence, we are dealing, not with an immediate principle but with the *first* root from which individuation arises and is derived.

II. – OPINIONS ARE PRESENTED. There are many opinions on this matter. (1) Aureolus, Durandus, Gregory Armenian, Gabriel Biel, and other nominalists—to whom are exacted Suarez and other more recent authors, such as Rosmini, Gioberti—hold that material substances are singular and individual of themselves; and so they posit the entity itself as the principle of individuation. The second opinion is that of Scotus: the Subtle Doctor thinks that nature is individuated through its ‘thisness’ (*haecceitas*), some positive mode, which is neither matter nor form nor the composite, but a mode of all of them, or the ultimate reality of matter, form, and the composite, which comes extrinsically to the nature and renders the nature indivisible into subjective parts. Hence, Scotus reaches this conclusion: “The principle of individuation is neither matter nor form nor quantity, but an individual property, namely, ‘thisness’.” (3) There were also some who assigned subsistence and existence as the principle of individuation, as Scotus relates.³ (4) Avicenna, Averroes, Zabarella, and some Scholastics place the principle of individuation in the substantial form. (5) The solemn position of the Thomists is that the first principle of individuation is matter signate by quantity (*materia signata quantitate*).

III. – FIRST CONCLUSION: “In matter-form composites the quiddity is not singular and individual *per se*.”

1st Argument. If the quiddity were essentially and *per se* individual, it would cause individual unity *per se* and essentially. But the quiddity of a material thing requires neither plurality nor unity *per se* and essentially. Therefore, the quiddity of a material thing is not *per se* and essentially individual. *Proof of the Minor.* From the words of St. Thomas: “For if plurality belonged to the *ratio* (of a nature), it could never be one, although nonetheless it is one according as it is in Socrates; similarly, if unity belonged to its concept and *ratio*, then the nature of Socrates and that of Plato would be one and the same, and it could not be multiplied in many [individuals].”⁴ See also what we said concerning this issue in *Major Logic*, Treatise I, a. 1.

2nd Argument. If quiddity were individual *per se*, it would be interchangeable with the individual, and consequently it could be predicated of the individual in the abstract. But in material things the essence is not predicated of the individual in the abstract; for one does not say, “Socrates is his humanity,” but rather, “Socrates is a man.” Therefore, the essence in material things is not individual *per se*.⁵

Objection. There is a distinction of reason between an essence and an individual, and similarly, there is distinction of reason between the concrete and the abstract, and hence it is that the essence in the abstract cannot be predicated of the individual in the concrete. **Reply.** The distinction between God and the Deity is one of reason, and nonetheless, the following proposition is true: “God is the Deity.” Therefore, the distinction of reason between an essence and an individual cannot prevent the truth of the proposition “Peter is his humanity.” Therefore, the distinction between the essence and the individual is not a distinction of reason, but a real distinction; therefore, the essence is not *per se*

³ FENELON also holds this view: “Whether if one wishes, in good faith, to consider actual existence without abstraction, it is true to say that it is precisely that which distinguishes one thing from another... This produced existence is the singular being or the individual.” *Traité de l’existence de Dieu*, II^e partie, c. IV.

⁴ *On Being and Essence*, Chapter 4.

⁵ Concerning this opinion, D. NYS rightly concludes that: “Such a solution is only acceptable in the absence of any other, for, in fact, it explains nothing.”

individual.

IV. – SECOND CONCLUSION: “A ‘thisness’ (*haecceitas*) that comes extrinsically cannot be the principle of individuation.”

Thisness can be taken in two senses: (1) as being the same as the individual difference, which formally makes a nature to be a singular *this*; (2) as being a mode that comes extrinsically. If Scotus only meant that nature formally becomes individual through an individual difference, then he spoke the truth, but missed the point of the difficulty. For we certainly admit that there is an individual difference, but we inquire what is the root and principle of this individual difference. – But if he argues that the principle of individuation is some mode that comes extrinsically, then he wandered off very far from the truth.

For one can argue against him thus: *Thisness* understood in this way is something either accidental or substantial. But neither can be admitted. Therefore. *Proof of the Minor with Respect to the First Part.* That which constitutes a primary substance or a substantial individual cannot be an accident. But *thisness* is supposed to constitute the substantial individual. Therefore, it is not an accident. *With Respect to the Second Part.* If it is something substantial, then it is either a substantial entity or a mode of a substance; if it is the entity itself, then we have already fallen into the opinion of the nominalists, which asserts that the entity itself of the thing is the principle of individuation; but if it is the mode of a substance, then it does not individuate but presupposes an already constituted substance and is founded in it, for a mode presupposes a thing that it modifies.

V. – THIRD CONCLUSION: “The principle of numeric individuation is not existence or subsistence.”

This hardly needs proof. Existence and subsistence are really distinct from the essence because they come (*adveniunt*) to an essence, and so they presuppose an already constituted and individuated essence. But if someone were to argue that existence is not really distinct from essence, but that it is the essence itself, we would further have to ask through what the essence and existence itself is individuated.

VI. – FOURTH CONCLUSION: “The principle of individuation is not a form.”

The principle of individuation must be an incommunicable root, as is evident from what we have said. But form is rather the principle of communicability. Therefore. *Proof of the Minor.* The form is the principle of specific degree. But a specific degree is of itself communicable to inferiors. Therefore, the form is the principle of communicability.

– Another argument: A specific difference is opposed to a numeric difference. But form is the principle of specific difference. Therefore, it is not the principle of numeric difference.

VII. – FIFTH CONCLUSION: “The principle of individuation is neither matter alone nor quantity alone.”

The principle of individuation is that whereby nature becomes determinate and incommunicable. But matter according to itself is indeterminate and indifferent to being in this or that individual. Therefore, matter alone is not the root of individuation. – Nor is quantity. For indeed, the principle of individuation is something substantial. But quantity of itself is an accident. Therefore.

VIII. – SIGNATE MATTER. – VARIOUS EXPLANATIONS. – Thomists unanimously teach that the principle of individuation includes both matter and quantity, but matter’s being signate through quantity is explained in various ways. Some say that signate matter is a certain aggregate of matter and actual or informing quantity, and they claim that this aggregate is the principle of individuation. Two things, they say, belong to the *ratio* of the individual: incommunicability and distinction from others; and

matter provides incommunicability, whereas quantity provides distinction from others. This is the view of Ferrara, Soncinas, and Nazarius. But this opinion is not satisfactory. Matter's being signate must inhere in the matter itself. But informing quantity inheres, not in matter, but in the whole composite. Therefore, matter does not become signate through informing quantity. Further, informing quantity, just like the other accidents, gives only accidental *esse*. But accidental *esse* cannot essentially constitute the individual. Therefore, informing quantity does not make matter signate. – Others defend the view that matter becomes signate through a certain substantial mode that comes from the nature of the thing and that is distinct from the matter and which determines it to this rather than that quantity. – But they posit this mode needlessly. Otherwise, this mode is either individuated by matter or is individual *per se*. If it is individuated by matter, then it is already presupposed that matter, without this mode, is the principle of individuation at least with respect to the mode; and for the same reason it would be the principle of individuation with respect to everything else. But if it is singular *per se*, then something is individuated *per se* without matter. Why are not the other modes and forms and accidents this way?⁶

IX. – THE TRUE NOTION OF SIGNATE MATTER. The true explanation, therefore, is the one that Cajetan, Bañez, John of St. Thomas, and the Salmanticenses give, namely: matter signate by quantity is prime matter itself, as pre-possessing in the manner of a root this quantity rather than that, or matter capable of having this quantity, such that it is not capable of having that quantity.⁷ Just as a thing marked with a seal comes to belong to someone in such a way that it cannot belong to another, so signate matter, or 'sealed' matter, is capable of having this quantity in such a way that it cannot be of another quantity.

Signate matter, therefore, means directly matter itself but indirectly the quantity that it connotes, just as the potency of matter directly signifies matter but indirectly the act that it receives and by what *ratio* it is defined. Therefore, the issue is to be understood thus: Matter is individuated *intrinsically* through a connotation of such a quantity, but *extrinsically* through the connoting quantity itself; in other words, *the relationship to this quantity* individuates in the manner of an intrinsic principle; but *this quantity* individuates in the manner of the extrinsic things connoted (*connotati*). Form is individuated by matter thus individuated, and the whole entity of the thing—from which the *thisness*, or the individual difference, is immediately derived—is finally individuated by the form. Therefore, signate matter is not said to be the principle of individuation in the sense that it is the individual difference itself, but because it is that from which the individual difference is first derived. Just as the intellectual soul is not the difference of man itself, namely, 'rational', but that from which it is derived, so signate matter is not the individual difference, but that which intrinsically causes it. And, just as a man is man both through its 'rational' as through its total formal principle and through the intellectual soul as through its partial formal principle by which 'rational' is caused, so an individual substance is constituted as *this* both through the individual difference as through its total principle and through signate matter as through its prior intrinsic cause by which that individual difference itself is caused.⁸

X. – SIXTH CONCLUSION: "Signate matter, in the sense explained, is the first principle of numeric individuation."

Proof. The principle of individuation must be substantial, intrinsic, and the principle of both incommunicability and of distinction from others. But signate matter exhibits all these things.

⁶ John of St. Thomas, *Phil. Nat.*, II P. q. IX, art. IV.

⁷ "The capacity of matter with regard to this quantity is not an adventitious property distinct from matter: rather, it is identical to it; in other words, it is matter itself, *affectée par nous d'une* relation with a reality that is to come." NYS, *Cosmologie*, n. 214.

⁸ From CAJETAN, Commentary on Aquinas' *On Being and Essence*, Ch. 2, q. 5.

Therefore. *Proof of the Minor*. (1) Matter in itself is an intrinsic and substantial principle and does not cease to be substantial by the fact that it becomes signate; for becoming signate is not an accident, but a transcendental relation to quantity. (2) It is a principle of incommunicability. For indeed, signate matter is capable of having this quantity in such a way that it is not capable of having another; indeed, it is not intelligible under some other quantity. But, if it is not intelligible under another quantity, it is impossible for it to be communicated to another which has some other quantity. Therefore, signate matter is incommunicable. (3) Signate matter, or matter that has a relation to this quantity, is the principle of distinction from others.

For it belongs to the *ratio* of quantity to have parts outside of parts or for one part not to be another. Therefore, two parts of quantity are in virtue of their essence distinct from each other, and similarly two quantities are *per se* distinct by their position and place. But that which is *per se* such is the cause of others. Therefore, quantity is the cause of the distinction of others. Therefore, matter that receives quantity B will be intrinsically distinct from matter that is related to quantity C. Consequently, a form that is received in matter that has quantity B will be intrinsically distinct from a form that is received in matter that has a relation to quantity C; but a distinction of forms implies a distinction of composites. Therefore, signate matter, or matter that has a relation to a determinate quantity, is the principle of distinction from others.

We have established, then, that the truth is as we asserted, namely, that matter becomes individual through its relation to quantity; that form is individuated by matter thus individuated and signate; and that the composite is individuated proximately by the form.

XI. – A DIFFICULTY IS HANDLED, AND IT IS EXPLAINED HOW MATTER RECEIVES THIS QUANTITY BEFORE THIS FORM.

We said that matter is individuated because it has a relation to quantity, and if this were established, the thesis would remain unshaken.

But an objection arises immediately: Matter is first (*prius*) related to that which is prior (*prius*) in the subject. But form is prior to quantity in the subject. Therefore, matter is first related to this numerically [one] form than to this numerically [one] quantity, and so it is not individuated by quantity but by form. **Reply.** *I distinguish the major:* that matter is first related to that which is prior in the thing in the *ratio* of dispositive and determinative cause, I concede; but that it is first related to that which is prior in the thing in the *ratio* of a purely dispositive cause, I deny. *I contradistinguish the minor:* that form is prior to quantity in the *ratio* of purely receptive cause, I concede; but that it is prior in the *ratio* of dispositive and determinative cause, I deny. *And I deny the conclusion.*

Explanation of the Solution. Form and quantity precede each other in diverse orders of causality. For in the genus of purely receptive cause, the substantial form is prior, since it is received in matter immediately, whereas the quantity is received mediately and after the reception of the form. But in the genus of dispositive cause, quantity is prior. For matter is related to this rather than that form only through dispositions which determine the potentiality of matter with respect to one form over another. For unless these dispositions coincided, matter would remain altogether indifferent. Therefore, matter is first related to the dispositions that determine it to a certain form than to the form itself, which is cause in a certain way by the dispositions and thus is posterior to them. But the first and most determinative of all dispositions is quantity. Therefore, matter is first related to quantity than form. *Proof of the Minor.* Quantity is the first accident, and it belongs to its *ratio* that it divides one part of matter from another, and when this division has been made, there result a distinction and a determination with respect to the matter thus divided; but matter thus divided and determined becomes capable of having such determined form. Therefore, quantity is that which most disposes and determines matter with respect to form. It is clear, therefore, that quantity is prior to form in the genus of dispositive cause.

Nor is it inconvenient that the same thing precedes and follows form under different respects.

For causes, as the axiom says, are causes of each other (*causae... ad invicem sunt causae*): thus the opening of the window—to use a trite example—under one *ratio* is the effect of the blowing wind, and is posterior to the blowing; under another respect it is its cause and it is prior to it; for the wind cannot enter unless the window is open. Therefore, this view rightly conceives how quantity can be prior to form in the genus of dispositive cause and posterior to in the genus of receptive cause.

Now, it is easy to understand why matter receives that which is prior (*prius*) in the *ratio* of dispositive cause before (*prius*) it receives that which is prior (*prius*) in the *ratio* of receptive cause. Since a disposition to form is the *ratio* of receiving a form, to be disposed to form is prior to receiving a form. Therefore, matter must relate first (*prius*) to that which disposes and determines it to form than to the form itself that is to be received. Since, therefore, quantity is a dispositive cause, matter must relate first to quantity than to form, and hence it happens that it is individuated through the connotation of this quantity and not through the connotation of this form.

XII. – ANOTHER DIFFICULTY IS RESOLVED BY APPLYING THE DISTINCTION OF LIMITED QUANTITY AND UNLIMITED QUANTITY.

It is hardly understandable how quantity can individuate. For indeed, quantity presupposes its subject. Therefore, it is posterior to the subject and, therefore, it does not individuate the subject but is rather individuated by it. **Reply.** *I distinguish the antecedent:* that a *limited* quantity presupposes its subject, I concede; but that *unlimited* quantity presupposes a subject, I deny. *I similarly distinguish the conclusion:* that, therefore, *limited* quantity is individuated by the subject, I concede; but that *unlimited* quantity is individuated by the subject, I deny.

Quantity can be seen in two ways: (1) as a perfect accident, as it inheres and informs, as it is perfected through the substantial form, which is its complement; (2) as it is an imperfect accident, abstracting from a certain terminus and figure. In the first case it presupposes a subject and is individuated by it; but thus taken, quantity is only a principle of individuation by extrinsic connotation. Seen in the second way, it does not presuppose a subject but is prior to it as a root that is pre-contained in the matter of individuation of that subject. Quantity in this respect is individual *per se*. For indeed, the subject is what makes quantity actually inhere and inform; but in virtue of its essence, and independently of the subject, it requires having parts outside of parts, whereby it happens that two parts of quantity and two quantities are *per se* distinct. Therefore, quantity is distinct and individual *per se* and in virtue of its essence.


– **But one could further insist on this objection:** Quantity cannot determine and individuate unless it itself is determinate. But it is not *per se* determinate, but only through the form. Therefore, form, not quantity, is the principle of individuation. **Reply.** *I distinguish the major:* that quantity cannot individuate unless it itself be determinate, in the sense that it refers to *this* numerically [one] quantity rather than *that*, I concede; but that it cannot individuate unless it itself be determinate by a last determination, such that it has a certain terminus and figure, I deny. *I contradistinguish the minor:* that quantity cannot be determined except through form by a last and perfect determination, I concede; but that it cannot be determined except through form by a determination present in it such that it refers to *this* numerically [one] quantity rather than *that*, I deny. *And I deny the conclusion.*

Explanation of the Solution. The Salmanticenses say: “*Determinate (determinata)* quantity is distinct from *limited (terminata)* quantity. For determinate quantity means quantity as numerically *this* quantity and not that, not caring whether it is limited and complete through substantial form or whether it has this or that magnitude, and in this way it is the principle of individuation, insofar as it is pre-contained in matter. But limited quantity means the same quantity as being posterior in nature to the substantial form, through which it is limited and formed; and similarly it implies according to that *ratio* that it has a certain magnitude, e.g., two cubits long; and taken in this sense it is not the principle of

individuation.”⁹

Therefore, in order for quantity to be able to individuate, a last and complete limitation is not required; it suffices that it affirms numerically *this* rather than that quantity. For two quantities, since they are *per se* distinct, divide *per se* one portion of matter from another; but after that division is done, there results, as we said, a distinction with respect to matter thus divided, and from matter distinguished that way there results a distinction with respect to the form. Therefore, for quantity to be the principle of individuation, it suffices that the determination that is present in it affirms numerically *this* rather than that quantity. Now, this determination does not come from the substantial form; for we have already shown how, by the benefit of the preceding dispositions, matter is first related to this numerically [one] quantity than to this numerically [one] form. Therefore, this numerically one quantity is contained radically in matter before this numerically one form, and hence the determination to this numerically one quantity is prior to the determination of the substantial form.

The said distinction between limited quantity and unlimited quantity is especially to be kept in mind. For, if by ‘matter signate by quantity’ one understands matter that has actually complete quantity and that is actually inhering in the manner of an intrinsic and informing cause, this ‘matter signate by quantity’ is no longer the principle of individuation with respect to its *being* (*quoad esse*), but with respect to its *being known and being demonstrated* (*quoad cognosci et demonstrari*), as the Salmanticenses warn, insofar as it is its inseparable sign. But if ‘signate matter’ means matter itself as pre-containing this quantity rather than that in the manner of a root and foundation, then it is the principle of individuation also with respect to being (*quoad esse*), as our arguments show.

XIII. – LAST DIFFICULTY. Given that we have employed the said distinction, an objection which many great authors make topples. The individual remains the same and the quantity varies; in fact, God can remove the quantity while the individual remains. But the principle of individuation is invariable. Therefore, it is not quantity. **Reply.** The quantity that varies, which can be removed by God, is limited quantity, quantity as informing and as inhering. But, even if the individual remains, there remains in the matter the same, constant determination to *this* numerically [one]  or some other; hence the kind of quantity that is the principle of individuation, namely, quantity as pre-possessed and pre-contained in matter in the manner of a root, is invariable and inseparable from matter.¹⁰ Therefore, *I distinguish the conclusion*: that informing and limited quantity is not the principle of individuation, I concede; but that unlimited and pre-contained matter is not the principle of individuation, I deny.

⁹ *De princip. Individ.* Tract. I, disp. I, dub. V, n. 132.

¹⁰ “Nevertheless, under ordinary circumstances, each species of body has natural dimensions that distinguish it from others, and it is precisely this normal volume, whose variations are contained between two extremes that are often approached, that is in question here.” Nys, *Cosmologie*, n. 215.

SECOND ARTICLE

Application of the aforesaid doctrine to the individuation of the human soul and to the individuation of accidents

I. – THE PRINCIPLE OF INDIVIDUATION IN MAN. We can examine three things in man: the body, the soul, and the composite. The body, or the matter, is individuated because it is related to this numerically [one] quantity; the soul becomes individual because it has a transcendental order to this body; and the composite, finally, is proximately individuated because it is informed by this soul. Even though these points can be somewhat established from the preceding discussion, nonetheless we shall now prove them again specifically, especially with respect to the soul. Hence, it is the case that:

II. – CONCLUSION: “The principle of individuation of the human soul is a transcendental order to the body.”

Proof. The principle of individuation of the soul is that whereby this soul first differs from that one. But this soul differs from that because it has a transcendental order to this body, and that soul to that body. Therefore, the principle of individuation of the soul is the soul’s transcendental order to this body. *Proof of the Minor.* The human soul is essentially the form of the body, such that the *esse* of the human body does not follow the human soul, but makes the soul human. But by the very fact that it is essentially the form of the human body, it essentially implies a commensuration or relation to the human body. Therefore, the commensuration of the soul to the human body does not follow a soul that is already human, but makes the soul human. Thus, *this* human soul is essentially the form of *this* body, such that the *esse* of the act of this body does not follow this soul, but makes it *this* soul. But the form of this body necessarily and essentially implies a commensuration, an ‘accurate joining together’ or relation to this body; for ‘this act’ signifies an essential relation to ‘this potency’. Therefore, commensuration or relation to this body does not follow this soul, but makes it *this* soul. Therefore, the principle whereby the soul is *this* or *that* soul comes from the commensuration to this or that body; and for that reason, the relation or ‘accurate joining together’ to this body is the principle of individuation of the intellectual soul. – This is so in man in a similar way to the way it is so in individuals in general, namely, the body or matter is individuated because it is related to this numerically [one] quantity, and the soul is made individual by the body thus individuated, and the whole individual human is individuated by the soul.

III. – THE INDIVIDUATION OF THE SOUL, HOWEVER, IS NOT [PRODUCED] BY THE BODY AS BY AN EFFICIENT CAUSE. We must expressly note that the individuation of the soul does not depend on the body *causally*, but only *as an occasion (occasionaliter)*. For ‘form’ is threefold: there is a form that is made *from* matter and *in* matter, as the form of a stone or the soul of an ox; another that is made neither *from* matter nor *in* matter, as the angel; and a third form that is *in* matter but is *not* made *from* matter or *out of* matter, namely, the human soul. Therefore, our soul does not receive being *causally* from matter.

Nonetheless, since the soul is *this* soul only due to the fact that it is the form of this body and that it implies a commensuration to this body, hence it follows that the body is a condition without which this soul attains neither *esse* nor unity. Therefore, the multiplication of bodies is an occasion *in becoming (occasio in fieri)* of the multitude of souls. But when an occasion in becoming ceases to be, the effect does not thereby cease to be with respect to its *esse*; hence when this body ceases to be, this soul does not thereby cease to be. For this reason **the individuation of the soul is in no way prevented by the**

Mortality of the body.

We conclude with a few words: The transcendental relation of the soul to this body is the soul's intrinsic principle of individuation, and this relation always remains in the soul, even after the destruction of the body, but this body is not its cause, properly speaking, but a necessary condition for the individuation of the intellectual soul, and if this condition ceases to be, the individuation does not thereby cease.


IV. – DIFFICULTY RESOLVED. *Objection.* The soul is not individuated by the body, but the body by the soul. For the body remains numerically the same in childhood, youth, and old age. But it does not receive its being numerically the same from quantity, which exists in perpetual flux and change. Therefore, it receives it from the soul, which is invariable. ***Reply.*** *I distinguish the minor:* that it does not receive its being numerically one from actual and informing quantity, I concede; but that it does not receive its being numerically one from an essential relation to quantity, I deny. *And I deny the conclusion.*

The solution can be derived from what we discussed above. That which varies in the body is inhering and informing quantity; but the relation to this numerically [one] quantity rather than that other remains always and invariably.

The objection only shows that the body is not individuated through inhering quantity, which we already conceded of our own initiative; but in no way does it prove that the body is not individuated through an essential relation to quantity as radically pre-contained in matter.

Otherwise, here an equivocation can easily creep in. For, by 'body' one can understand either matter itself or the composite itself.

Matter becomes individual directly through its connotation of quantity, whereas the human composite is individuated by signate matter as by a first principle and proximately and immediately by the soul itself. Hence, that that composite always remains numerically the same comes *proximately* from the soul; but one cannot thereby conclude that signate matter is not the *first* and *radical* principle of individuation.

V. – ON THE INDIVIDUATION OF ACCIDENTS. – OPINIONS. Durandus, Suarez, and many others hold that an accident is individuated *per se* insofar as it such and such an entity in act or in  aptitude. Thomas, the Salmanticenses, and the Thomists unanimously hold that accidents are individuated by the subject, which is, as it were, their matter.

VI. – CONCLUSION: “Besides unlimited quantity, which is *per se* individual, all accidents are individuated by their own subject.”

We have sufficiently discussed quantity: unlimited quantity is individuated *per se* because in virtue of its essence it has parts outside of parts, but limited quantity is related to the subject like any of the other accidents concerning which is the present conclusion.

Proof of the Thesis. (1) From the Authority of St. Thomas: “Accidents are individuated through their subject: we say ‘this white’ insofar as it is in this subject.”¹¹ “But just as accidents have *esse* in the subject, so they receive unity and multitude from the subject.”¹² – “We must note that accidents are not individuated through prime matter, but are individuated through their own subject, which is *ens* in act.”¹³

(2) From Reason. 1st Argument. A numeric difference is a material difference just as a specific difference is a formal difference. But a material difference must come from matter just as a formal

¹¹ ST I.29.1.

¹² ST I.29.3.

¹³ Opusc. XXIX.

difference is taken from the form. Therefore, the numeric difference of accidents is traced back to their matter. But the matter of accidents is their subject. Therefore, the numeric difference of accidents originates from the subject—not taken materially, of course, since in the same subject taken materially there can be many accidents, but taken formally insofar as it underlies *the same action, of the same agent, and at the same time*.

2nd Argument. The principle of individuation must be the cause of incommunicability and distinction from others. But the principle of incommunicability and distinction is not traced back to the accident itself, but to its subject. Therefore, an accident is not individuated *per se* but through its subject. *Proof of the Minor.* Accidents, as such, are acts and forms. But a form of itself is communicable, unless [its being communicated is] prevented and limited. Therefore, the principle of incommunicability is not derived from the accident itself.

– But from the subject. For indeed, the subject taken formally is that which underlies *the same action of the same agent and at the same time*. But from the very fact that an accident is received in such a subject, it becomes incommunicable to another [accident] that underlies other actions, or to other times; and similarly it is distinct from an accident that is received in another subject that underlies another action or another time. Therefore, the subject taken formally is the principle of incommunicability and distinction.

VII. – DIFFICULTIES RESOLVED. 1st Objection. Signate matter is the principle of individuation of substance. Therefore, *a fortiori* it is the principle of individuation of accidents. **Reply.** *I deny the conclusion.* For accidents are secondary forms and have *esse secundum quid*. Therefore, they require a subject that already has a first form and *esse simpliciter*, and this is the composite.

2nd Objection. A thing is made numerically one through that through which it is an *ens*. But an accident is made an *ens* through its own entity. Therefore, it is made one thing through its own entity; that is to say, it is individuated *per se*. **Reply.** *I distinguish the major:* that a thing becomes numerically one through that through which it is made an *ens*, as through a proximate and immediate principle, I concede; but that a thing becomes numerically one through that through which it is made an *ens*, as through a first and radical principle, I deny. *I distinguish the conclusion:* that, therefore, an accident becomes numerically one through its own entity, as through a proximate and immediate principle, I concede; but that it does so as through a first, radical principle, I deny.

– In this whole question we are dealing with the first principle and root of individuation, whether we speak in reference to substance or to accidents. For, if we are discussing the proximate principle of individuation, we could concede that the composite is individuated *per se* through its individual difference and less remotely through the substantial form. But that in no way prevents signate matter from being the remote and radical principle of individuation. Similarly, we acknowledge that accidents are individuated *proximately* through their entities insofar as each of these is a *this*, but we inquire the *first* cause of why they are *this*. We have shown, however, that these are *this* due to the fact that the subject is *this* and, therefore, that the subject is the *first* and *radical* principle of the individuation of accidents.

VIII. – COROLLARY I: “It is impossible for two accidents that are only numerically distinct to be compatible [i.e., can exist simultaneously] in the same subject.”

This is the position of the Thomists against Aureolus, Scotus, Suarez, etc. The Angelic Doctor says: “It is impossible for many accidents of one species to be in the same subject.”¹⁴

The argument is very keen. Accidents of the same species in the same subject would be two and not two at the same time, but this is most manifestly impossible. – They would be two, as it is supposed; but they would not be two, because they would be neither formally nor numerically distinct.

¹⁴ *Commentary on Aristotle’s Metaphysics* Book V, Lect. 12 (text 12).

– They are not formally distinct, for they are supposed to be of the same species, but those things which coincide in the same species are formally the same. Nor are they numerically distinct, for indeed the principle of individuation and numerical multiplication is the subject. But there is only one subject in this case. Therefore, these two accidents would be numerically one.

– **Objection:** The same subject can receive many accidents of different species simultaneously. Therefore, it can also receive many accidents that are only numerically distinct. **Reply.** *I deny the conclusion.* For the subject has diverse potencies in relation to specifically distinct accidents; in fact, it has as many potencies as there are species of accidents in it, but it comes under one potency in relation to one species and to the accidents of one species. This potency cannot be formally diversified except per **connotationem** of diverse times. But the subject taken formally underlies the same action of the same agent at the same time. Therefore, it cannot be formally diversified; therefore, it cannot receive accidents that are only numerically distinct.

IX. – COROLLARY II. Hence we can now understand the very popular axiom: “An accident does not migrate from one subject into another” (*Accidens non migrat de subjecto in subjectum*), that is, it cannot occur that an accident that was in a prior subject passes into another subject while remaining numerically the same, but it is necessary that a new accident be produced. Thus, when motion is propagated from one mobile being to another, there are two numerically diverse motions [that is, one in the mover and one in the moved]. For, since there is a new subject, there is a new and distinct principle of individuation.
