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Antoine Côté:

Siger and the skeptic

Most assessments of Siger of Brabant's contribution to philosophy have tended to focus on his adoption of Averroistic noetics, a position he would later renounce, and on his supposed role as the factious leader of a group of "Latin Averroists" within the Faculty of Arts, an enduring myth finally put to rest by R.-A. Gauthier.[1] He is now more accurately viewed as a staunch and indeed unrepentant proponent of philosophy as an autonomous discipline, a man who believed that the professional philosopher should go about his business exploring Aristotle's arguments wherever they might lead, an attitude both reckless and admirable, for which he would come to some grief toward the end of his short life.[2]

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[1] See the seminal two-part article by René-Antoine Gauthier, "Notes sur Siger de Brabant, I. Siger en 1265," *Revue des Sciences philosophiques et théologiques* 67 (1983): 201–232, and "Notes sur Siger de Brabant, II. Siger en 1272–1275, Aubry de Reims et la scission des Normands," *ibid*., 68 (1984): 3–49. In the following I will be discussing principally two works of Siger, the *Impossibilia* and the *Questions on the Metaphysics*. All references to the *Impossibilia* are to Bernardo Carlos Bazán's edition, Siger de Brabant, *Écrits de logique, de morale et de physique*, Philosophes Médiévaux, 14 (Louvain: Publications universitaires/ Paris: Béatrice-Nauwelaerts, 1974), 67–97. When quoting from this work I shall refer to it as *I*, followed by the number of the *impossibile* according to the order in which it appears in the edition, followed by the page number and the lineation. Two editions exist of the *Questions on the Metaphysics*, a work that has survived in four different "reportations," i.e., student notes, each in a different manuscript. William Dunphy published an edition based on the reportations found in two manuscripts, one in Munich and another in Vienna: Siger de Brabant, *Quaestiones in Metaphysicam*, Philosophes Médiévaux, 24 (Louvain: Publications universitaires/ Paris: Béatrice-Nauwelaerts, 1981); Armand Maurer followed a couple of years later with two editions of the same work, the first based on a Cambridge manuscript, the second on a Parisian one, the latter probably being the reportation taken by Godfrey of Fontaines. Both editions are published in Siger de Brabant, *Quaestiones in Metaphysicam*, Philosophes Médiévaux, 25 (Louvain: Publications universitaires/ Paris: Béatrice-Nauwelaerts, 1983). As the texts of these editions sometimes differ significantly in wording, I shall refer to the one whose wording is clearest—but I shall not quote from Godfrey's reportation. The two editions from which I will quote will be abbreviated respectively as *QiMD* and *QiMM*, followed in each case, first, by the book number in Roman numerals, then the question number, and finally the page and lineation when necessary. A complete bibliography of Siger, including both the edited work and secondary literature, is found on http://www.mapageweb. umontreal.ca/pironetf/Siger/SigerBiblio.pdf

[2] In 1277, Siger, together with two other clerics from Liège, was summoned at Saint-Quentin by the Inquisitor of France, Simon du Val, under the suspicion of heresy. What happened immediately afterwards is a matter of some dispute. Some historians claim that Siger fled to Italy. But according to Gauthier, Siger stood trial and was probably acquitted (See "Notes sur Siger de Brabant, II," 27).

The bulk of his writings are made up of commentaries on works by, or attributed to, Aristotle, but he is also the author of a number of disputed questions on ethics, logic and natural philosophy, all heavily indebted to Aristotle as well. He owes much—unsurprisingly—to Averroes, and Arab philosophers generally, but he was also influenced by Thomas Aquinas, whom he greatly admired. However, Siger was not uncritical of his sources, and although I know of no instance where he disagrees philosophically with Aristotle, he did, at times, openly disagree with both Aquinas and, to a lesser degree, with Averroes.[3] This critical stance toward his predecessors has led William Dunphy to talk of a "Sigerian interpretation of Aristotle" or a "Sigerian Aristotelianism."[4]

Siger often voices objections or difficulties not directly addressed by Aristotle that he attempts to resolve using Aristotelian principles. This is specifically the case with his refutation of skepticism, a topic to which Siger devoted considerable attention.[5] Siger's discussion is interesting for two reasons. First, in arguing against skepticism, he presents the outlines of a plausible and indeed appealing theory of perception, distinct in its focus from those of Averroes and Aquinas whose commentaries he made greatest use of in the preparation of his own commentary. Second, his discussions offer invaluable insight into the assumptions of Aristotle's theory of perception and to its medieval reception, a theory that would remain influential until the advent of the Modern Age, and indeed some versions of which are still today looked upon longingly by some proponents of "direct" or "commonsense" realism. In this paper, I shall focus essentially on the first

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[3] In his commentary of Book III of the *Metaphysics* Siger asks whether there is a first efficient cause of all effects, and notes that this is the opinion of Aristotle, Avicenna, Proclus and almost all Peripatetics. He adds, however, that "authority alone is not sufficient in the search for truth…," *QiMM*, III, q. 5, 84, 39. Elsewhere he writes that basing oneself on an idea's popularity (*famositate*) as a ground for its truth is to rely on the reason of others as if one did not possess reason or intellect oneself. *QiMM*, IV, q. 33, 179, 13–15. Siger believed that doctrines in matters of faith were true, but that, in most cases—creation being an exception—their truth could not be proved by reason. He also believed however that there were arguments whose conclusions were contrary to those of faith that could not be disproved by reason, which was not to say that they are true. As a result, Siger felt that the expositor of Aristotle should feel no qualms about exploring any of the Philosopher's arguments, for if the conclusions of any of those arguments were contrary to those of faith that meant they contained some fallacy discoverable by reason, or if philosophical discussion could reveal no fallacy, at the very least it meant that they were wrong. In one text, Siger chided Aquinas for purposely "covering-up"—or so Siger seems to insinuate—the Philosopher's intention, presumably because he was scared of the conclusions. (*QiMM*, III, q. 15, 110; see also II, q. 14, 58). An even more severe rebuke can be found in Siger's commentary on the *Book of Causes*, Quaestio <2>, *Les Quaestiones super librum de causis de Siger de Brabant*, ed. Antonio Marlasca, Philosophes Médiévaux, 12 (Louvain: Publications universitaires/ Paris: Béatrice-Nauwelaerts, 1972), 40.

[4] On Siger's attachment to the spirit of the Philosopher right until the end of his short professorial career, see Fernand Van Steenberghen, *La philosophie au XIIIe siècle*, Philosophes Médiévaux, 9 (Louvain: Publications universitaires/ Paris: Béatrice-Nauwelaerts, 1966), 391, and Antonio Marlasca's comments in his introduction to his edition of Siger's commentary on the *Book of Causes*, 25–29.

[5] See Van Steenberghen, *La philosophie au XIIIe siècle*, 270.

point, basing my discussion on the second of Siger's *Impossibilia* as well as on his commentary on Aristotle's *Metaphysics*.

I

The skeptic's argument in the Impossibilia. Siger is the author of six *impossibilia*, disputed sometime between 1270 and 1273.[6] *Impossibilia* are best described as a type of *sophisma*, once defined by Norman Kretzmann as "a sentence puzzling in its own right or on the basis of a certain assumption, designed to bring some abstract issue into focus," which figured prominently in the University curricula starting in the second half of the 13th century.[7] The definition could apply equally to *impossibilia*, the difference being that an *impossibile* was viewed not merely as a puzzling sentence but as a downright absurd one. As was the case with *sophismata*, at least initially, *impossibilia*, were used as exercises in the Faculty of Arts, geared toward helping students hone their dialectical skills, and readying them for the exacting discipline of the *disputatio*.[8]

Siger's *Impossibilia* deal with several kinds of impossibility: metaphysical impossibility, as in *I*1 ("God does not exist"); physical impossibility, as in *I*3 ("The Trojan war is happening in this instant") and *I*4 ("Some unimpeded, upward lying heavy object would not fall"); ethical impossibility, as in *I*5 ("In human affairs there is no evil action in virtue of whose evil that action should be prohibited or someone punished for committing it"); logical impossibility, as in *I*6 ("It is possible for something to both be and not to be, and for contradictories to be true of each other or of the same thing"); and finally, epistemic impossibility, as in *I*2: "everything that appears to us are illusions (*simulacra*) and similar to dreams, so that we are not certain of the existence of anything."

Making the skeptical argument an example of *impossibile* is in itself a significant move on Siger's part and needs underscoring at the outset: Skepticism is simply not viewed as

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[6] See Bernardo Bazán, Siger de Brabant, Écrits de logique, de morale et de physique, 26, and Martin Grabmann's still valuable monograph: Die Sophismataliteratur des 12. und 13. Jahrhunderts, mit Textausgabe eines Sophisma von Boetius von Dacien: ein Beitrag zur Geschichte des Einwirkens der aristotelischen Logik auf die Ausgestaltung der mittelalterlichen philosophischen Disputation, Beiträge zur Geschichte der Philosophie und Theologie des Mittelalters, XXXVI,1, (Münster i. W.: Aschendorff, 1940). For a general presentation of Siger's Impossibilia, see Fernand Van Steenberghen, Maître Siger de Brabant, Philosophes Médiévaux, 21 (Louvain-Paris: Publications universitaires-Vander-Oyez, 1977), 92–94.

[7] Norman Kretzmann, "Socrates is Whiter than Plato Begins to be White," *Noûs* 11 (1977): 6. There is abundant literature dealing with the topic of *sophismata*. One recent and thorough treatment on *sophismata* as a literary genre and its relation to disputations is Olga Weijers, *La 'disputatio' à la Faculté des arts de Paris (1200–1350 environ), esquisse d'une typologie*, (Turnhout: Brepols, 1995), 68–91.

[8] See Pierre Mandonnet, *Siger de Brabant et l'averroïsme latin au XIIIe siècle*, 2nd edition, Les Philosophes Belges: textes et études, 6 (Louvain: Institut supérieur de philosophie, 1911), 124–125, and Olga Weijers, *La 'disputatio,'* 86.

posing a credible theoretical threat.[9] When all is said and done, Siger views all skeptical arguments, however clever, as pieces of sophistry devoid of any real purchase on our actual beliefs.[10]

The general position the skeptic wants to argue for is that "one ought not to trust a power to which something appears that is mere appearance, unless another power judges that it is so."[11] By "power" Siger (and the skeptic) means cognitive powers—that is, the senses and the intellect. One of the consequences of this position, quite apart from the fact that it leads to an infinite regress, is that it implies that the senses in and of themselves are not trustworthy sources of knowledge, and indeed that they are not sources of knowledge at all. The skeptic, Siger tells us, argued for this position in two ways.

His first argument is that a sense that is prone to illusion can generate no certitude with respect to its objects.[12] By "prone to illusion", the skeptic presumably means that the senses sometimes lead us astray, and he could be implying that for a power to generate *bona fide* knowledge it must always generate veridical perceptions. The senses would be trustworthy only if they were infallible. Thus construed the argument is really quite powerful and it is not clear that Siger has grasped its full force for he merely points out in his answer to it that the inference from "this sense has led me astray once before" to "therefore it will lead me astray again" is fallacious.

> To the first argument against <our position> it must be said that although something may appear to a power in one of its sensations which is a mere appearance so that this sensation is not to be trusted, <it does not follow> that that power is not to be trusted in another of its sensations.[13]

Yet, even if Siger had grasped the full force of the objection he would probably have rejected it outright. Siger, following Aristotle, believed that sensation involved three elements: the sensible object, the medium and the sense organ. Although Aristotle had explained that, in the act of perception, the sensible quality in actuality and the sense in actuality were one,[14] a view Siger naturally agrees with, Aristotle also felt that the fact

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[9] See *QiMM*, IV, q. 37, 186, 61–65.

[10] A similar dismissal of the arguments invoked against the existence of motion is to be found in an anonymous series of questions on Aristotle's *Physics*. No attribution is found in the sole manuscript in which this Commentary is contained, but it is Sigerian in style and content, and its attribution to Siger is accepted, or at least viewed as highly probable, by many scholars. *Ein Kommentar zur Physik des Aristoteles aus der Pariser Artistenfakultät um 1273*, ed. Albert Zimmermann, (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter & co., 1968). See in particular questions 9, 10 and 11. See Van Steenberghen, *Maître Siger de Brabant*, 196 regarding the possible Sigerian authorship of this work.

[11] *I*2, 73, 7–9.

[12] *I*2, 73, 9–10.

[13] *I*2, 76, 75–80: "Ad rationem primam in oppositum dicendum quod, quamquam alicui virtuti una eius sensatione appareat aliquid quod sit apparentia tantum et illi sensationi eius non credatur, non tamen oportet quod illi virtuti secundum aliam eius sensationem non credatur per se quod ita sit in re."

[14] Aristotle, *On the Soul*, 3.2.425b26.

that the sensible quality must cross a medium and be received in the sense meant that it might not be received *as it is* in the sensible object, either because of the indisposition of the medium or of the organ.[15] In a sense, the physics of perception makes some measure of error inevitable.

The skeptic's second argument proceeds in three steps. He argues first that just as (A) we do not believe (*creditur*) that something that appears to a sense is an illusion unless a superior power judges it to be so (…*hoc diiudicantem*), so too (B) the sense will not be believed (*non credetur*) unless a superior power judges (*diiudicet*) that it is not an illusion.[16] The skeptic then takes B as the major of his second argument which runs thus:

> **P** We must not believe a sense to which things appear that are mere illusions unless another power judges that this is so.

> **P** But *all* senses are such that things appear that are mere appearances.

> **C** Therefore we must not believe any sense that things are such as they appear.[17]

Finally, the skeptic goes on to argue that if we cannot trust the senses, then we cannot trust the conclusions proceeding from a superior power either, as all certitude ultimately derives from the senses.[18]

Siger provides two distinct answers to this second argument. His first answer is to reject the inference from A to B. He justifies this rejection by saying "that it does not belong to the nature of a sense to which something appears that is illusion to judge (*iudicare*) that it is an illusion. One does not turn to it, but to some other (faculty) to whom it belongs to judge, such as the intellect."[19] However, Siger tells us, we *are* entitled to take the sense's word for it that a particular perception is *not* an illusion provided "no deception is made manifest by a more worthy sense or by a concept derived from a more worthy sense," in which case "it ought to be believed as veridical without (appeal to) a superior faculty."[20]

Thus, whereas the skeptic says that the sense must appeal to the superior power both to judge that something is an illusion and to judge that it is veridical, Siger contends that it is only necessary to appeal to the superior power to judge that something is an illusion. The position might strike one as odd in the sense that it seems to attribute to the senses the capacity to judge that something is not an illusion (but not that something is) and to the intellect the capacity to judge that something is an illusion (but not that something is not an illusion). The difficulty here might be due in part to Siger's use of the word 'judgement'. Following medieval practice, Siger sometimes talks about the senses as

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[15] *QiMM*, IV, q. 9, 148, 19–24.

[16] *I2*, 73, 10–14.

[17] *I2*, 73, 14 – 74, 18.

[18] *I2*, 74, 18–22.

[19] *I2* 76, 90–94.

[20] *I2*, 76, 94–97.

able to "judge" (*diiudicare*[21]). In *I*2 76, 90–94, however, where he refers explicitly to intellect, *in contradistinction to sense*, as "some other (faculty) to whom it belongs to judge (*iudicare*)," he is using the word in its technical sense of affirming and denying. Siger's point is simply that the testimony of the sense (its "judgement") in certain specific cases is a sufficient reason for believing that things are as the sense senses them. Recourse to a superior power—the intellect, whose proper act is judgement—is not necessary; whereas such recourse becomes necessary in order to believe that some deliverance is non-veridical. What Siger wants to say, then, is that sense deliverances, or at least certain types of sense deliverances, are veridical by default and hence credible *per se*, a position we will see him defend at length.

Siger's second answer to the second argument is to say that by requiring the sanction of another faculty to validate the testimony of the senses is to demand an explanation (*rationem quaerere*) for what is known *per se*; but this would amount to requiring an explanation for everything, from which it follows that nothing will have an explanation. Also, if every belief requires a demonstration of its truth, an infinite regress of explanations will ensue, and therefore there will be no first cause of belief.[22] The arguments only work, of course, if we assume that the senses do yield obvious, *per se* knowledge, but this, as we will now see in more detail, is precisely Siger's point.

II

Sense and evidence. The point is stated succinctly in his *solutio*:

> It must be said that we are certain of the existence of certain things, and <that> all <appearances> are not merely illusions and passions of sentient subjects. Thus we are certain of the existence of things that appear to our senses, provided that sense is not contradicted by a more worthy sense or a reason (*intellectus*) taken from a more worthy sense. We are also certain by the intellect of the existence of certain intelligibles, provided the reason (*intellectus*) is not contradicted by a more worthy reason or <one> taken from a more worthy sense, or by a more worthy sense.[23]

Siger's solution to the skeptic's challenge is based on a distinction between what he calls "more and less worthy senses." It is, he contends, the failure to take this distinction into account that has led philosophers into error.[24] Siger lists three errors that have arisen as a result of this failure. The first error is to infer from the fact that some sense deliverance

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[21] See also *I*2, 75, 53.

[22] *I*2 76, 98–103. See also *QiMM*, IV, q. 36, 187, 66–69.

[23] *I*2, 74, 33–39: "Dicendum quod nos sumus certi de existentia aliquarum rerum, et non sunt omnia simulacra et passiones sentientium. Nos enim sumus certi de existentia rerum nobis apparentium, cui sensui non contradicit sensus dignior vel intellectus acceptus ex sensu digniore. Sumus etiam certi per intellectum de existentia aliquorum intelligibilium, cui intellectui non contradicit intellectus dignior seu acceptus ex sensu digniore, nec etiam sensus dignior; ita quod qui non distinguunt inter sensum digniorem et minus dignum ut ei credatur, incidunt in diversos errores."

[24] *I*2, 74, 39–41.

turns out to be non-veridical that every deliverance is illusory. The second error is to infer from the fact that some sensations are veridical that this must be so in the case of all sensations. The third error is committed by those who base themselves on some sense, argument, image or opinion not taken from a more worthy sense, but whose testimony is incompatible with that of the more worthy sense, and who dismiss the latter. This, Siger tells us, is the error Aristotle attributed to Zeno who argued that everything is at rest against the evidence of a sense more worthy of being believed.[25] The key to not committing these errors is realizing that "all senses are not equally worthy of being believed."[26] Thus the sense of taste of the healthy individual is to be trusted more than the sick person's; a person awake is more worthy of being believed than one asleep; and the proper sensible is more reliable than the common sensible, and so is the sensible *per se* than the sensible by accident.[27] The greatest degree of certitude, however, is the one the sense gets from sensing its proper object:

> … [N]o one can be induced to believe that that the white that he sees is not white, neither through the habit of hearing the opposite nor by sophistical arguments.[28]

Part of the interest of Siger's answer stems from the fact he seems to allow a certain positive role for the intellect, for he explicitly states that a "reason" stemming from the intellect *can* lead to the overruling of a sense's "judgment" that some deliverance is veridical. But this, Siger tells us, can only occur if the reason (*intellectus*) is itself based on the testimony of a sense more worthy of being believed.[29] For instance, if I am on a boat and my sense "judges" that people standing on the shore are in motion,[30] I can overturn that judgment by observing that the boat I am on is in motion with respect to the water, and by reflecting that when in the past I have been standing on the shore I did not see or feel myself moving, and thence conclude that it is I and not the people on the shore who are in motion. Although my conclusion would be based on an argument, it would nonetheless ultimately rest on the testimony of a sense more worthy of being believed, whereas the subtle argumentation of Zeno, which aims at overruling the sense's judgment concerning the existence of motion, is not. The question, of course, that immediately arises is how I *know* that some particular deliverance is more worthy of being believed. Siger's answer is that, well, I just know:

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[25] *I2*, 75, 50–51. See also *QiMD*, IV, q. 35, 233, 14–18.

[26] *I2*, 75, 64.

[27] *I2*, 75, 65–69; *QiMM*, qq. 34&35, 181, 52–55.

[28] *QiMM*, IV, q. 37, 186, 61–63: "… nec enim assuetudine audiendi contrarium, nec ex aliquibus rationibus sophisticis potest aliquis induci ad credendum illud quod videt album non *esse* album."

[29] This in turn could explain why Siger felt that the senses do not need the intellect to regard a perception as veridical, though it does not explain how the intellect would be in a position to judge that something is an illusion.

[30] This is the only example of sensory illusion provided by Siger in *I2* (74, 43 - 75, 44).

> I say that what is perceived (*sentitur*) is such as it is perceived; and this is known by no other means, but that it is perceived to be such by this sense and by no other.[31]

His source for this belief might be Averroes who in his summary of Aristotle's argument in *Metaphysics* 1010b9–14 had contended that "Aristotle means that we have a primary cognition (*prima cognitio*) by which we distinguish between (the case) where the sense is in error (*sensus falsat*) and where it is veridical."[32] Siger does not refer to this passage but its tenor squares nicely with his own position. In any case, Siger gets quite irritated at the thought that one could fail to acknowledge this:

> To one who does not recognize that a sense is more worthy <of being believed> than another and that some sensation is to be believed *per se*, but who seeks a demonstration for the fact that it is as it appears, to him nothing can be proved, he can be certain of nothing. For it is not possible that something be known or believed, unless there be something that is known and believed *per se*, not through something else.[33]

If, to boot, the evidence of the proper sense is corroborated by other sense information, disbelief becomes downright absurd:

> When all the senses concur in the judgment of some sensible thing and they are not opposed by a reason taken from more worthy senses, believing the opposite seems supernatural and almost magical rather than natural, unless one has been accustomed to this from childhood.[34]

There is nothing we can do if someone denies that some senses are to be trusted more than others, the idea here being that the certitude afforded by sensation is the strongest form of certitude we have; if *it* does not convince the skeptic nothing else possibly could either. In a passage of his commentary on the *Metaphysics*,[35] Siger suggests that those who question the evidence of sense knowledge do not recognize evidence when they see it, and that given that nothing will generate more certitude than the perception of the proper sense, searching for an additional validating proof is bound to be a vain enterprise. He then recalls the argument we have just quoted, that unless something were known *per se*, that is, unless there was some initial certitude, nothing at all would be certain, for where there is no first certitude there will be no subsequent one either.[36] It is,

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[31] *QiMD*, IV, q. 4, 229, 46–47.

[32] Averroes, *Metaph.*, IV, com 24, *Aristotelis opera cum Averrois commentariis*, vol. VIII, (Venice: Apud Iunctas, 1562–1574), fol. 91 M.

[33] *I2*, 75, 69 - 76, 74: "Qui autem aliquem sensum *esse* digniorem quam alium et alicui sensationi per se credendum non accipit, sed huius rationem quaerit quae ostendat quod sit ita sicut apparet, huic nihil probari potest, iste de nullo certus *esse* potest. Non enim possibile est aliquid *esse* cognitum vel creditum, nisi sit aliquid quod per se, non per aliud, cognoscatur, cui per se, non per aliud credatur."

[34] *I2*, 75, 52–57: "Cum autem omnes sensus concorditer conveniant in iudicio alicuius rei sensibilis, quibus etiam intellectus acceptus ex sensibus dignioribus non contradicit, credere oppositum illius supernaturale videtur et miraculosum magis quam naturale, nisi forte aliquibus accidere possit ex consuetudine a pueritia."

[35] *QiMM*, IV, q. 34, 229–230, 65–72.

[36] See Aristotle, *Metaphysics*, 4.4.1006a9–10.

he explains, just as necessary to appeal to a first certitude in the order of knowledge as it is to appeal to a first cause in the order of being:

> If there is not a first known thing, which is not founded on anything prior, then nothing at all will be known, just as if there were not a first being whose being was not caused by another cause, there would no being at all.[37]

Now Siger might very well be right about this last claim, but it cannot count as an argument in favor of the thesis that the first certitude is to be found in *sense perception*, for it is perfectly compatible with the truth of the principle that there must be a first certitude that the first certitude reside in another power, for instance the intellect. But of course, Siger takes it for granted that intellectual knowledge is grounded in sense knowledge, so that saying that there must be a first certitude really means that the first certitude must be grounded in sense perception. Still, we might feel that Siger needs to offer some basis for the thesis that some sensations are evident *per se* and that the evidence provided by the senses is the strongest, beyond merely assuring us that this just is the case.

There are a few passages in Siger's writings that seem to tackle this problem. One is in q. 34 of Book IV of the commentary on the *Metaphysics*, where he explains that when perceivers are confronted with conflicting sense reports (I 'see' sweetness, but what I taste is bitter) it is a matter of empirical fact that they believe one more than the other, and Siger's ground for that belief is that, once again as a matter of empirical fact, people always act on the basis of one of two or more conflicting sense reports. If a person were ever in a position of believing equally two conflicting sense reports, then we would see her acting in a way which was coherent with each belief, which is absurd. In another formulation of the same point,[38] Siger notes that if two deliverances appeared equally certain to an observer then when judging one to be true the observer would not cease to believe that the other is true, which is also not what we observe. The point, then, is simply that people's behavior shows that they just do trust certain sense deliverances:

> … [T]hose who say that there is nothing in the judgment of the sense that ought to be believed more, even though they say this, do not actually believe it, as we can tell from their actions.[39]

Of course, all this tells us is that people are prone to behave in certain ways, not that they are right in doing so. Yet the suggestion that they are not, Siger believes, seems so far-fetched as to be devoid of any real philosophical interest. We need to look at Siger's reasons for believing this.

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[37] *QiMM*, IV, q. 37, 187, 66–69: "Si enim non sit aliquid primo notum, cuius simpliciter non sit aliquid prius notificans, nihil simpliciter erit notum, sicut si non esset aliquod Primum Ens, cuius simpliciter non esset alia causa essendi, nihil penitus esset ens."

[38] *QiMD*, IV, q. 34, 230, 78–82.

[39] *QiMM*, IV, qq. 34&35, 181, 56–58.

III

The ontology of sensation. When Siger assures us that "no one can be induced to believe that the white that he sees is not white,"[40] he means to point to two things: first, that the sense is infallible with regard to its own sensations, that is, the object is qualitatively as it is sensed, and second, that it cannot doubt that the object it senses exists. The first point emerges clearly from the following text.

What makes it certain that things are such as this judgment says more than what that judgment says? I say that it is known that what is sensed is such and not otherwise by the fact that it is sensed as such by the proper sense, so that if it is judged by sight that something is sweet, but by taste that it is bitter, it is known that it is determinately bitter by the fact that it is sensed as such by taste. And if someone should require that this be made known by some other <reason>, […] he is looking for a reason where no reason ought to be sought, as Aristotle says here.[41]

Beyond that, the sense cannot doubt that there actually exists something that it senses:

> … [W]here no doubt is possible, one is not to look for an additional grounding; but this <thing> that some person sees as white, he does not doubt that it is white; which is why one ought not to ask for additional grounding. The minor is evident since when there is vision of some actual white, it <i.e. vision> always says that it is white and always judges it <to be> in the same way; which is why it does not err in that <knowledge>; which is why that man does not doubt that that was white. And I do not only mean that man does not doubt that that white which he sees <that> he senses and sees as white, but I also mean that that man does not doubt that that which he sees as white and of which there is vision actually exists (*esse*); thus one ought not to always ask for some other proof, but one must rest in the sense as in the principle.[42]

This last passage offers a striking statement of what one commonly refers to as "medieval realism." Siger is not merely asserting that I cannot be wrong about the existence of my inner experiences; he is asserting that when I sense white I cannot doubt

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[40] *QiMM*, IV, q. 37, 186, 61–63.

[41] *QiMM*, IV, qq. 34&45, 182, 65–72; II, q. 23, 73, 16–18: "Sed per quid certum est ita se habere sicut dicit hoc iudicium magis quam sicut dicit aliud? Dico quod cognoscitur quod id quod sentitur tale sit et non contrario modo se habens per hoc quod sensu proprio tale sentitur, ut si visu iudicetur aliquid dulce, gustu autem amarum, cognoscitur ipsum determinate *esse* amarum per hoc quod gustu tale sentitur. Et si aliquis quaerat hoc sibi fieri notum per aliud, in principio rationis rationem quaerit ubi ratio non est quaerenda, ut hic dicit Aristoteles."

[42] *QiMD*, IV, q. 35, 234, 53–62: "…[I]n quo nullus potest dubitare, non est quaerendum aliud notificans ipsum; sed in hoc quod quis videt album, quin sit album non dubitat; quare aliud notificans ad hoc non est quaerendum. Minor patet, quia visus si fuerit albi, semper illud dicit *esse* album et semper eodem modo iudicat; quare in hoc non errat; quare quin hoc fuerit album non dubitat. Et non solum dico quod homo non dubitat quin illud quod videt album sentiat et videat album, sed etiam dico quod homo non dubitat hoc *esse* quod ipse videt album et cuius est sibi visio; non igitur est semper quaerendum aliud notificans, sed in sensu est standum sicut in principio."

the existence of an object of the sensing, the existence of some actually white thing, though I can be wrong about just which object it is.

It is instructive to read Siger's commentary of Aristotle's discussion of this very point in *Metaphysics* 4.5.1010b19–26, and to note his attendant disagreement with Aquinas's reading of this passage. Aristotle's goal here is to show that the proper sense is always right about its object or quality and yet that the sense can judge differently at different times. Does this mean that the object actually changes? Aristotle's answer is that in fact the sense *never* disagrees about its quality, and that the disagreement arises only "about that to which the quality belongs."[43] Aquinas offers a very literal reading of this passage, one that is in fact little more than a paraphrase, noting that any change that occurs in the perceived quality is due either to a change in the object itself (the wine going from sweet to bitter) or to a change in the sentient subject. The litigious passage follows:

> But the sense of taste never changes its judgment without judging sweetness itself to be such as it considered it to be in the sweet thing when it judged it to be sweet.[44]

This last sentence, Sigers avers, amounts to a misinterpretation of Aristotle:

Some understand Aristotle to claim that concerning sweetness <the sense> does not change its judgment without judging that <thing> to be how it senses it. But this is incorrect: in order for <a sense> to always judge in the same way regarding sweetness, as Aristotle claims, it is not only necessary that <the sense> judge it <to be> such as it senses it, for it does not always sense it under the same quality, sometimes <it senses it> as sweet, sometimes as bitter, but it is also necessary that it judge it to be as it *is*. Thus, when taste judges that sweetness is bitter, one must understand that <the judgment refers> not only to the sweetness but also to the bitter humor existing in the tongue. Hence, when it judges in this way, it does <not> judge sweet to be bitter, but rather that to which it belongs to be it judges to be bitter, so that that which pertains to the same sweetness it always judges in the same way, i.e. that it is sweet.[45]

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[43] Here is the passage from Aristotle: "But not even at different moments does one sense disagree about the quality, but only about that to which the quality belongs. I mean, for instance, the same wine might seem, if either it or one's body changed, at one time sweet and at another time not sweet; but at least the sweet such as it is when it exists, has never yet changed, but one is always right about it, and that which is to be sweet must of necessity be of such and such a nature." Aristotle, *Metaphysics*, *The Complete Works of Aristotle*, vol. 2, ed. J. Barnes (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1984), 1595–1596.

[44] Thomas Aquinas, *In XII Metaphysicorum Aristotelis Expositio*, ed. M.-R. Cathala, R. M. Spiazzi (Torino: Marietti, 1950), IV, lectio 14, n. 703: "Sed nunquam gustus mutat iudicium suum quin ipsam dulcedinem talem iudicet *esse* qualem perpendit in dulci, quando iudicavit eam *esse* dulcem."

[45] *QiMD*, IV, q. 34, 230, 98 - 231, 9, my emphasis: "Et ideo quidam exponunt Aristotelem sic, quod ipse intelligat quod circa dulcedinem non mutat iudicium hoc quin iudicet illud *esse* tale, quale ipsum sentit. Sed hoc non valet, quia ad hoc quod semper eodem modo iudicet de dulcedine, sicut dicit Aristoteles, non tantum oportet quod tale iudicet ipsum quale ipsum sentit, quia non semper ipsum sentit sub eadem qualitate, sed quandoque ut dulce, quandoque ut amarum; sed oportet quod iudicet ipsum tale quale est. Et ideo intelligendum quod, cum gustus iudicat dulce *esse* amarum, non solum est dulcis, sed etiam amari humoris in lingua existentis: unde, cum sic iudicat, <non> iudicat dulce *esse* amarum, sed illud cuius est

There is perhaps nothing really substantive about Siger's disagreement with Aquinas. Indeed, Aquinas shares all the realist assumptions regarding sense perception with his colleague at the Faculty of Arts; Siger seems to seize upon a slightly infelicitous choice of words on Aquinas's part to underscore a point that Aquinas agreed with anyway.[46] Still, though the point is a minor one, it does bring out in a striking way the extent of Siger's realistic commitment: sensing for Siger is never just a mental occurrence; the judgment of sweetness is not about how I perceive things, it is not about contents of the mind, it is about the nature of the things I perceive. This does not mean that qualities cannot be considered mentally mentally—they can, as Siger makes perfectly clear—but they are not thought to be possible objects of investigation apart from their connection to their physical substrate. This very point emerges again in a passage from Siger's commentary at the beginning of bk. IV of the *Metaphysics*. There he tells us that the sense senses its object, the sensible, as well as itself sensing the object. In this latter kind of knowledge the sense cannot be wrong. Error can only arise in two ways, either with respect to the sensible object if the sense organ is indisposed, or with respect to the common object.[47] Thus, a sense can be wrong about its proper object when, say, wine is sweet but tastes bitter owing to an indisposition of the tongue. The erroneous sense "judgment" does not, however, stem from the fact that the sweetness is tasted *as* bitter, for as Siger has just explained in *QiMD*, IV, q. 34, 230, 98– 231, 9, the sense can only taste sweetness as sweet. The sense can also err in attributing the bitterness to the common sensible, in this case the wine – or rather the colored liquid that turns out to be wine. Thus, error in sense-knowledge, for Siger, resides not in confusing mental states with real things, a problem he nowhere seriously contemplates, but either in the sense's sensing the wrong quality or in the attribution of real qualities to the wrong supporting substrate. Nevertheless, the main point Siger seems to be wanting to make in the above passage is that, barring the case of deception and the senses being hindered from functioning normally, my being certain that I taste the wine's sweetness is also my being certain that the wine is truly sweet.

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esse iudicat amarum; unde cuius est ipsius dulcis semper eodem modo iudicat, ut ipsum *esse* dulce." Here is the parallel passage from *QiMM*: "Some interpret this such that in the act of sensation the sense senses the sensible and senses its own act; for it is always right in its judgment of what the sensation is, so that it judges the sensation to be as it considers it, though it does not always judge the sensible (thing) to be as it is. But this is not consonant with Aristotle's text. For he says that the sense never changed once it judged what sweetness is, but is always right about it." Latin text: "Exponunt autem quidam hoc sic, quia in actu sentiendi sensus sentit sensibile et sentit actum suum; semper autem est verus iudicando qualis sensatio sibi fiat, ita quod qualem sensationem perpendit talem eam iudicat; non semper autem quale est sensibile, tale ipsum iudicat. Sed huic non consonat littera Aristotelis. Dicit enim quod sensus quale est dulce quando fuerit numquam mutavit, sed semper de ipso verum dicit." *QiMM*, IV, qq. 34 &35, 183, 99–04.

[46] Siger probably read Aquinas's commentary very closely when he was writing his own commentary. See A. Maurer's remarks in *QiMM*, 17.

[47] *QiMM*, IV, q. 4, 148, 15–20.

IV

Siger and the Academics. The remarkable thing about Siger's discussion is that he seems to be unworried by what we might feel is the *real* problem of skepticism. For instance, he seems unmoved by cases of perceptual illusions which the Academics had famously pointed to in support of their thesis that veridical appearances are indistinguishable from non-veridical ones.[48]

Their arguments were known to the medievals primarily through Augustine,[49] but Siger as a philosopher working at the Faculty of Arts typically quotes only philosophers, and, as far as I know, does not so much as mention or even allude to Augustine in his writings, and in any case never alludes to the Academics' argument.[50] The closest he comes to it is in two connected objections against his own position voiced by the skeptical opponent in *I*2.

The first objection is that there is nothing (*nulla re*), that is, no sensible quality, judged to be one way that is not also judged to be otherwise. But if the reason we deem the quality to *be* one way is because it appears that way, then for the same reason we might just as well conclude it to be otherwise because it appears otherwise. And as both perceptions cannot be true, we, so argues the skeptic, infer that both are appearances.[51] Now we know that Siger's answer to that argument is to appeal to the difference between senses more and less worthy of being believed. But the skeptic then goes on to show that that answer is of no avail: "If you say that one ought not with equal reason believe a person who is awake and a person who is asleep, nor a person who is well and one who is ill, one who is wise and one who is unwise, the same argument applies."[52] Actually, the application of the argument yields somewhat clumsy examples: a person who is deemed to be awake by one observer will be deemed to be asleep by another (!), one judged to be reliable in matters of taste by one observer will be judged not to be by another.[53] The moral however is clear: we cannot appeal to the distinction between more and less worthy senses without begging the question as to what a more or less worthy sense is.

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[48] The thesis is attributed to Carneades by Sextus Empiricus (*Against the Professors* 7, 159–65), and can be traced back to Arcesilaus (Cicero, *Academica*, 2.77–8). For discussion and presentation of these and other relevant texts, see A. A. Long & D. N. Sedley, *The Hellenistics Philosophers*, vol. 1, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press: 1987), 239–253 and 455–462.

[49] For the medievals' knowledge of ancient skepticism, see Pasquale Porro, "Il *Sextus latinus* e l'imagine dello scetticismo antico nel medioevo," *Elenchos*, vol. 2 (1994), 229–253.

[50] Of course Augustine was clearly not the only source, and Siger's favorite philosophers, Aristotle and Averroes, abound in relevant examples, for instance in the *de somnis*.

[51] I2, 74, 23–26.

[52] *I*2, 74, 27–29: "Quod si tu dicas quod non aequali ratione credendum est vigilanti et dormienti, nec sano et infirmo, nec sapienti et insipienti, eadem ratione arguitur."

[53] See also *QiMM*, IV, qq. 34–35, 180, 21–27; 181, 38–44.

Siger does not actually respond to the skeptic's charge, but his answer can be inferred from what he has said previously. If as a matter of fact we do not hesitate between two competing sense reports, if as a matter of empirical fact we do believe our sense deliverances (because we act in conformity with them), then the various scenarios adduced by the skeptics (dream arguments, hallucinations and so forth) are nothing else but sophistry. Although the skeptic's argument in *I*2 is not exactly that of the Academics, Siger would probably have felt that the same answer would apply equally well to the Academics' argument. In fact this was exactly the position of a close contemporary of Siger's, the theologian Henry of Ghent, who explicitly connects arguments close to the ones made by the skeptic in *I*2, 74, 26–28 with those of the Academics and provides the same answer in response to both positions, one that is quite close to that of Siger's, at least on one important point.

The passage in question occurs in Henry's *Summa quaestionum ordinariarum* which contains many quite lengthy discussions devoted to the problem of knowledge.[54] The opening question of the *Summa* asks whether man can know anything. One of the many arguments listed against the possibility of human knowledge is the familiar Aristotelian argument that things appear differently to many observers or appear differently to the same observer at different times; therefore, as all knowledge is based on the senses, there will be no certainty there either.[55]

Henry's answer to this question is roughly the same as Siger's: it is not because the same thing appears differently to one person or to many that the senses are never to be trusted, for something can be perceived determinately by a sense that is not deceived, at the time at which it is not deceived.[56] He then turns to the Academics' argument that "nothing is perceived determinately by (infallible) signs," and finds it wanting for the same reasons:

> For what they say is not true that nothing is perceived determinately by signs, and that they <i.e. the signs> do not vouch veridically (*verificant*) for the thing; rather, signs which are the proper sensibles of a particular sense reveal what they are to the proper sense when it is not deceived or hindered…[57]

However, although Henry believes as Siger did that the proper sensibles reveal themselves as they are to the proper sense, he also believes, unlike Siger, that it belongs to the intellect to recognize which sense is not deceived:

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[54] For a thorough discussion of Henry's doctrine of sense perception and his stance on the question of skepticism, see Marilyn McCord Adams, *William Ockham*, vol. 1, (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 1987), 551–571.

[55] Henry of Ghent, *Summa quaestionum ordinariarum*, Paris, 1520, a. 1, q. 1, fol. 1rA.

[56] *Summa,* a. 1. q. 1, ad3, fol. 3rG.

[57] *Summa*, a. 1, q. 1, fol. IIIrG: "Non enim verum est dictum eorum quod nihil percipit determinate per signa et quod non verificant de re: immo signa quae sunt propria sensibilia alicuius sensus, id quod sunt ostendunt sensui proprio non decepto nec impedito…"

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Thus, even though the same thing can appear differently to the same observer or to different observers, that is only because of the deception or the impediment of a particular sense which should not be believed in that instance. For a sense that is not deceived should most certainly be believed; which one is such it belongs to the intellect to judge on the basis of many experiences concerning that about which a sense can be deceived or hindered.[58]

Henry reiterates this position in greater detail later on in the *Summa* when responding to the contention that truth cannot be known with certitude without there being features that distinguish it from the false.[59] Henry replies that it is true that there is no specific difference between a veridical sensation and a non-veridical one, in the sense that both are sensations. Thus, the sense of sight is unable to discern between gold and brass. Reason (*ratio*) however transcends the sense and is able to discern the veridical from the illusory.[60] By allowing that there is no specific difference between a veridical sensation and a non-veridical one, Henry seems to want to grant precisely that which Siger adamantly denies, that is that we in some sense do not *intuitively* distinguish between the illusory and the veridical; but what Henry is considering in this later text of the *Summa* is not the problem Siger is most anxious to resolve both in *I2* and in his commentary to the *Metaphysics*, namely the existential certainty regarding the objects of the proper sense, but our knowledge of the common sensible, where Siger is perfectly willing to recognize the sense's fallibility.[61] But although, as we have seen, Siger would have recognized the need, in this latter case, to appeal to reasons taken from a superior power, that is, the intellect, he would also have claimed, if I have understood him correctly, that the intellect's judgement was ultimately based on the testimony of another sense.

V

Conclusion. According to Siger, then, our reasons for believing that things are as they appear, is that they appear that way. That is not to say that all appearances are equally trustworthy. They are only trustworthy when they do not conflict with information that can ultimately be traced back to another sense more worthy of being believed. Siger does not describe the process through which we come to distinguish between more and less trustworthy senses. On the one hand, he seems to incline toward the view that veridical perceptions are in some sense intuitively obvious. On the other hand, much of what he

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[58] *Summa*, a. 1, q. 1, fol. IIIrG–H: "Unde et quamvis idem diversimode apparet eidem vel diversis, hoc non est nisi propter deceptionem vel impedimentum alicuius sensus cui non oportet credere in hoc: nec tamen propter hoc dicendum est quod nulli sensui credendum est. Sensui enim non decepto omnino oportet credere: et quis sit talis maxime habet iudicare intellectus ex pluribus experimentationibus praehabitis circa illa in quibus sensus potest decipi vel impediri."

[59] *Summa*, a. 1, q. 1, fol. 23vA.

[60] *Summa*, a. 1, q. 1, fol. 24rD.

[61] See *QiMM*, IV, q. 9, 148, 18–19.

says suggests that their obviousness is only relative to other sense perceptions, which implies that a given deliverance can be deemed veridical only as a result of a process of comparison between different sense reports. What Siger is quite clear about, however, is that, while intellectual knowledge does play some role in that process, it is ultimately the senses themselves that provide the decisive certitude. As Siger puts it in the Commentary on the *Metaphysics*,[62] there is no more persuasive reason for believing something than the fact that the appropriate sense testifies to its existence. If we were to seek another reason we would either come up with a reason that wasn't effective at all or one that was effective only because it told us that something is such because it is sensed as such. Siger's insistence on the primacy of the senses is systematic throughout his epistemological writings and the attention he devotes to the issue and to the reliability of the senses as a means of knowledge suffice to set his commentary apart from that of, say, Aquinas. This insistence on the primacy of the senses might provide a clue to the thesis that the intellect is needed to unmask illusions but not to recognize veridical sense reports: Siger might be pointing to the fact that the senses are veridical by default.

Although, as we have seen, Siger's argument against skepticism is not aimed at the type of skepticism associated with the Academics, this need not be seen as a defect in his position. Because Siger does not frame the problem of sense perception in the terms in which it is couched by the Academics, arguments such as the indistinguishability argument (between dreams and wakeful experiences for example) cannot get off the ground. Whereas the Academic points to the allegedly evident indiscernibility of certain veridical and non-veridical perceptions, one could surmise that Siger might have taken it as equally evident that there is no such indistinguishability. He might have pointed out that our actions show that we do make the requisite distinction between two putatively indistinguishable perceptions. Regrettably, Siger does not comment on the most explicit passage in this regard in chapter 5 of *Metaphysics* IV. In its cryptic Aristotelian formulation, the passage reads thus: "…if someone in Libya believes himself one night in Athens, he does not set off for the Odeon." It is not clear from the wording, as one scholar put it, whether Aristotle means "that *we* know that the dreamer is not in Athens, or that *he* knows."[63] Scholastic commentators however tended to adopt the second reading. Dreamlike experiences and wakeful ones are clearly not indiscernible, not because of some internal feature that immediately labels one as veridical or non-veridical, but because upon awaking the dreamer will act in accordance with his wakeful perceptions, not his dreams, which presupposes that he has the ability to compare both.[64] However, although this general approach could be successful in defusing arguments such as the dream argument, it might be less successful in answering the challenge posed by, say, hallucinations, which, alas, Siger does not discuss.

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[62] *QiMD*, IV, q. 34, 229, 49–54.

[63] Christopher Kirwan, *Aristotle's Metaphysics, Books Γ,Δ, and E*, (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1971), 109.

[64] See Thomas Aquinas, In XII Metaphysicorum Aristotelis Expositio, n. 698.

Charles Bolyard:

Côté's "Siger and the skeptic"

Introduction

In "Siger and the Skeptic,"[1] Antoine Côté has given a clear, thorough exposition of Siger's account of skepticism, as seen in his *Impossibile* 2 and his *Questions on the Metaphysics*.[2] Côté's contextualization of Siger's positions and arguments, especially vis-à-vis Aquinas, Averroes, and Henry of Ghent is also noteworthy. Though I will argue that more such contextualization is needed, Côté has suggested some avenues that are worth exploring.

That having been said, I will divide my comments into two categories. First, I will briefly mention a few minor problems that appear towards the beginning of Côté's paper. Second, I will focus on some larger, speculative questions that are generated from Côté's work, but are not for the most part directly addressed there.

Minor Criticisms

The first minor criticism concerns Côté's account of the first few lines of Siger's *Impossibile*. Here I quote Côté:

> "The general position the skeptic wants to argue for is that 'one ought not to trust a power to which something appears that is mere appearance, unless another power judges that it is so.'…One of the consequences of this position, quite apart from the fact that it leads to an infinite regress, is that it implies that the senses in and of themselves are not trustworthy sources of knowledge."[3]

My question is the following: does the skeptic's "corroborating power principle" (as I will put it) *necessarily* imply a regress? It seems perfectly consistent with the principle to hold that the sense faculty itself is untrustworthy without corroboration by the intellect, while the intellect, as a different sort of faculty, does not need such

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[1] Antoine Côté, "Siger and the Skeptic," *Proceedings of the Society for Medieval Logic and Metaphysics*, in this volume.

[2] The *Impossibilia* may be found in Siger de Brabant, *Écrits de logique, de morale et de physique*, Philosophes Médiévaux 14, ed. Bernardo Carlos Bazán (Louvain: Publications universitaires/Paris: Béatrice-Nauwelaerts, 1974), pp. 67-97. His *Questions on the Metaphysics* appears in Siger de Brabant, *Quaestiones in Metaphysicam*, Philosophes Médiévaux 24, ed. Armand Mauer (Louvain: Publications universitaires/Paris: Béatrice-Nauwelaerts, 1983) [*QiMM*].

[3] Côté, on page 6.

corroboration itself. In another way, the skeptic might argue that the combination of sense faculty and intellect—that is, their agreement, if they do in fact agree—is enough to ground certitude. This skeptic could hold that there are independent, internal reasons for trusting or distrusting the intellect, and not require an appeal to a further power.

Compare, for instance, the way Scotus says that in cases in which the sense modalities are not in agreement – either because one modality yields a different result than another modality, or because a single modality yields different results at different times – we can appeal to the intellect to adjudicate among them.[4] Using his example, we know that a stick in water that appears broken cannot really be broken, because our intellect knows the truth of the claim 'the harder object is not broken by the touch of something soft that gives way before it'. In such a case, Scotus argues, we can discount the testimony of sight, but we can trust the intellect. Obviously many varieties of skeptic would not agree with Scotus on all points, but a skeptic might well hold that there is a special problem for sensory information that does not apply at the level of intellect.

Despite this concern, this criticism is more of a technical problem than a substantive one, as nothing in Côté's account seems to ride on whether such a "corroborating power principle" inevitably leads to regress.

The second minor criticism concerns the following exchange between the Skeptic, Siger, and Côté, which may be simplified as follows:

> Skeptic: "A sense that is prone to illusion can generate no certitude…"[5]
>
> Siger: No. Untrustworthiness in one case does not entail universal untrustworthiness
>
> Côté: "…it is not clear that Siger has grasped [the skeptical argument's] full force…Yet even if Siger had grasped the full force of the objection, he would probably have rejected it outright. Siger, following Aristotle, believed that sensation involved three elements: the sensible object, the medium and the sense organ. Although Aristotle had explained that, in the act of perception, the sensible quality in actuality and the sense in actuality were one, a view Siger naturally agrees with, Aristotle also felt that the fact that the sensible quality must cross a medium and be received in the sense meant that it might not be received as it is in the sensible object, either because of the indisposition of the medium or of the organ. In a sense, the physics of perception make[s] some measure of error inevitable."[6]

My question is the following: why would admitting, with Aristotle, that "some measure of error [is] inevitable" lead to the outright rejection of the skeptic's original position, that "a sense that is prone to illusion can generate no certitude"? If anything, agreeing with Aristotle here would seem to force Siger to grapple with the skeptic's position.

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[4] See John Duns Scotus, *Opus Oxoniense* I, d.3, q.4, a.2, in the context of discussing skepticism and Henry of Ghent's epistemology.

[5] Côté, on page 6.

[6] Côté, on pages 6-7.

Speculative questions

The first three of the five speculative questions discussed here are generated from Côté's basic account of Siger's epistemology, in which he argues that Siger ultimately grounds his epistemology on the senses' infallibility, and on their ability to generate self-evident propositions (propositions per se notae).

The first question is the following. Siger is a fairly radical empiricist: the senses, on his view, give certitude, while the intellect on its own cannot. Is a fuller investigation of why he thinks the intellect forms self-evident propositions in order? He discusses these propositions to some degree in his *Questions on the Metaphysics*, arguing that such propositions, though not arising from other intellective cognitions, are a result of what the senses give us.[7] By understanding the terms given by sense, and the definitional or causal relations among such terms, we form self-evident propositions. Perhaps there is something more to his relegation of the intellect to a secondary role, and perhaps an examination of his account of self-evident propositions will help us understand better why Siger makes this move.

The second question concerns whether Siger's account of error is sufficient. Much as did Epicurus, e.g., Siger holds that the senses more or less accurately reflect the world, and that inaccuracies are due largely to some other factors. Berkeley's idealism makes an analogous move, denying the possibility of sensory error by eliminating an external world with which that sensory information might disagree. No matter how such sensory certainty is achieved, however, most philosophers who hold the view that sensory certainty exists must find another point at which error might enter our cognitive system.

Siger addresses the issue by saying that "senses don't err, but humans do."[8] Problems creep in, says Siger, when we put the intellect or reason above the senses in terms of reliability. But if this is so, and if Siger has no way of telling us when the intellect is judging correctly, hasn't this simply pushed the skeptical question back a level, in which case the skeptic can switch from talking about the unreliability of the senses to the unreliability of the intellect? Or is it rather that Siger, as a philosopher, is asking us to ignore the intellect altogether?

The third question arises from the stark difference we see when we compare Siger to Descartes. Where Descartes feels compelled to give justification for the senses' reliability by means of invoking a non-deceptive God, Siger feels no such compulsion. Perhaps this lack of compulsion is related to his general views about truth. As Côté says in one of his footnotes, "Siger believed that doctrines in matters of faith were true, but that, in most cases...their truth could not be proved by reason."[9] If Siger requires no justification for truth in the case of matters of faith, then is it a surprise that he similarly

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[7]See especially Siger de Brabant, *QiMM* II.5, IV.11, IV.34, and IV.35.

[8] Siger de Brabant, *QiMM* II.24.16-17.

[9] Côté, n. 3, on page 4.

requires no justification for the truth of the products of our senses? And if so, are Siger's justificatory standards low enough that he shouldn't even be thought of as an epistemologist at all? Note that we can ask this question of many medievals, such as Peter Auriol, who seem to share more similarities to modern day cognitive scientists than they do to modern day epistemologists. In short, is Siger particularly deficient in this regard, or is he within the standard range for the time?

The last two speculative questions are more broadly historical. First, what exactly is driving Siger to take these positions? Is there some theoretical threat, embodied in thinkers or texts of particular importance in Paris at the time, or is he simply trying faithfully to relate some positions that Aristotle and Averroes took issue with, without himself understanding why they were important? The fact that Henry of Ghent was also directly addressing skepticism suggests some larger threat, but Henry too seems to miss some of the import of the skeptical arguments.[10] Second—and this arises in part from the last question—what exactly is the novelty in Siger's view? And if it is novel in some regards, are these novelties ones that should be taken seriously?

Conclusion

To sum up, Côté's account of Siger is clear, informative, and plausible, but more attention to questions of impact and importance would be beneficial. In particular, further focus on Siger's views of the intellect's role in cognition, limited though that role may be, would be helpful in gaining a fuller understanding of his account of skepticism.

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[10] For a medieval criticism of Henry on this point, see John Duns Scotus, *Opus Oxoniense* I, d.3, q.4.

Rondo Keele:

Applied logic and mediaeval reasoning: iteration and infinite regress in Walter Chatton[*]

ABSTRACT – A great deal of excellent research has been done in mediaeval logic on the many theories of language, validity, consequences, topics, etc. which have been explicitly advocated by various important thinkers. Thus we have a good notion of what many mediaeval philosopher-theologians *said* good reasoning should be like. But not as much attention has been paid to how these same people *actually reason* when they are working through a difficult issue. As investigators we should be open to both approaches, for we should judge a philosopher not only on what he says but also on what he does. We might call this line of inquiry 'applied logic'. An interesting basic question for applied logic and mediaeval reasoning is to ask if one can find customary patterns of reasoning or argument strategies which, while often relied on, are not themselves the subject of much explicit logical theorizing. In a nutshell: Are there mediaeval argument strategies often *used* but seldom *talked about* generally and self-consciously? A second step in this line of inquiry would be to ask, if there are such patterns, *why* are they used but not explicitly investigated? I suggest that an example of such an argument strategy, often used but not discussed, is the infinite regress. Sometimes relied on as part of a *reductio* strategy, such reasoning is seldom itself the subject of explicit mediaeval theorizing. In this paper I present two case studies from the philosophy of Walter Chatton. Chatton has a clever and complex argument strategy based on iteration and infinite regress, which he uses against Ockham in their debate over ontological commitment, and which he preemptively defends himself from in his solution to the problem of future contingents. I present the gist of both these complex arguments and attempt to analyze the common way that regress and iteration are used in each. I then note the similarities between Chatton's concerns about iteration and those of modern modal logicians when they study iterated modalities.

I

Under the pressure of a foreign military campaign, soldiers will sometimes improvise weapons and armor for themselves with an alacrity unmatched by military engineers back home whose motivational level is affected by their more peaceful surroundings. So too for the soldier in mediaeval theological battles; sometimes in the heat of discussion there is innovation in argumentation that logicians outside the conflict never have time to catch up to.

For the most part, mediaeval logicians stayed up with the theologians. Many logical and semantic theories are well-discussed by logicians in the Middle Ages and are in turn well-used by philosophers, theologians, etc. To take an obvious example, categorical syllogistic was constantly discussed and developed as an explicit object of theory, and was also constantly used to display the validity of reasoning on every imaginable subject. Similarly, the idea of consequences in the late mediaeval period was systematized into rules and cases, and one often sees such rules actually referred to and applied in theological debates. To take two narrower examples, William of Ockham gives us a theory of truth conditions in his account of personal supposition, but also uses this theory as part of his rejection of universals existing outside the mind, and again, his treatment of connotation theory and his application of it against realist metaphysicians is legend.

By contrast, some logical theories are extremely well-developed but are, strange to say, seldom applied, as far as we know. An obvious example would be *obligationes*. These elaborate rule systems for detecting and maintaining logical consistency were worked out, sometimes in remarkable detail, by diverse thinkers from the thirteenth to the fifteenth centuries; yet we still do not have a clear idea what the theory was for, that is, how it really applied to actual reasoning, if indeed it did. Logical theories of this type are obviously of great interest and appeal to modern researchers; the darkness of their antique purposes begs to be lit.

Today I want to draw attention to a third category, as presaged in my military example above: namely, those argument strategies and patterns of reasoning which, although relied upon in difficult situations by philosophers and theologians, are nevertheless not explicitly discussed in logical theory; i.e., patterns on whose logic mediaeval philosophers rely, but whose logic is, so to speak, unknown, or at least, is relatively unknown. Are there important mediaeval argument strategies often *used* but seldom *talked about* generally and self-consciously? I'm going to call this line of inquiry 'applied logic', because we are examining reasoning that was applied but not generally talked about directly, and I want to take a step into the subject with a look at a complex and interesting argument strategy involving iteration and infinite regress. This strategy was discussed on at least two occasions by Walter Chatton, but it receives no explicit development by him outside these contexts, nor, as far as I know, was it developed by anyone else. Chatton relies on this iteration-technique in two very different

philosophical contexts, concerning issues very dear to his heart. I will examine these two applications of his iteration rule in reverse-chronological order, because the later one, in his *circa*1324-8 *Lectura*[1] discussion of the anti-razor, is in fact the clearer and more elaborate of the two. I will then apply what we learn there to an earlier instance of the same reasoning, exhibited in very condensed fashion in his *circa* 1322 *Reportatio*[2] discussion of future contingents. I intend to keep the philosophical background of the larger theological issues pared down the minimum needed for illuminating his iteration strategy; since this is a paper on logic, not theology or metaphysics, I wish to focus on the general, abstract, and common features in the reasoning itself, not the issues in which the reasoning is embedded.

II

Our first case study comes from Chatton's defense of his anti-razor against certain Ockham-style objections.[3] Chatton's anti-razor is a principle for determining ontological commitment. Say we have a true proposition *p*, whose truth we want to use to help establish an ontology. Briefly, Chatton's anti-razor procedure is to ask how many instances of what kinds of things (*res*) would be required to for the truth of *p*? We determine the answer to this basic question by thought experiment. If proposition *p* is about Plato and Socrates, say, then we know they must exist to make it true, but to go deeper we must also imagine that *only* Plato and Socrates existed, and then ask "Is this bare situation is consistent with the falsehood of *p*?". If it is, then Plato and Socrates alone are not enough to make *p* true, and we know more things are required in our ontology. Consequently, we must then posit whatever metaphysical items sensibly fill this ontological gap we have detected, and in general, if *n* entities aren't enough to make a sentence *p* true, we must posit an $n + 1^{th}$ entity, etc. until we have enough things such that they are inconsistent with the falsehood of *p*. (I find it useful to think of Chatton's anti-razor as a kind of *a priori* version of Mill's joint method; by controlled experiment we discover what things are necessary and sufficient to cause a proposition's truth.)

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[1] The *Lectura* has been edited by Jerry Etzkorn, and is being published by The Pontifical Institute of Mediaeval Studies as part of their Studies and Texts series. The first volume should appear in 2007. All references to the *Lectura* in this paper are to the paragraph numbers in Etzkorn's edition, which he has graciously allowed me to see in advance of publication.

[2] The *Reportatio* has been fully edited in four volumes. The relevant volume here is *Reportatio super Sententias: Liber I, distincitones 10-48*. Ed. Joseph C. Wey and Girard J. Etzkorn. [*Studies and Texts* 142] Toronto: Pontifical Institute of Mediaeval Studies, 2002. Hereafter cited as '*Reportatio* I'.

[3] Throughout the paper I leave to one side the question of whether Ockham ever made *exactly* the objections Chatton attributes to him; the objections are certainly Ockhamist in spirit. Nevertheless, Ockham's *Quodlibet* I.5 gives an example of an objection very like the one I here characterize as 'Ockhamist'.

An informal example of how Chatton applied his anti-razor will help to clarify all this. Chatton believed that we had to posit the existence of certain kinds of real relations, in particular relations of causality, as distinct Aristotelian accidents inhering in individual substances.[4] Thus, if this light ray is caused by the sun, then we must certainly posit the ray and the sun, but Chatton believed the situation could only be fully explained by the existence of two other entities, (1) an active relational entity we could call *production* (=Latin *actio*), which inheres in the sun and 'points to' the ray as its product, and (2) and passive relational entity *being produced* (=*passio*), which inheres in the light ray and 'points to ' the sun as its producer. Now the anti-razor is used to support this kind of realist ontology as follows. Imagine that nothing exists except the sun and a light ray, and that we have the proposition 'This light ray is from the sun' before us.[5] There is nothing which guarantees that these two distinct so-called absolute entities, ray and sun, have the right relationship so that the proposition 'This light ray is from the sun' is true; that is, with only the ray and the sun existing, no part of reality speaks to the 'producer/produced-relation' that the proposition asserts for these two absolute entities, ray and sun. Since the two-element ontology {ray, sun} is consistent with the falsehood of the proposition 'This light ray is from the sun', this ontology is in general insufficient to guarantee its truth. However, if we add to this ontology two respective accidents, one of *production* and one of *being produced*, as described above, then the ray and the sun would be related in such a way that the proposition would be true. Having completed this thought experiment, we deduce that, in the real world, where the proposition 'This light ray is from the sun' is sometimes in fact true of certain light rays, there must in fact be such respective accidents (partially) causing the truth of the proposition. The intuitive center of Chatton's anti-razor is that whatever makes a difference to truth must be real, and since in our experiment respective accidents made a difference to truth, they must be real.

An interesting Ockham-style objection to this application of Chatton's ontological principle would say that propositions sometimes require more than just *things* (*res*) to make them true; sometimes, for example, they require instead that certain *conditions* be met. To put it briefly, Ockham certainly agreed with Chatton that while there must *be* in actuality all that is necessary to account for the truth of actually true propositions, he objected that, nevertheless, not everything that propositions require for their truth is therefore some *thing* in one of Aristotle's ten categories (i.e., a *res*). For example, Ockham objected that we do not need to posit an Aristotelian accident *motion* in order

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[4] Chatton defends this in many places, e.g., *Reporatio* I, d. 30, q. 1, a. 4, 38, pp. 233-4, "Quartus articulus est respondere ad formam quaestionis, an aliqua accidentia respectiva sint in orbe. Sunt, ut dixi, quattuor vel tres opiniones ... quod non .... Sed teneo conclusionem oppositum..." He goes on to give six examples of cases where one needs to posit causal respectives, viz., a case of *generation*, one of *production*, one of *motion*, one of *condensation*, one of *seeing*, and one of *understanding*.

[5] This example comes from *Lectura* I, d. 3, q. 1, a. 1, paragraphs 43-46.

to explain the truth of 'Object *a* moved', rather, we only need to posit the object *a* and the following three conditions:[6]

> (i) *a* was in a place and now is in another
>
> (ii) this change happened continuously and successively
>
> (iii) this change happened without any intervening rest on the part of *a*

Ockham insists it is not the positing of more *things* (*res*) that clarifies the meaning of 'motion' here, but rather the positing of more conditions on moving object *a*, and as conditions are to not be reified as *things*, we have clarified the truth conditions of the proposition without expanding our ontology. An ontology of one thing, together with these three conditions, does the same thing as a Chattonian ontology of two things.

Chatton must have had just such an Ockhamist objection in mind when he defended his anti-razor principle in the *Lectura*, for in that place he gives the following complex argument against the Ockhamist objection:

> The following method ought to be used against these objections and against all other similarly derived objections. Whenever a new, added condition is designated by an objector as required for some original proposition *p* to be true, we ought simply to accept the condition, whether the proposition expressing it is affirmative or negative. We then ought to ask what things are required for the proposition expressing the condition to be true. Either: (1) the proposition requires *n* things such that it is inconsistent with the existence of these *n* things, equally present without another thing, that *p* be false, or, (2) not *n* things but only fewer than things are required such that it is consistent, when they are present in a certain condition without another, that *p* be false. If the first alternative is the case, then I have the plurality I proposed. After all, the [anti-razor] already requires *n* things such that it is inconsistent with the existence of these *n* things, consistently present without another thing, that *p* be false; [therefore the anti-razor holds;] therefore, it is required to posit the *thing*, not just the proposed condition, to account for the truth of the proposition. If the second option is given, then I argue in this way: since fewer than *n* things, howsoever they are present without another, are consistent with the falsehood of the proposition, it follows that these things so present are not sufficient to account for the truth of it, and, consequently, besides the [first] added condition, it is required to posit yet another condition.

In that case, I accept the proposition that expresses this additional condition and I ask what things are required to account for *its* being true. Either as many things, present in a certain way without a new thing, as are consistent with *p*'s being false, or as many things as are inconsistent with *p*'s being false. If the second answer is given, then I have the plurality I originally proposed, since in order that it be true, this latest proposition requires that the condition be true, and the condition requires that just as many things be posited [as the anti-razor originally claimed were required]. But therefore the proposition requires that just as many things be posited [as the anti-razor originally claimed were required]. If the first answer is given, I then add that other condition, form its proposition, and ask about it, as previously, and so on to infinity.

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[6] See for example *Quod.* I.5.

> Whosoever labors ... in adducing reasons why the anti-razor is false, let it be objected against him through the method sketched above, ... since if the interlocutor should not want to object against his own position through this method, then he proceeds insufficiently, even by his own standards. [7]

The full import of this quotation is not immediately clear, but on can informally sense within it (and analysis will indeed reveal) a very clever argument strategy using self-referential iteration and infinite regress. We need to pull this text apart piece by piece. But we will be aided in our analysis if we use as scaffolding a more formal and precise step-by-step presentation of the anti-razor method. As we construct this general and abstract description of the anti-razor below, it will be useful to keep in mind the concrete example of the ray and the sun previously discussed.

Given a true proposition p and an original stock of n entities, $a_1, a_2, \ldots a_n$, the anti-razor sets out a two-stage meditation, forcing us to posit the existence of suitable $n + 1^{\text{th}}$ thing, call it a_{n+1}, to explain the truth of p:[8]

> (i) It must be that the original n entities, $a_1, a_2, \ldots a_n$, are required for the truth of p, and yet it must be that the existence of these n entities, $a_1, a_2, \ldots a_n$ is consistent with the falsehood of p. That is, $a_1, a_2, \ldots a_n$ alone are necessary but not sufficient for the truth of p. Then ...

> (ii) ...we must ask whether with the presence of a suitable a_{n+1} thing it is still consistent to say that p is false. If it is, then we have not yet filled the truth gap, so to speak, since we have not yet explained p's truth, and so, obviously we would have to come up with another entity a_{n+2}, add it to the mix, and start again. If, however, it is inconsistent that the a_{n+1} thing exist and yet p is false, then p obviously requires this a_{n+1} thing for its truth, and this a_{n+1} thing is enough. Hence, since p is in fact true, this a_{n+1} thing must exist.

III

Let this be the general method of the anti-razor. Now we can ask: what is Chatton's general response in the previous paragraph to the Ockhamist objection – namely, the objection that the insufficiency the anti-razor detects is not always to be remedied by positing even more *things*, but rather, by sometimes instead by positing more *conditions* which need to be met by the things we already recognize?

In the long quotation, Chatton seems to be asking us to apply the anti-razor method to the propositional content of the very condition the objector insists on adding. Let's try to do this in detail using our pervious example of the ray and the sun.[9] Let the machinery of the anti-razor be assumed as above. Now, take the proposition 'This light ray comes from the sun,' and suppose that it is in fact true. As we have already seen,

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[7] *Lectura*, dist. 3, q. 1, a. 1, paragraphs 40-42.

[8] This theory is most fully developed in *Lectura* I, d. 3, q. 1, a. 1, paragraphs 4-22.

[9] This discussion comes from *Lectura* I, d. 3, q. 1, a. 1, paragraphs 43-46, and is a response to an objection first mentioned in objection in *ibid.* paragraph 25.

Chatton would say the truth of this proposition requires that a light ray exist, that the sun exist, and that besides these two absolute entities, a relative accident of *production* and one of *being produced* exist in the sun and the ray, respectively.

Now an Ockhamist objector can challenge the whole basis of this analysis in a manner similar to Ockham's challenge to realist theories of motion, by saying that the consistency of the existence of the light ray and the sun with the falsehood of 'This light ray is from the sun' shows, not that other *things* must exist, but that there are in reality more *conditions* on the truth of 'This light ray is from the sun', which conditions have not yet been met. What kind of conditions? To take one example, we might say that God could make a ray, the sun, and the two respective accidents, and yet could make 'This light ray is from the sun' still be false because he refuses to co-act with the causal power of the sun for producing this ray. Continuing with this counter-example, we might say that what would be needed to bring about the truth of 'This light ray is from the sun', is not that there are other things, but instead a further condition is met, namely, that God cooperate, and co-act with the causality in the sun to let this ray be from it. The point of the objection is that sometimes not only *things* but also *conditions* must be posited for the truth of propositions.

Now, in his *Lectura* text, Chatton attacks such an objection this way. Take the new condition the objector claims is necessary, in this case the condition *that God co-acts so that this ray is from the sun*, and make the condition into a proposition, thus: 'God co-acts so that this ray is from the sun'. Since 'God co-acts so that this ray is from the sun' is just a proposition, we can simply apply the anti-razor to it and see what happens. That is, we ask, what kind and how many *things* must exist in order for the truth of the new proposition 'God co-acts so that this ray is from the sun'?

Now, there are two possible answers to this last question. OPTION 1: 'God co-acts so that this ray is from the sun' requires us to posit the same number of things as the anti-razor would say the original proposition 'This ray is from the sun' itself requires. That is, one possibility is that 'God co-acts so that this ray is from the sun' requires that four things exist {sun, ray, two respective accidents}, which is just as many as the anti-razor said were required. OPTION 2: The truth of 'God co-acts so that this ray is from the sun' requires that fewer than four things exist, presumably just the two things outside of the dispute, i.e., the ray and the sun. [We do not consider that 'God co-acts so that this ray is from the sun' could require *more* than four things, since the objector is obviously a nominalist, and would not introduce a condition that *expanded* our ontology beyond even Chatton's requirements!]

But under either option the objector has a problem. If the first option holds, then four things exist, and Chatton and his anti-razor were right all along anyway, since application of his anti-razor showed that, indeed, we had to posit four things. If the second option holds, then even with the new condition added, the ray and the sun are still insufficient for the truth of 'God co-acts so that this ray is from the sun'. That this is so is shown this way. Everyone agrees that two things, the ray and the sun, are insufficient for the truth of 'This ray is from the sun', they only disagree on how to fill the gap. But since 'This ray is from the sun' is an embedded dictum in 'God co-acts so

that this ray is from the sun', clearly 'God co-acts so that this ray is from the sun' requires at least as many things for its truth as the dictum 'This ray is from the sun' does. Hence, if two things were insufficient for the truth of 'This ray is from the sun', obviously two things are also insufficient for the truth of the new proposition, 'God co-acts so that this ray is from the sun'.

So, *on his own principles*, even the objector would have to agree that, on Option 2, the insufficiency we detected at the first level is pushed up to this new, higher-level proposition. Now, the objector holds that insufficiency for propositional truth in this case requires posting, not more things, but rather more conditions, so by his own lights, the insufficiency of these two things for the truth of 'God co-acts so that this ray is from the sun' requires us to posit the existence of still *another* condition, this time a condition on the proposition 'God co-acts so that this ray is from the sun'. It is difficult to say what this new condition would be, but let's try, for example, the condition *that God wills that God co-act so that this ray is from the sun*. Some such new condition is clearly necessary to fill the insufficiency that sill exists, and, so to speak, make up the ontological gap.

Now we can again propositionalize this new condition *that God wills that God co-act so that this ray is from the sun*, just as we did previously with *that God co-act so that this ray is from the sun*, to yield the new, even more complex proposition 'God wills that God co-act so that this ray is from the sun'. We then proceed exactly as before, and ask: What is required for the truth of 'God wills that God co-act so that this ray is from the sun'? Either as many things as the anti-razor says, or fewer. If as many as, Chatton was right all along; if fewer, then the objector's own strategy forces us to posit still *another* condition, which new condition we can propositionalize as before, etc.

Now either this process proceeds to infinity, with each new condition in its turn requiring we posit yet another condition to explain the previous proposition's truth – and in that case we have an explanatory regress, since the truth of 'This ray is from the sun' never finally gets explained – or else at some level we jump off this infinity train. But the only station through which we can exit is Option 1 or its equivalent, that is, the only way to break the regress is to admit that Chatton was right to begin with; more than two *things* are needed for the truth of 'This ray is from the sun'. But then of course, the entire nominalist line of objection was for naught.

To recapitulate briefly and more formally, the general structure of this objection and Chatton's reply is as follows:[10]

> (1) Assume the machinery of the anti-razor for the sake of objection.
>
> (2) Objection: the consistency of the existence of a_1, a_2, ... a_n, with the falsehood of p shows, not that we must posit a new thing a_{n+1}, but rather a new condition on the truth of p, call it Cp.

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[10] A graphical representation of this summary, streamlined and with simpler notation, occurs as an appedix.

(3) Form the proposition expressing the new proposed necessary condition *Cp*, written $\pi(Cp)$. Ask: what must exist in order for $\pi(Cp)$ itself to be true?

(4) Now, there are two possible answers. OPTION 1: $\pi(Cp)$ requires more than *n* things exist, just as Chatton's anti-razor says *p* did. OPTION 2: The truth of $\pi(Cp)$ requires that than *n* or fewer things exist.

(5) If Option 1, then the anti-razor was correct after all.

(6) If Option 2, then even with the *C(p)* added, entities a_1, a_2, ... a_n without a_{n+1} are still insufficient for the truth of $\pi(Cp)$. *Proof:* By hypothesis, *n* or fewer things are ontologically insufficient for the truth of *p*, but since *p* is an embedded dictum in $\pi(Cp)$, clearly $\pi(Cp)$ requires at least as many things for its truth as *p* does. Hence, if *n* or fewer things are insufficient for the truth of *p*, obviously *n* or fewer things are insufficient for the truth of $\pi(Cp)$ as well. QED

(7) The objector's general method would therefore require us to posit still *another* condition to explain the truth of proposition $\pi(Cp)$; call the new condition $C^*\pi(Cp)$. This $C^*\pi(Cp)$ is necessary to fill the insufficiency which, by (6) above, still exists for $\pi(Cp)$.

(8) But we can propositionalize $C^*\pi(Cp)$ just as we did *Cp*, to yield $\pi C^*\pi(Cp)$, and then proceed again as in (4)-(7) above, to for the positing of $C^{**}\pi C^*\pi(Cp)$, which we can make into $\pi C^{**}\pi C^*\pi(Cp)$, etc.

(9) Now either this process proceeds to infinity, with the nth requirement of a new condition producing a true proposition of the form $\pi C^{*\,n+1} \ldots \pi(Cp)$ – and in that case, *p*'s truth conditions never having been finally stated, we have an explanatory regress – or else admit (4) Option 1 above, and the entire objection was for naught.

Assume for the moment that this argument strategy works. What has Chatton accomplished thereby? He has shown that one cannot fill ontological gaps with non-entities; positing conditions only generates more propositions whose truth conditions must be similarly explained by the nominalist, which explanation requires yet more conditions, and so on. Only real things are ontologically sturdy enough to fill the chinks in this sinking semantic ship. The Ockhamist analysis in which conditions make propositions true, even if it is correct, still depends upon the more basic fact that propositions about things are made true by things, which basic fact is given more proper due by the realist analysis. Hence the Ockhamist objection sheds no light upon the correctness or incorrectness of Chatton's own realist ontological analysis with his anti-razor. Put simply, Chatton has shown that the Ockhamist analysis is dependent upon a more basic realist analysis, and so is not capable of adjudicating on questions raised about that more basic level of analysis.

How though can we briefly summarize Chatton's argument strategy in plain English? I think the following statement captures what is important:

> ***Chatton's rule of iterated analysis*** – Given two competing analyses *A* and *B*, where we want to show that *A* is more fundamental, and *B* as less so, we can ask what happens if we self-referentially iterate *B*, that is, what happens when *B* is used to analyze its own outputs (assuming this is legitimate). If the legitimate iteration of *B*

leads to an explanatory regress unless analysis *A* is used to terminate it, then clearly *B* at bottom depends upon *A*.[11]

I wish to stress that this rule of iterated analysis we have discovered is not identical with the anti-razor, nor is it a part of it. The anti-razor is a semantic theory which Chatton here defends with the rule of iterated analysis, but, as the next section will reveal, the rule can be easily applied to very different philosophical contexts just as easily. In short, *A* and *B* can be any two analyses at all.[12]

Is Chatton's strategy a good one? I think that it is, if we add some provisos on its application and results:

> (i) Clearly *B* may depend upon things other than *A*; that is, with his rule we show at most that the success or truth of analysis *A* is necessary for the success or truth of *B*, but there may of course be other factors upon which *B* depends, or upon which *A* depends. Chatton's *Lectura* discussion does not show any awareness of this issue.

> (ii) Although other things may be necessary, in addition to analysis *A*, in order to terminate *B*'s iteration, it really must be the case that *A* is strictly *necessary* to terminate *B*'s iteration. If there is another way of doing so that is independently acceptable and that does not involve *A*, then all bets are off.

> (iii) The application of analysis *B* to itself must be otherwise logically and philosophically legitimate, for example, it must not make a category mistake. Chatton's discussion in *Lectura* does show awareness of this issue.

The best way to argue against a *particular* application of Chatton's rule of iterated analysis is, obviously, to show that it fails on one of the provisos above, or, still more directly, to show that the regress that drives the argument is not really a problem: for example, that it is not vicious, or that the regress is not infinite, but instead collapses to the finite. Perhaps such a response could be made above on behalf of the Ockhamist above.

IV

In his highly original treatment of future contingents in *Reportatio* I, d. 38, Chatton again has occasion to face this complex iteration strategy. Only this it seems that, instead of applying the strategy, he is rather defending against it, since in that text he is at pains to show that a certain seemingly infinite regress stemming from an iterated analysis in fact collapses to the finite level.

For complex reasons that we need not go into, Chatton's solution to the problem of future contingents requires that there be two distinct, independent analyses of what it means to be committed to the proposition 'Socrates will be sitting,' and in general to any future-tensed proposition of the form '*a* will be P', where *a* names a contingent

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[11] Chatton does not give a name to this strategy, but simply refers to it as a 'method'.

[12] Thanks to Jack Zupko for pointing out the need for this clarification.

thing. Our commitment to '*a* will be P' can have two particular, distinct analyses, according to Chatton. '*a* will be P' can mean either:[13]

> (i) '*a* will be P' is true   [A future-tense proposition *is true*.]
>
> or
>
> (ii) '*a* is P' will be true   [A present-tense proposition *will be true*.]

Although Chatton thinks true propositions of the first form lead to fatalism, he the thinks those of the second form do not, and hence the distinction between these two forms can be the basis of a stable solution to the problem of future contingents.[14] That is, to avoid fatalism but still safeguard veridical prophecy and divine foreknowledge, we have to say that Analysis (i) yields a proposition which is really indeterminate in truth value, while Analysis (ii) yields a proposition which can be regarded as true. Consequently, it is absolutely critical to Chatton's solution that these two analyses are distinct and independent, and in particular, it cannot be that Analysis (ii) depends at all on Analysis (i). At the point where he should naturally make an argument for this important point, he instead offers this extremely compressed and obscure remark:

> If 'The Antichrist will come' is true according to the second mode of assertion, then if it were again asserted to be true, it would again be true in that very same mode in which it was originally asserted. The reason is that from the opposite of something the opposite conclusion follows (this dictum being understood here in a general sense).[15]

What could he mean here?

I believe what we have learned above from his rule of iterated analysis can shed light on this remark. Imagine someone opposed Chatton's claim that Analyses (i) and (ii) above are distinct and independent. They could attack his whole strategy by applying the iterated analysis rule against him, in particular, they might try to show that Analysis (ii) in fact depends upon (i). This would of course finish off Chatton's solution to future contingents.

How could we go about using Chatton's rule against him in this way? Chatton's rule of iterated analysis suggests we iterate Analysis (ii) on its own outputs in such a way that a regress is generated which only Analysis (i) can break. Now, Analysis (ii) says that the truth of '*a* will be P' commits you to the truth of "'*a* is P' will be true". Notice that the original sentence is future-tensed, and that, after we apply Analysis (ii), the result is another future-tensed proposition. Consequently we can legitimately iterate Analysis

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[13] *Reportatio* I, d. 38, q. unica, a. 1, paragraph 22, p. 351.

[14] *Reportatio* I, d. 38, q. unica, a. 1, paragraph 24-29, pp. 351-2. Paragraph 28 contains the heart of his solution. For a full explanation, see Rondo Keele, "Walter Chatton", *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy (Fall 2006 Edition)*, Edward N. Zalta (ed.), URL = http://plato.stanford.edu/archives/fall2006/entries/walter-chatton/, section 5.

[15] *Reportatio* I, d. 38, q. unica, a. 1, paragraph 23, p. 351. He says "Si est vera in secundo intellectu, igitur si asserat se *esse* veram, illo modo vera est ut asserit se veram, quia ex opposito sequitur oppositum, si intelligatur illud dictum generaliter."

(ii), applying it to its own original output, to get a proposition of a higher 'level' so to speak: from "'*a* is P' will be true" we get "'"*a* is P' is true" will be true'. This could continue, and, using parentheses instead of quotation marks, we would then have, schematically:

Level 0   *a* will be P *commits you to:*

Level 1   (*a* is P) will be true *commits you to:*

Level 2   ((*a* is P) is true) will be true *commits you to:*

Level 3   (((*a* is P) is true) is true) will be true *etc.*

At each new level we have used Analysis (ii) to obtain a new future contingent sentence, the truth of which is entailed by the previous level.

Chatton claims that level 0 and level 1 are equivalent. But this analysis could obviously be repeated to infinity, so that Level 1 automatically generates Level 2, and it seems the truth conditions of the sentence on Level 1 might seem to await determination by what happens at Level 2, but 2 generates 3, so 2 awaits determination by 3, which generates 4, etc. Hence we seem to have an explanatory regress. How could the regress be broken? The only way would be to determine *independently* the truth conditions for any arbitrary Level $n > 0$ of the schema above. So consider, under what conditions are any of these higher sentences in the above schema true? Since at any Level $n > 0$ of this analysis we are dealing with a future-tensed proposition, to answer this question we must ask: Under what conditions is a future-tensed sentence generally true? And this is just to ask, how do we know that, for example, the sentence '(((*a* is P) is true) is true) will be true' is true? But – and here is Chatton's worry – *to ask this is really just to ask what makes a sentence of the form in Analysis (i) true*. To see this clearly it is best to approach the matter formally. Note that no matter what level we are at in the schema above we have, on the left, a long proposition, and on the right finally the main logical operator, the phrase 'will be true'. Now regard 'true' in this phrase as a predicate, P; we then have at every level a proposition function 'will be P'. Since a proposition is a contingent thing, the long proposition on the left can be represented by *a*, which symbol you recall can stand for any contingent thing. We see immediately that each level of the schema actually has the logical form '*a* will be P', thus:

Level *n* of Analysis (ii):   (... (a is P) is $true_1$) is $true_2$) ...) will be $true_n$

Analysis (i):   *a*   will be   P

Hence, to ask of any Level *n* in the schema for Analysis (ii) whether it is true is just to ask whether a sentence of the form '*a* will be P' is true, which sentence is as the form in Analysis (i); hence, to terminate the regress in the schema of Anaysis (ii) we are forced to resort to Analysis (i), which Chatton said leads ultimately to fatalism.

Chatton seems to face here the same stark choice we just saw him put before the Ockhamist. For in order to give the truth-conditions of any arbitrary future-tensed proposition of any Level $n > 0$ in his schema, by his own lights Chatton has only two choices: use Analysis (i) or use Analysis (ii). If he uses Analysis (i) the fatalist was right all along. If he uses Analysis (ii) he simply obtains the $n + 1$th level of the schema, and the regress continues unless Analysis (i) finally be admitted. In sum, by Chatton's own

rule of iterated analysis, since Analysis (i) is needed to break the regress on the iteration of Analysis (ii), we have shown that (ii) depends upon (i). So it seems that Chatton has been sunk with his own rule here.

It is just such an objection that Chatton is trying to head off, I think, when he asserts the compressed remark with which we began this section of the paper:

> If 'The Antichrist will come' is true according to the second mode of assertion, then if it were again asserted to be true, it would again be true in that very same mode in which it was originally asserted.

The reply suggested in this quotation amounts to this: Analysis (ii) does not really create a new sentence whose determinate truth cannot be explained otherwise – rather, the product of Analysis (ii) is a new, contingent, future-tense sentence that can be understood *in just the same way as the original*, because the iteration outputs of Analysis (ii) are all equivalent to the original sentence, i.e., each Level $n > 1$ really reduces by equivalence to Level 1. And it is just here where Chatton's remark about the *ex opposito* dictum comes in – it turns out we can in fact reason *ex opposito* to collapse the infinite schema down to the finite. Without an infinite regress, the rule of iterated analysis does not apply, Chatton can have his distinction, and we can all avoid the iron hand of fate.

How though can we collapse these levels to the finite by reasoning *ex opposito*? In general, reasoning *ex opposito* is just reasoning by what we call contraposition, viz., $p \rightarrow q$ therefore $\sim q \rightarrow \sim p$, or vice versa. Now, we already have that Level $0 \leftrightarrow$ Level $1 \rightarrow$ Level $2 \rightarrow$ Level $3 \rightarrow ...$ from Analysis (ii) itself, so if we could establish a corresponding implication the other direction, and show for any $n > 1$ that (Level $n \rightarrow$ Level $n - 1$), then we would have the equivalences needed to collapse the infinite regress to the original two-term equivalence, Level $0 \leftrightarrow$ Level 1.

The argument from contraposition that collapses these levels is easy to establish in full generality but tediously long to state in that form; instead I will illustrate the method by using contraposition to reduce Level 3 to Level 2:

Take a sentence of Level 3; it has the form (((a is P) is true) is true) will be true. We want to show this entails the Level 2 sentence ((a is P) is true) will be true. The proof is by contraposition. We assume *(((a is P) is true) will be true) is false* and show *((((a is P) is true) is true) will be true) is false*.

1. (((*a* is P) is true) will be true) is **false**   *given;   this implies that*
2. ((*a* is P) is true) will **not** be true   *which implies that*
3. ((*a* is P) is **not** true) will be true   *which implies that*
4. ((*a* is **not** P) is true) will be true
5. (*a* is **not** P) = (*a* is P) is **not** true   *law of negation; subst. in 4 yields*
6. (((*a* is P) is **not** true) is true) will be true   *which implies that*
7. (((*a* is P) is true) is **not** true) will be true   *which implies that*
8. (((*a* is P) is true) is true) will **not** be true   *which implies that*

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9. ((((*a* is P) is true) is true) will be true) is **false**   QED

Hence, Level 3 → Level 2.

Although my hypothesis explains a great deal about what Chatton has in mind, I may be wrong, of course, and this might not be the way to exposit the *'ex opposito'* portion of this compressed remark. After all, the reduction from level can be done directly and more simply by using the logical equivalence '*a* is P' is true iff *a* is P, and substitution into sentence at level *n*, e.g., merely from

(((a is P) is true) is true) will be true

and

'*a* is P' is true iff *a* is P

alone it follows immediately by simple substitution that

((a is P) is true) will be true

Hence, Level 3 → Level 2. But if Chatton did not intend this reasoning as I have reconstructed it here, it is difficult imagine how else to sort out his very obscure remark.

V

Chatton's intense interest in the logical behavior of certain sentential analyses under iteration puts one in mind of modern modal logicians and their worries about the axiom sets under which iterated modalities collapse. For example, it can be shown that under the powerful and seemingly useful assumptions of the modal system S5, one ends up with a logic that cannot sustain iterated modalities, in the sense that any string of unary operators $\sim$, $\Box$, $\Diamond$, in front of a formula p is S5 equivalent to one of only four basic modalities, $\sim\Box p$, $\Box p$, $\sim\Diamond p$, or $\Diamond p$. Thus S5 is axiom rich but theorem poor.

And again, modern philosophers have found that they must grapple with infinite regress in order to sort out their own debates. One thinks of Russell and the paradoxes of self-reference plaguing set theory early last century. It is interesting that we have now found Walter Chatton six centuries ago combining these two powerful tools, self-referential iteration and infinite regress, into one interesting argument strategy, although this strategy itself is apparently never named or discussed explicitly by logicians.

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Appendix: Picturing Chatton's Rule of Iterated Analysis in *Lectura* I, d. 3, q. 1

(alternative notation)

CHATTON

EVERYONE AGREES

n things are insufficient for p's truth

we must posit more things, n +, until it is inconsistent that p is false

sometimes we must posit, not more things, n +, but rather that some further conditions on p are met, say conditions (i)p, (ii)p, ...

OCKHAM

Chatton says: take one of Ockham's conditions, say (i)p, and propositionalize it to get a new proposition, p'(i)p. Now, ask what is sufficient for the truth of this new proposition p'(i)p? There are only two options for the truth of p'(i)p. Either:

(1) merely n things are sufficient for the new proposition p'(i)p OR
(2) rather n+ things are sufficient for the truth of p'(i)p

If option (2), then Chatton obviously wins, since this is what his anti-razor originally claimed.

However, option (1) is impossible without option (2), so Chatton wins anyway. For p'(i)p contains p as an embedded part, and so p'(i)p requires at least as many things as p did. But n things were insufficient for p, so n things are insufficient for p'(i)p as well. But Ockham's strategy was to insist that insufficiencies for truth be explained by adding new conditions, not new things. So, by iterating the above Ockhamist analysis we must posit new conditions for the truth of p'(i)p as well.

This gives us a new condition, say (iii)p'(i)p. Obviously, we can again propositionalize condition (iii)p'(i)p to yield p''(iii)p'(i)p, and we then ask the same question of sufficiency again Since p''(iii)p'(i)p contains p as an embedded part, p''(iii)p'(i)p requires

at least as many things as p did. n things were not enough for p, hence they are not enough for p''(iii)p'(i)p, and so option (1) is closed once again. We must iterate the Ockhamist

ITERATION

analysis, so this new insufficiency leads us to posit another condition, say (iv), which we propositionalize to yield p'''(iv)p''(iii)p'(i)p, etc., etc.

INFINITE REGERSS

The non-expansive nominalist option, option (1), will go to infinity as long as we only have recourse to the Ockhamist analysis. Consequently, we must eventually answer as per option (2), and Chatton wins.

Jack Zupko:

Comments on Rondo Keele, "Applied logic and medieval reasoning: iteration and infinite regress in Walter Chatton"[1]

My comments will focus on one historiographical point and two possible objections a medieval nominalist might make to Chatton's use of this particular regress argument to defend metaphysical realism. Let me say at the outset, though, that I find Professor Keele's exposition of Chatton here completely sound – indeed, impressively so, given the obscurity of the text in the places he indicates. My sense is that he has the *dialectical spirit* of Chatton right – at least the Chatton I am familiar with – and that this is as important when reading his work as any more programmatic concern about figuring out what his contribution was to late medieval realism.

First, the historiographical point. I do not think the device Professor Keele nicely dubs "Chatton's anti-razor" has anything to do with medieval logic, applied or otherwise. The iterative method it employs is not covered in any logic textbook I am familiar with (though of course I am happy to be corrected here), though there are lots of discussions of the semantics of the term 'infinite' (e.g., whether it should be interpreted categorematically or syncategorematically in a given context),[2] of infinitizing or term-negation as opposed to propositional negation (e.g., 'non-animal' in 'A stone is a non-animal'),[3] of the interpretation of sophism-sentences containing the term 'infinite' (e.g., 'Infinites are finite'),[4] and so on. But Chatton's anti-razor plays no role in determining the signification or supposition of terms, nor does it help us settle the truth-conditions of propositions. So I doubt whether any medieval logician would have regarded it as part of his dialectical toolkit, even if it strikes us as similar to modern devices like Mill's joint method (3). What the 'anti-razor' is, I think, is a form of logico-mathematical reasoning that was fairly common among 14th-century philosophers and theologians, especially among Chatton's contemporaries, the Mertonians or 'Oxford Calculators', who developed sophisticated analytical models to solve problems of motion,

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[1] American Catholic Philosophical Association 80th Annual Meeting, Satellite Session on Medieval Skepticism and Epistemology sponsored by the Society for Medieval Logic and Metaphysics, Denison University, 10/27/2006.

[2] See Buridan, *Quaestiones Physicorum* III.14-19 (Paris: 1509); ed. Thijssen 1991.

[3] See Buridan, *Summulae de Dialectica* 1.3.3 (tr. Klima 2001: 28-29).

[4] See Burley, *Shorter Treatise on the Purity of the Art of Logic* (tr. Spade 2000: 74-75).

acceleration, and change.[5] Insofar as it invokes the concept of infinity, its distant relative is the simpler kind of regress argument used by Thomas Aquinas in the First Way, which assumes that an *actual* infinity of movers and things moved does not explain the existence of actual motion; the only thing that can do that is an actual Prime Mover, since only something actual can terminate the regress of motion. Best to think of the anti-razor as an explanatory principle, then, whose function is normative because it determines what counts as a good explanation. Medieval logic is not normative in that sense.

Now to the first objection. Much of Chatton's thought is developed in counterpoint to Ockham's, and I think Professor Keele brings this out quite nicely. But why on earth would any self-respecting nominalist – like Ockham, for instance – agree that "whatever makes a difference to truth must be real" in the sense of being a *res*, or thing? Nominalism's austere ontology rests on the intuition that since truths vastly outnumber truth-makers, there must be something about the mode or arrangement or "condition" of the latter that impinges on the former. And their insight is this: such conditions can be real, or truth-making, without being things, or full blown truth-makers. They are not "non-ontological" if by that you mean 'unreal' (7). So it seems a nominalist could distinguish very easily between the real but participial or adjectival effect of conditions on the truth of a proposition on the one hand, and the substantive effect of things on the other. The way out of the anti-razor is to say that although Socrates and Plato by themselves are not sufficient for the truth of 'Socrates is to the left of Plato', we do not remedy this by adding more individuals to the number of things, but by specifying the way in which these primary supposits are related to each other. John Buridan, for example, sees this as a function performed by the *connotation* of a term:

> … sometimes it happens that a relative concrete term not only signifies or connotes the thing for which it supposits, and the thing to which the comparison is being made, but also connotes another thing either inhering in some one of them, or perhaps sometimes extrinsic to them. For example, if I say, 'Socrates is similar to Plato', the term 'similar' not only signifies and connotes Socrates and Plato, but also connotes the quality according to which he is similar to him. And so if I say, 'Socrates is equal to Plato', the term 'equal' connotes, beyond Socrates and Plato, their magnitudes. And if I say, 'Whiteness inheres in a stone' or 'Form inheres in matter', then the word 'inheres' connotes the disposition added apart from the form and the matter, viz., the inseparability, as was stated in another question. Likewise, if I say, 'Socrates is at a distance from Plato', the term 'is at a distance' connotes another thing apart from Socrates and Plato and also extrinsic to Socrates and Plato, viz. the intermediate

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[5] I gloss a controversy here: Murdoch and Sylla want to treat the analytical languages of the Oxford Calculators as *logical* languages, since they see no difference between logical and physical sophismata (Sylla in *CHLMP*, 1982: 546-47). I think this is right on a superficial level, but it is important to note that the two types of analysis come from different places, historically: logical languages are dialectical and trivial; physical calculations are mathematical and quadrivial. That is why medieval logic textbooks contain no treatments of the latter – though there are of course plenty of *examples* of calculation in certain logical genres, such as the resolution of sophism sentences.

dimension by which Socrates is at a distance from Plato. (*QM* V.9: 32va; cf. *QM* V.8: 31rb-33ra)[6]

Now I realize that Chatton would be unlikely to accept this. But I also think that the debate between medieval nominalism and medieval realism comes down to a clash of intuitions about how many and what sorts of things are needed to account for the truth of propositions. A nominalist willing to grant Chatton that only substantive things can make a difference to truth has already given the game away. If this were a game of obligations, the right response by a nominalist would be '*distinguo*'.

Finally, the second objection. It seems fairly easy to hoist the realist by his own petard if we ask how it is that *the thing* that is A's being related to B inheres in A, if not by *another thing*, A's being related to A's being related to B, and so on – thereby introducing another vicious regress of truth-makers. Surely it is better to admit at the outset that reality has two aspects, things and modes of things, only the former of which has ontology-enriching consequences. If I may appeal once more to my favorite nominalist, Buridan argues that we do not need to posit some additional cause to explain the truth of a negative proposition because "whatever causes are required for the truth of any proposition, the same causes are required for the falsity of its contradictory" (*QM* VI.8: 39ra).[7] Thus, if a proposition becomes false, what has changed is not anything on the part of the subject, but in the way things stand with respect to it.[8] The change in a proposition's truth-value is thereby assimilated to a particular species of relation Buridan describes as that in which a subject "can be differently related at different times to something extrinsic to it, without any change on its part, through a change in that extrinsic thing, such as when a column is first on my right and then on my left [i.e., after I walk around to the other side of it]" (*QDA₃* III.11: 123).[9] The same

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[6] "… aliquando contingit quod terminus relativus concretus significat vel connotat non solum rem pro qua supponit et rem ad quam est comparatio, immo etiam connotat rem aliam vel inhaerentem alicui illarum vel forte aliquando extrinsecam: verbi gratia, si ego dico 'Sortes est similis Platoni', ille terminus 'similis' non solum significat et connotat Sortem et Platonem, immo etiam connotat qualitatem secundum quam ille est similis illi. Et ita si ego dico 'Sortes est aequalis Platoni', ille terminus 'aequalis' ultra Sortem et Platonem connotat magnitudines eorum. Et si dico 'albedo inhaeret lapidi' vel 'forma inhaeret materiae', tunc illa dictio 'inhaeret' connotat dispositionem additivam praeter formam et materiam, scilicet inseparabilitatem, ut dicebatur in alia quaestione. Similiter si ego dico 'Sortes distat a Platone', ille terminus 'distat' connotat rem aliam praeter Sortem et Platonem etiam extrinsecam Sorti et Platoni, scilicet dimensionem intermediam per quam Sortes distat a Platone." (QM V.9: 32va)

[7] *QM* VI.8: 39ra (cf. *QDA₃* III.12: 134): "quaecumque causae requiruntur ad veritatem alicuius propositionis, eaedem requiruntur ad falsitatem suae contradictoriae."

[8] We might think of this along the following lines: "[the term] 'false' does not assert [of something] what [it is], but how [it is]" (*S* 7.3.10: 546).

[9] *QDA₃* III.11: 123 (cf. *QP* II.3: 31ra-rb): "nam res uno modo potest aliter et aliter se habere prius et posterius ad aliquod extrinsecum, sine aliqua sui mutatione, per mutationem illius extrinseci, sic enim columna prius mihi dextra sit posterius mihi sinistra." For the other two modes of accidental change, see chapter 11 below. The column example was traditional. Most everyone assumed it was from Boethius's *De Trinitate*, although the example there has one man approaching another stationary man, not a man approaching a column.

sequence of steps is sufficient to make one proposition true, i.e., 'The column is on my left', and another false, i.e., 'The column is on my right'. I do not have to *do* anything else to make the second proposition false.[10]

But, as I suggested above, none of this would be likely to shake Chatton. Medieval realists are fundamentalists about things, unwilling to accept anything but literal denotation as relevant to the truth of a proposition. I do not think this is right, but I doubt whether there are conclusive arguments to demonstrate it.

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[10] Cf. Aristotle, *Categories* 5.4a35-b2: "Statements and beliefs, on the other hand, themselves remain completely unchangeable in every way; it is because the actual thing changes that the contrary comes to belong to them. For the statement that someone is sitting remains the same; it is because of a change in the actual thing that it comes to be true at one time and false at another. Similarly with beliefs."

Rondo Keele:

Response to Professor Zupko

Professor Zupko makes several interesting and clear points in his thoughtful remarks, for which I am grateful. His critique has helped me make the paper better and has forced me to clarify my thinking on several matters.

I agree with Professor Zupko's historiographical point. The anti-razor is a semantic theory, and an "explanatory principle", and it has nothing to do with logic per se (2). But the anti-razor must be carefully distinguished from the iteration strategy Chatton used to support it; the two are separable, and, as Section IV of the paper shows, the iteration strategy can be used in contexts that have nothing to do with the anti-razor, or with ontology generally. And it is *this* strategy that I regard as the object of study in my paper on applied logic in mediaeval reasoning, not the anti-razor, necessarily. I think that I failed to make this clear in the version of the paper I originally read and to which Professor Zupko responded. The version now online tries to make the distinction clearer, and I have a footnote to Professor Zupko.

Concerning the first critical point: Professor Zupko asks why "would any self-respecting nominalist – like Ockham, for instance – agree that 'whatever makes a difference to truth must be real' in the sense of being a thing?" (2). After all, nominalism itself "rests on the intuition that since truths vastly outnumber truth-makers, there must be something about the mode or arrangement or 'condition' of the latter that impinges on the former" (2-3). This too is correct, of course – realists and nominalists do have quite different 'ontological intuitions'. I mentioned Chatton's realist intuition in my paper, not as an argument (and certainly not as an argument for his rule of iterated analysis), but simply as intuition, as a part of characterizing his realism for the reader. An intuition is no argument, of course.

But Chatton does have an argument that, if successful, makes the realist analysis more fundamental than any nominalist analysis based on conditions or arrangement. For any given condition that would be proposed to fill a truth gap that both sides agree is a gap can itself be propositionalized, forming a new proposition that will also give rise to a truth gap that requires a condition, and so on. In short, if Chatton's rule of iterated analysis is correct and correctly applied in this case, then he has shown the nominalist analysis is dependent upon the realist analysis, and so is not fit to adjudicate the question raised by the realist analysis – do we have enough *res*? It will not do to suggest, for example: 'We can always say these given *res* are enough, and just fill the gap with conditions,' because conditions are either language or else they are *res*. If *res*, then the realists were doing the right thing all along. If language, then we can ask what makes *it* true, and we're off on a regress. If there is a third alternative between *res* and language, then we need an explanation; the nominalist has some heavy metaphysics to do. But it is precisely heavy metaphysics that the nominalist eschews.

The lesson Chatton wishes for us to draw is just this: sometimes conditions might be needed to make propositions about things true, but, in general, propositions about things are made true by things, and the question of whether we have enough things in our ontology is a *prior question* that must be settled before we consider what conditions could be involved. If it works, Chatton's rule of iterated analysis is supposed to break the deadlock of intuitions between the two camps.

Concerning the second critical point, Professor Zupko does two things. (i) He raises an infinite regress puzzle for the realist, whose tendency to reify relations as accidents seems to generate a new relation – namely, between the relational accident and its subject – which then needs to have a reified relational accident to explain it, and so on to infinity. (ii) He also describes how Buridan might explain, using the idea of 'modes of things' and 'how things stand' to explain the way a relational sentence gets to be first true and later false.

This first puzzle is quite interesting. One way out is to claim that in Aristotelian metaphysics we are usually trying to explain visible change in material substances, and that positing accidents inhering in those substances is the basic method of the system. To then ask what makes an accident inhere in a substance is to move up a level of explanation. At this higher level many things are possible: perhaps we don't know what to say – explanations must stop somewhere after all. But the important point is that it is not *required* to give the same answer to the question 'What makes a relational accident inhere in its substance' as we give to the question 'What makes Socrates be left of Plato?', for the theory posits, not that relational accidents explain *every* relation, but that they explain *substance*-relations, that is, relations between first substances. We are not forced by the theory itself to adopt the same explanation for the higher-level case, and so the regress is blocked. In terms of my paper, the iteration of the analysis on the new situation is not legitimate here; it involves a category mistake. Similarly, Plato's 'one over many principle' says roughly that similarities are explained by Forms, so we might ask: 'Does the similarity the Form F has with the many f-things f_1, f_2, ... entail that there must be another Form to explain the similarity, say F', which Form is now similar to F and f_1, f_2, ... requiring another F'' etc.?' The proper answer is 'No'. For this is to state the one over many principle too loosely and without sufficient care: say instead that every case where some particulars x_1, x_2, ... have f in the world of becoming requires that we posit a Form of F in the world of being, which Form is the cause of the x_1, x_2, ... having f. If then you ask: 'What is the explanation of the similarity between the particulars x_1, x_2, ... that have f and F itself?' we can answer 'Well, the Form F causes the f in x_1, x_2, ...' – and this is not *ad hoc*, but is rather the real and general answer the theory gives. Forms explain similarities among particulars. They are not intended to explain similarities between Forms and particulars; participation, or some such thing, is supposed to do that. Now, maybe participation doesn't make a very convincing explanation. But there is no *regress* here.

On the contrary, the Ockhamist is in a regress, if he holds that insufficiencies for truth of certain propositions require, not more *res*, but more conditions, because the added conditions generate new propositions which require new conditions, etc., since they seem to be about the same old *res* which were insufficient to begin with, according to everybody.

With respect to point (ii), I reply as above. I think it is very reasonable to say "that reality has two aspects, things and modes of things, and that only the former have ontology-enriching consequences" (4), provided that one explains how the modes do things – causal things, such

as making propositions true – without having any kind of being or ontological status. It's only fair for us to give them some status (as Professor Spade often points out) if we are going to make them do work in our theories. And at any rate, one wants most of all to know what modes are like; the nominalist, it seems, still has some heavy metaphysics to do.

Joshua P. Hochschild:

Kenny and Aquinas on individual essences

1. Introduction

Anthony Kenny objects to many aspects of Aquinas's treatment of being. He has long held, and recently argued in an entire book, that as a whole Aquinas's treatment of *being* (*esse*) is inadequate, incoherent, even "sophistry."[1] Among the many particular metaphysical doctrines Kenny criticizes as incoherent are the real distinction between being and essence in creatures, the notion of being as "participated," the notion of subsisting immaterial forms, and the notion of God as subsistent *esse*.

Some commentators have sought a general diagnosis of Kenny's unsympathetic interpretation of Aquinas. They have focused on his unabashed deference to Fregean assumptions. Briefly, they have found while Fregean insights do serve to clarify certain aspects of Aquinas's thought, Kenny seems to think that the Fregean framework must always function like a pair of night vision goggles, illuminating the obscurity of Aquinas. Kenny never considers that most of the time, at least, the Fregean framework might work more like a polarized lens, filtering out the rich refractions and diverse reflections of Thomas's brilliance.[2]

I think this general diagnosis is accurate, and my own reflections here will serve to confirm it. But my strategy is to begin from the inside, as it were, and focus on one particular puzzle Kenny raises. The puzzle is, at first glance at least, at some remove from the issue of *being* in its own right, and for that reason it is a puzzle that can be handled manageably and I hope persuasively. But by addressing this puzzle, I do hope to allow some other aspects of Aquinas's teaching about being, left obscure on Kenny's interpretation, to shine forth.

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[1] Anthony Kenny, *Aquinas on Being* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002), cf. pp. vii and 194. Hereafter page references to Kenny's book will be cited parenthetically in the main text.

[2] The limitations of Kenny's reliance on Frege are explored in Gyula Klima, "On Kenny on Aquinas on Being: A critical review of *Aquinas on Being* by Anthony Kenny," *International Philosophical Quarterly* 44 (2004): 567-580; in Brian Davies, "Kenny on Aquinas on Being," *The Modern Schoolman* 82 (2005): 111-129; and in Steven A. Long, "*Aquinas on Being* and Logicism," *New Blackfriars* 86 (2005): 323-347.

2. Kenny's puzzle about individual essences

The puzzle raised by Kenny that I want to address initially is this: how is an individual material being distinct from its essence? At issue here is not some utterly naïve mistake of confusing individual members of a species with the common nature they all share. Rather, Kenny has struck on a genuinely interesting problem about "individual essences," as opposed to universal essences or common natures. He wonders how individual essences are distinct from the individuals of which they are the essences.[3]

Kenny's question arises most clearly from Aquinas's remarks about matter and essences in *De ente et essentia*. There, Aquinas points out that the essences of material things must in a sense include not only form but also matter, for it is part of the definition of material things that they are material. On the other hand, it is also the case that, for an Aristotelian, matter is the principle of individuation by which the common essence is numerically differentiated in distinct individuals. How can matter play both roles – serve as a part of the essence *common* to many individuals, and serve as that by which the common essence is *individuated*? To address this apparent difficulty, Aquinas offers a clarification, distinguishing between undesignated and designated matter. Undesignated matter is "matter in general," matter considered insofar as it is included in the definition of any body *qua material* substance; designated matter is a particular piece of matter, considered under its determinate dimensions, which serves as the principle of individuation.

This much is clear from Aquinas. Kenny's puzzle arises when he considers what is included in the *individualized* essence, that is, the essence, not considered absolutely,[4] but as it exists, individualized, in a particular material substance. For Aquinas's point seems to be that the essence *absolutely considered* includes undesignated, but not designated, matter, while the individual includes, or is composed from, that essence and the individuating designated matter. But then, what are we to say of the individualized essence, the essence not absolutely considered but as it has particular existence in the individual? Surely the individualized essence must include more than just undesignated matter; how else can we differentiate it from the specific essence? But if it includes designated matter, how can we differentiate it from the individual substance itself?

Here is Kenny posing the puzzle in his own words:

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[3] So far as I can tell, this question is not directly addressed in what is, to my knowledge, the most thorough Thomistic response to Kenny, taking up many other particular arguments and interpretations: Laurence Dewan, "Discussion: On Anthony Kenny's *Aquinas on Being*," *Nova et Vetera* 3 (2005): 335-400.

[4] Kenny often refers to the "universal essence" or "specific essence," although it is usually clear from context that he means the essence considered absolutely, not the essence as it exists in the intellect which thus acquires the accident of universality. I will address some ambiguities in Kenny's terminology again below.

If, as Aquinas holds, there are individual, and not just universal, essences, we can ask what makes Socrates' essence the essence *of Socrates.* Is it not the same thing as makes Socrates Socrates—namely, that it is the essence of this particular body? If matter individuates Socrates from all other human beings, why doesn't it individuate Socrates' essence from all other human essences? If humanity as such contains form and some matter of a specific kind, surely the humanity of Socrates contains form and *this* matter of the same specific kind. This is a question the answer to which we seek in vain (21).

We might try to summarize Kenny's reasoning as follows:

1. The *specific essence* includes form and *undesignated* matter; while:

2. An *individual* includes more than the form and the undesignated matter that are included in the specific essence; it also includes the principle of individuation, namely *designated* matter; but then:

3. An *individual essence* must include not only what is included in the specific essence but also what individuates it; so:

4. An individual essence includes form and *designated* matter; but then:

5. If both the individual and its individual essence include form and the same quantity of designated matter, it seems to follow that the individual is identical with its individual essence.

I intend this as a friendly formulation of Kenny's argument, although strictly speaking the identity of the individual and the individualized essence does not follow from it: even if both the individual and the individual essence include form and the same parcel of designated matter, it may be that the individual includes yet more that is not included in the individual essence, thus allowing them to be overlapping but non-identical. I also think that someone attentive to Aquinas's own usage might object to the formulation I offer: it is not clear that the distinction which I take from Kenny, between the "specific essence" and the "individual essence," is a wholly adequate substitute for Aquinas's distinction between the essence absolutely considered and the essence as it exists in individuals. I will return to this below, but leaving these difficulties aside, I think Kenny has raised an interesting difficulty, and one that bears examining in further detail: must not the individualized essence in some way include designated matter, and if so, how is the individualized essence distinct from the individual? Kenny says that this is a question "the answer to which we seek in vain." I think the search can yield not only an answer, but some other illuminating insights about Aquinas's understanding of being and essence.

3. Expanding Kenny's puzzle: individual accidents

As an initial response to Kenny's puzzle, we might point out that the problem he perceives need not be restricted to individual *substantial* essences, for a parallel problem would seem to arise also for individual *accidents*. For surely an individual accident, *qua individual* accident, must be identified much as an individual substantial essence is, namely by including its principle of individuation. In the case of an individual accident, this principle is the individual subject of which it is the accident, say an individual substance. If the specific accident, whiteness, just includes the

accidental form, must not the individual accident, Socrates' whiteness, include the accidental form *and Socrates*? How, then, can we distinguish Socrates' whiteness from Socrates himself (who is white)?

Kenny actually anticipates this further difficulty, and offers a solution. We could take a power of Peter, such as the power to speak, as an individual accidental entity, only existing in Peter. But "Peter's powers are clearly distinct from Peter in the sense that they may come and go while Peter remains: it took him time to learn a language, and he may lose the power of speech before he dies" (55).[5] So in the case of individualized accidental forms, Kenny says that we can distinguish them from their possessors by the very fact that they have different existence conditions – the individualized accident may or may not exist while its individual possessor remains in existence.

This, however, doesn't seem to be a fully satisfactory response to the question of what differentiates individual accidents from their possessors. For one thing, Kenny's solution only seems to point out the *fact* that they are different, without any account for *why* they are different. But more importantly, Kenny's solution is not always applicable. What about the case of necessary accidents? Peter's risibility, an accident which follows from his rational nature, or his cellular metabolism, an accident (or accidents) which follow(s) from his animal nature, are co-existent with Peter – Peter can't be Peter without them, and yet it would seem we would still want to make a distinction between the individual substance, Peter, and his necessary accidents such as risibility and cellular metabolism.

There is still another reason to be dissatisfied with Kenny's account of why individual accidents are not identical with their possessors. Even in the case of non-necessary individual accidents, the position could still be maintained that *while they are in existence,* they are identical with their possessors. Just as, while Socrates is white, white Socrates is Socrates, it could be that, while Socrates is white, *Socrates' individual whiteness* is Socrates.

Kenny can probably get away with such a weak account of the distinction between an individual accident and its possessor because it is so unlikely that anyone would actually confuse them. The being of one is so obviously different from the being of the other. As Aquinas puts it, and Kenny recognizes, while substances are properly *beings*, accidents are not properly *beings*, they are rather *of beings*.[6] That is, the individual accident only has being insofar as it is the accidental being *of* a substance.

This seems a more promising way to distinguish individual accidents from the bearers that individuate them. It also helps to clarify the sense in which an individual accident "includes" the substance of which it is an accident: the individual accident does not

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[5] We may grant Kenny's assumption that in some sense it is possible for a human being to gain and lose the power of speech, although in another sense the power of speech, as a power of the soul, is a necessary accident.

[6] Kenny quotes this Thomistic dictum in a note on p. 55.

include the substance as a *component* of the accident, one of several elements from which the accident is composed. Rather, the individual accident "includes" the substance as a reference point in terms of which it, the individual accident, *qua individual* accident, must be understood. Just as I cannot grasp whiteness in general, except as recognizing it as an accident and so as the being of some material substance (or of the surface of that material substance), so I cannot characterize the individual whiteness of Socrates except as an act of being *of Socrates*. The individual accidental form only "includes" the individual substance of which it is an accident in the sense of making reference to it. But then, what is in this sense "included" in the individual accident is still extrinsic to the accident.

4. A solution to the puzzle: what individual essences "include"

This treatment of individual accidents paves the way for a solution to Kenny's particular puzzle about individual essences. We must clarify the sense in which the individual essence "includes" or "contains" the designated matter. For we do not have to treat the designated matter as a component of the individualized essence, so that the designated matter of which Socrates is composed also makes up Socrates' essence. Rather, the individualized essence "includes" designated matter in the sense of requiring reference to the particular individual, *qua particular* individual, of which it is the essence—and so necessarily it requires reference to that individual's designated matter. In short, when Kenny tries to reason to the identity of the individual and its individualized essence, there is a crucial ambiguity in saying that the individual essence "includes" or "contains" designated matter. Clarifying this ambiguity makes it possible to see that the sense in which the individualized essence "includes" or "contains" designated matter (which designated matter is not "included" or "contained" in the specific essence) does *not* imply the identity of the individualized essence with the individual composite of that designated matter and substantial form.

I find this very point made by Peter Geach, whom Kenny cites as a kind of authority on the topic of "individualized" forms or essences in Aquinas.[7] In Geach's example, we might treat the square root function as a form, and the square root of a particular number, say the square root of 25, as an individualized form.[8] While the term '25' might be part of the complex term 'square root of 25,' we wouldn't say that (the number) 25 is *part of* or *included in* the square root of 25. If square root is a function (like a predicate) and the square root of 25 (= 5) is an individual object, then 25 is at

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[7] I do not mean to indicate that Kenny agrees with everything Geach says, but that Kenny sees Geach as "authorizing" our speaking of "individualized forms," as well as thinking of these in somewhat Fregean terms. I do not notice Kenny criticizing Geach on the particular point discussed in this paragraph.

[8] In speaking of "square root" I mean more precisely "positive square root." A given number has both a positive and a negative square root; with two outputs for one input "square root" is not strictly speaking a function. Thanks to Michael Gorman for pointing out the need for this clarification.

best only included in the *designation* of 5 *as* square root of 25; but 25 is not a "part" of five. As Geach puts it quite explicitly:

> If one designation is a part of another, it does not follow that the things designated are respectively part and whole. 'The square root of 25' is a complex designation having as parts the designations 'the square root of' and '25'; but it does not follow (as Frege oddly inferred) that there is some sense of 'part' in which we may suitably say that the number 5, which is the square root of 25, has two heterogeneous parts—the square-root function and the number 25.[9]

I think this kind of clarification about how individual essences are designated helps us to understand the significance of Thomas's careful counterfactual about defining individual essences: he says that designated matter "is not included in the definition of man as such, but *it would be included in Socrates's definition, if Socrates had a definition*".[10] Thomas's point is that, while it is possible to speak about the individual essence of Socrates, it is not possible to formulate the *ratio* of that essence, because definitions are intelligible and universal while an individual, *qua* individual, includes something not available to the intellect, namely, the particular designated matter of that individual.

At best, it seems, we might try a quasi-definition of Socrates' individual essence, which would make reference to *this* particular chunk of designated matter. Notice, however, that for such a quasi-definition, I must *make reference* to designated matter, but that does not mean that the essence signified by this (quasi-)definition "contains" or is *composed of* designated matter. It means that the only way I have of picking out that essence (Socrates') as opposed to some other individual essence (Plato's) is by reference to the designated matter which individuates it.

5. The distinctness of essence and being

If these reflections already allow us to answer Kenny's puzzle about how an individual is distinct from its individual essence, they also suggest further clarifications that touch on other difficulties Kenny has with Aquinas's notion of being. For one thing, it has direct relevance to the doctrine of the real distinction of being and essence in creatures. To extend Aquinas's counterfactual about defining individuals, notice that, if individuals *qua* individuals *could* be defined, their definitions would include reference to their designated matter, as Aquinas said, but they would *not* include reference to their *being*. It is essential to Socrates that he be *this* individual, but Socrates is a contingent being; it is not essential to Socrates that he exist. This very point is made by Cajetan in

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[9] Peter Geach, "Form and Existence" (in *God and the Soul* [1969], pp. 42-65), p. 52. [The article also appears in Kenny, ed., *Aquinas: A Collection of Critical Essays* (London: Macmillan, 1969) 29-53; originally in *Proceedings of the Aristotelian Society* 55 (1954-5): 250-276.]

[10] From *De Ente et Essentia*, the end of ch. 2: "Et dico materiam signatam, quae sub determinatis dimensionibus consideratur. Haec autem materia in diffinitione hominis, in quantum est homo, non ponitur, sed poneretur in diffinitione Socratis, si Socrates diffinitionem haberet."

his commentary on Aquinas's *De Ente et Essentia*. Here he summarizes and explains Thomas's argument for the real distinction:

> Whatever has something really joined to its quiddity, which is outside of its essence, is composed from the quiddity and that added thing—that is essence and being; every being other than God has something real really joined to its quiddity outside its essence, namely being; therefore every being other than God is composed from being and essence.

Cajetan further clarifies, however, that the essence here talked about is the essence of a particular *qua* particular, that is, what Kenny would call an individual essence:

> The major premise Thomas treats as obvious. It should be modified so that that added thing is outside of the essence of the thing *taken as a particular*. (I make this [qualification] because [I want to rule out] that [universal] inferior which, while outside the essence of the superior, is nonetheless not *composed* with it [e.g. as man is outside of, but does not enter into composition with, animal]). And the proposition deserves to be modified thus, because being is outside the essence of Socrates, *and would not even be posited in his definition, if he were defined*.[11]

The being of the individual, like the designated matter which individuates it, is extrinsic to (not a part of) the individual. But unlike the designated matter, the being of the individual would not even be part of the *definition* of the individual – it is not included in the individual essence. How can this be? It might seem that being must be included in the essence of Socrates, because, after all, Socrates is a being. Indeed, it seems that being would have to be included in the essence of man, because man is a species of substance, one of the categories of being. But now notice, just as we could distinguish the sense of matter that is included in the essences of material things from the sense of matter that is outside of and individuates those essences, we can distinguish between the sense of being that is included in the essence of any kind of being, and the sense of being that makes an individual of any kind to actually be.

This defense of the real distinction of being and essence depends, then, on another distinction that Kenny finds problematic, the distinction between common being (*ens commune*) and *esse* or the act of existence. As analyzed here, that distinction seems to be closely analogous to the distinction between different senses of matter, one included

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[11] "Omne habens aliquid realiter suae quiditati conjunctum, quod est extra essentiam ejus, est compositum ex quiditate et illo additamento, id est essentia et esse; omne ens aliud a Deo habet aliquid reale suae quiditati realter conjunctum extra essentiam ejus, scilicet esse: ergo omne ens aliud a Deo est compositum ex *esse* et essentia. Major relinquitur a S. Thoma pro manifesta. Et est modificanda ita quod illud additum sit extra essentiam rei particulariter sumptam (quod dico propter inferius, cum sit extra essentiam superioris, non tamen componit cum illo) et etiam deservit sic modificata proposition, quia esse est extra essentiam Sortis, non enim poneretur in ejus diffinitione, si diffiniretur." Cajetan, *In De Ente et Essentia*, §90. Cf. §84: "existentia enim primo est actus suppositi, cujus est fieri, quae tamen <non> caderet in diffinitione Sortis si diffiniretur." The suggested emendation of the text at §84 (the addition of "non") is required not only for consistency with §90, but for the internal coherence of the passage, which is arguing that *esse* is an extrinsic principle of the supposit, that is a real act of the supposit *which nevertheless* [*quae tamen*] is not intrinsic to it, and so would not fall in the definition of the supposit, since the definition of the supposit only includes what is intrinsic to the supposit.

in the essences of material things and the other not. Again, it is essential to Socrates that he is in the category of substance, just as it is essential to him that he is a man; and the category of substance falls under "being" in general – so it is essential to Socrates that he be a being (*ens*). But of course, just as saying that the essence of Socrates includes undesignated matter does not single out any particular material object that is Socrates, so saying that the essence of Socrates includes *being* in this sense does not say very much about what kind of being Socrates is, or whether he actually is at all. The being included in the essence of Socrates is quite indeterminate; some further formal specification must be added to it to make it the essence of some individual kind of thing. And yet, even with such a further specification or determination of being added to the essence, so that the essence of Socrates is not just the essence of a being but the essence of a human being, it is clear that the essence so specified or determined need not be the essence of some actually existing human being. After all, it is not essential to Socrates that he exist. Socrates is a contingent being; he, and his individual essence, need not exist.[12] In this way we can distinguish from the *common being* which is included in the essence, the *act of existence* or being (*esse*) which is neither included in the specific essence of material things nor referenced in the definition of the individualized essences of existing individuals.

6. Forms, essences, and being as causes

My response to Kenny's puzzle about the distinction between individuals and their essences has prompted a clarification about what is "included" in individual essences, which has in turn led to a defense of the real distinction between being and essence. Whether or not my defense of the real distinction would persuade Kenny, it does illustrate the interconnection of some of these very fundamental metaphysical issues in Aquinas. I also think the reflections so far point to a further clarification about the relationship between essence and being as understood by Aquinas.

Note that above it was stated that it is thanks to the act of being that the individual, and its individual essence, actually exists. But we can be more precise here. For it is thanks to an individual essence's act of existence, which is distinct from or extrinsic to that individual essence, that an individual essence actually exists; and it is thanks to the actually existing individual essence that the individual actually exists. So, while an individual essence does not include the act of being intrinsically, still insofar as it has an act of being the individual essence can be the cause of being for the individual of which it is the essence.[13]

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[12] Even Plato's arguments for the immortality of the soul presume that the continued existence of Socrates' essence needed to be proven; it is not *per se notum* that Socrates, or his soul, must exist. Indeed, the final argument for the immortality of the soul in the *Phaedo* does not start from the fact that Socrates' soul essentially has *being*, but that it essentially has *life*.

[13] It should go without saying that the essence is the cause of the being of the individual composite not as efficient cause but as formal cause.

That an individual's essence is the cause of the being of the individual is a fundamental Aristotelian principle, but one which Kenny in places actually seems to deny. In places he treats essence as a cause of kinds, but not of being (p. 31). Elsewhere, facing Aquinas's statement that the essence "gives *esse* to its possessor" (I. Sent. 7, 1, 1, ad. 2, Kenny's translation), Kenny seems to give that point a deflationary gloss: "Peter exists by courtesy of his essence: for Peter, to be at all is to be a human being" (p. 54). But it is clear that for Aquinas essences, and in general forms, are not just causes of things being the *kinds* of things they are, but causes of the things *being*.

How can we help explain the sense in which the essence is the cause of something's actual existence, and not just the specification of something's kind of being? Well, we said that the individual essence can only cause the being of the individual insofar as the individual essence itself has being. So we can speak both of individuals and of their essences as "existing" or as "having being" — but it is clear that they do not have being in the same way. An individual can have being in one way, the essence or form only has being as *that by which* an individual has being. In this sense, the essence or form (at least in material things) is not really an "entity" in the same sense as an individual material thing is an entity.[14]

Kenny is not entirely unaware of this peculiar status of forms. In fact, it is in treating the notion of form that Kenny himself can't ignore the limitation of the Fregean framework for interpreting Aquinas. Frege divides the world into objects and concepts, but, says Kenny:

> If we consider an ordinary individualized form such as the wisdom of Socrates, or an ordinary individualized essence such as the humanity of Socrates, we find that they do not fit into either of the Fregean categories. They are not objects, because they are not self-subsistent; on the other hand, they are not concepts, because they have histories and they have causal effects in the world (146).

This is an insightful passage – forms have causal power but are not self-subsistent – but unfortunately Kenny's awareness that forms do not fit Fregean categories does not lead him to question those Fregean categories. He recognizes clearly that "…Aquinas's metaphysical inventory is, for better or worse, too rich to be mapped on to the Fregean

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[14] Somewhat like Kenny, I am being a little sloppy here in moving from "essence" to "form." Strictly speaking, the substantial form and essence are only identical in an immaterial substance, but are distinct in a material substance. A material substance is composed of its substantial form (its *forma partis*) and prime matter, and likewise (carving up the whole into different metaphysical components) it is composed of its essence (its *forma totius*) and designated matter. Both essence and form can be thought of as principles whereby something is what it is, but in a material substance the substantial form is the individual determination actualizing matter to be a substance (and so includes the designation of matter), while the essence is the quiddity or whatever is signified in the substance by its definition (and so does not include the designation of matter). As explained above, the "individual essence" – that is, the quiddity of something not considered as the kind of quiddity it is but as the particular quiddity of that thing – only "includes" designated matter as that to which reference must be made in order to account for its individuation.

dichotomy of concept and object" (146). But Kenny leaves the impression that this is a problem for Aquinas's metaphysics, not a problem for Fregean assumptions.

Kenny nowhere conceives of forms as *actualities of* things, as having being as *that by which* something else has being. In fact, far from treating forms as causes, Kenny proceeds to insist on his own, more static and limited notion of form as simply *the correlate of a predicate*. "The notion of form, in both Aristotle and Aquinas, is that of an entity corresponding to a true predication. The way in which the notion is introduced leaves no room for the notion of a pure form, a form that would correspond to a predicate that was not a predicate of something" (192-193). Treating form in this way, it is not surprising that for Kenny, the notion of *immaterial* actuality, or self-subsistent form, appears rather scandalous – it smacks of "Platonism," and simply doesn't fit with Kenny's conception of Aristotelianism. Kenny several times expresses incredulity at the notion of self-subsistent essences (angels or intelligences) (29-32; 141-142; 192-193). Here is a typical example of Kenny's surprise: "It is striking that [in *Summa Theologiae* Ia, 3, 3c] Aquinas links the identity of supposit and essence to the absence of hylomorphic complexity. What he says implies that not only is God identical with his own essence, but so too are any created spirits there may be. God is his own goodhood or deity, but likewise Michael is his own Michaelhood, and Gabriel is identical with Gabrielity" (142).

Now there is a great irony to be remarked here. For I began with Kenny's suggestion that it would be problematic to *distinguish* material individuals from their essences; now, however, when it comes to immaterial individuals, Kenny finds it awkward that they are in fact *identical* with their essences. In other words, Kenny finds problematic both Aquinas's account of those subsistent individuals which cannot be identical with their essences, and Aquinas's account of those subsistent individuals which must be identical with their essences. What is going on here?

I think behind both difficulties is a fundamental confusion about the metaphysical role of form, and specifically a failure to appreciate the notion of form as *cause of being*. Indeed, the notion of *being as act* itself depends on this very understanding of forms or natures as *causes*. Geach, in his essay about "form and existence" which Kenny often cites, makes this his starting point: Just as *albedo Socratis* (the whiteness of Socrates) is synonymous with *quo Socrates albus est* (that by which Socrates is white), so *esse* (being) is synonymous with *id quo aliquid est* (that by which something is).[15]

Kenny does not adopt this starting point from Geach, taking up only Geach's general strategy of trying to interpret Aquinas with the help of Fregean insights. But then, when Kenny speaks, on Geach's authority, of "individual essences" or "individualized essence," he is apparently thinking of non-individual things (universals) that become

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[15] Geach, "Form and Existence," p. 42.

individually instantiated.[16] Aquinas's more careful language has it that there is a form or nature which can have being or existence in things, but in itself (considered absolutely) does not have being or existence. But then, for this form to have being, it must receive being from something else. (Thus we see how naturally Aquinas's reflections lead to a conception of God as self-subsisting being, which has being essentially and can be the *per se* cause of other things receiving being.)

Moreover, how a form will be realized when it receives existence depends on what kind of form it is: if it is a form such that its nature is to cause a material thing to be – that is, if it is a material form – then that form's actually being will be its actualizing or communicating being to some particular matter, and so the being of that form will coincide with it being individuated by designated matter. Such an individualized form obviously cannot be identical with that of which it is the form.

On the other hand, if it is a form such that its nature is not to cause a material thing to be – that is, if it is an immaterial form – then that form's actually being will not be the actualization of any particular matter, and its actual being will not involve its communicating being to something else of which it is a component part. It will be an "individual" form, then, not thanks to some material principle of individuation, but thanks to its being this particular existing immaterial form and not some other. But its being this particular existing immaterial form and not some other is obviously due entirely to the form itself having received being, and so in the case of an individual immaterial form the form must be identical with the individual which its existence causes.

For Aquinas's treatment of individual material and immaterial forms to make sense, then, we must think of forms not as universals that get instantiated, but as modes or limitations of being. Not surprisingly, this is another area of Aquinas's teaching that Kenny finds baffling. Whenever it emerges, Kenny treats talk of essences as limitations of being as an absurd "container theory" (71-72, 112-113, 123); along with the talk of "participation" (78, 80, 148, 162-164), Kenny dismisses it as a kind of "Platonism" that is *prima facie* incompatible with Aquinas's "Aristotelianism." Again, Kenny finds obscurity, but what is filtering out the light is his own interpretation of forms as properties or "correlates of predicates," rather than as *acts of being* which serve to limit or characterize *being* in particular ways and so *cause* particular things of specific kinds to *be*.

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[16] This interpretation appears in another context as well: writing elsewhere, Kenny takes Geach to say that in cognition the form in the mind and the form in the thing is the same individualized form which is in both places with different acts of being. Kenny counters: "What we have are two different individualizations of the same form, not two different existences of the same individualized form…. [T]he doctrine of intentionality is not, as Geach represents it, a doctrine of two modes of existence of the same individualized form." From pp. 247-248 of Anthony Kenny, "Intentionality: Aquinas and Wittgenstein," in Brian Davies, ed, *Thomas Aquinas: Contemporary Philosophical Perspectives* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002), pp. 243-256. The article is reprinted from Anthony Kenny, *The Legacy of Wittgenstein* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1984), pp. 61-76.

Whether Kenny finds it in Aristotle, this notion of form as both cause of things being and limitation of pure being is something that Thomas clearly finds in Aristotle. It is not a fanciful or mystical notion that sometimes creeps into Aquinas's otherwise sober reflections – it is deeply considered, and central to all of Aquinas's metaphysical reflections.[17] Once we notice this, we can take it seriously, and treat it to rigorous theoretical articulation – even treat it to a kind of formal analysis, in the spirit of Peter Geach[18]; or we can ignore it, in which case Aquinas's various discrete metaphysical theses will naturally remain beyond the power of our vision.

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[17] As Timothy McDermott has put it, there is a "seminal idea that unifies and animates the material of the *Summa* from start to last…. That seminal idea… has as its base the understanding of the onward flowing existence of the temporal universe as owned and selved and circulated in various modes by agent substances; at its middle it has that mode of substance that we call 'human being,' a prudence which not only occupies existence but is alive to existence (in the way animals not only occupy space but are alive to it, taking it in with intelligence and giving it out with loving care; and at its top it has that creative providence of which human prudence is to be an instrument, and in which the circle operates in reverse, creation starting with the giving out and ending with the taking in. This is the seminal idea which orders the *Summa*: actuality as doing and being displayed in various modes—and which generates the multiplicity of theses with which any student of Aquinas is initially faced." This seminal idea, according to McDermott, "if once caught, could properly be called the voice of Aquinas, and could be set perhaps to animate and illuminate the material of contemporary philosophy." ("Everything flows," in *Times Literary Supplement*, April 29, 2005.) Though McDermott is criticizing another analytic interpretation of Aquinas for missing this seminal idea, his point is not that Aquinas necessarily resists analysis by contemporary philosophers; rather, it is that any contemporary analysis must respect and try to come to terms with this dimension of Aquinas's thought.

[18] For an even more sophisticated analytic treatment, see Gyula Klima, "The Semantic Principles Underlying Saint Thomas Aquinas's Metaphysics of Being," *Medieval Philosophy and Theology* 5 (1996): 87-141.

David B. Twetten:

Really distinguishing essence from *esse*

Given the developments in contemporary analytic philosophy over the last thirty years, one no longer need apologize for theorizing about essence. Metaphysics in general, of course, is once again an acceptable philosophical project. Many analytic philosophers defend such counterintuitive positions as the Platonic reality not only of Universals but also of Propositions; a Counterpart Theory affirming the genuine existence of every possible world; and an Unrestricted Mereology affirming that this letter *e* taken together with the last breath of Shakespeare constitute as much a single entity as do you. After the resuscitation of such medieval theories as haecceity and middle knowledge, the call for a doctrine of Aristotelian essence to found a Kripkean essentialism should seem a modest claim.[1]

Of course, as philosophical developments bring the medievals into conversation with contemporaries, they also introduce such in-house disputes as those over the reality of the common nature and the plurality of substantial forms. I wish to consider one such dispute, that over the 'real distinction' between essence and *esse*,[2] most famously

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[1] Baruch Brody, "Why Settle for Anything Less than Good Old-Fashioned Aristotelian Essentialism?" *Nous* 7 (1973): 351-64; Gyula Klima, "Contemporary 'Essentialism' vs. Aristotelian Essentialism," in *Mind, Metaphysics, and Value in the Thomistic and Analytic Traditions*, ed. J. Haldane (Notre Dame, 2002), 175-94. Klima is quick to observe that a metaphysical theory of essence will have to be accompanied by revised theories of predication and semantics. See Gyula Klima, "The Changing Role of *Entia Rationis* in Medieval Philosophy: A Comparative Study with a Reconstruction," *Synthese* 96 (1993): 25-59; Gyula Klima, "Ontological Alternatives vs. Alternative Semantics in Medieval Philosophy," *European Journal for Semiotic Studies*, 3 (1991): 587-618. For a defense of Realism, see Michael Jubien, *Contemporary Metaphysics: An Introduction* (Oxford, 1997).

[2] When speaking of Aquinas, I normally retain the Latin term *esse* rather than use a translation or paraphrase such as "being," "existence," "act of existence," or "act of being," each of which, though defensible, is destined to raise objections where there should be none. In this practice, I intend *esse* not in every sense, but in one of the four significations distinguished by Aquinas following Aristotle; see Thomas Aquinas, *Scriptum super libros Sententiarum* [=*Sent.*], ed. P. Mandonnet and M. Moos (Paris, 1929-1947), 1, d. 33.1.1 ad 1 (quoted below in n. 94); Aquinas, *In duodecim libros Metaphysicorum Aristotelis expositio* [=*In Met.*], ed. M.-R. Cathala, R. Spiazzi (Turin-Rome, 1950), 5.7, lect. 9. According to this signification, *esse,* as the verbal noun corresponding to *est* just as running (*currere*) corresponds to runs (*currit*), signifies an act, "that by which it is said [of something] that it is" (*Questiones de quolibet* [=*Quodl.*] 9.4.1c, ll. 117-121, in Aquinas, *Opera omnia: iussu impensaque, Leonis XIII. P.M. edita* [Rome, 1882-], vol. 25; Aquinas, *Summa contra gentiles* [=*SCG*], ed. C. Pera et al. (Turin-Rome, 1961), 2.54, n. 3 *[Secundo autem]*), or ". . . that it is in act" (*Sent.* 1, d. 8.1.1c; *Sent.* 2, d. 3.1.1c); "the act of an *existing x* insofar as it is a being" (*Sent.* 1 d. 19.2.2c); "that by which [*x*] subsists in the nature of things"

ascribed to Thomas Aquinas.[3] No contemporary philosopher untouched by 'Thomism' entertains the plausibility of such a theory, yet I wonder whether it will not be required in a revived Aristotelian theory of essence. After all, there already are philosophers who defend 'is' or 'existence' as a predicate, perhaps even as a first-order property or

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(Aquinas, *De ente et essentia* 4, ll. 163-64, in *Opera omnia*, vol. 43) or "by which each thing formally is" (*De ente* 5, ll. 27-28); "that which first falls in the intellect through the mode of actuality absolutely speaking; since '*est*' said simply signifies actually to be, . . . [signifies] the actuality of every form" (Aquinas, *Expositio libri Peryermenias* [=*In Peryerm.*] 1.3, lect. 5, ll. 393-399, in *Opera omnia*, vol. 1.1*). *Esse*, then, pertains to the question 'whether *x* is' and is not an essential predicate of a thing; Aquinas, *Quaestio disputata de spiritualibus creaturis* [=*QDSC*] 8 ad 3, ll. 340-349, in *Opera omnia*, vol. 24.2. As a result, "that which has *esse* is rendered an actually *existing* thing;" *Quaestiones disputatae de potentia Dei* [=*QDDP*] 7.2 ad 9, in Aquinas, *Quaestiones disputatae*, ed. P. Bazzi et al. (Turin-Rome, 1953), vol. 2. As some of these texts indicate, Aquinas at times uses '*existens*' or '*existentia*' as synonymous with this signification of '*ens*' or '*esse*'; see also, for example, Aquinas, *Quaestiones disputatae de veritate* [=*QDDV*] 1.2 ad 3, in *Opera omnia*, vol. 22; *SCG* 2.84, n. 17 (*Secundo quia*); Aquinas, *In librum beati Dionysii De divinis nominibus expositio*, ed. C. Pera (Turin-Rome, 1950), 2 (73-75), lect. 6, nn. 216-18; c. 4 (188), lect. 14, nn. 474-475; c. 5 (284), lect. 3, nn. 669-73; c. 6 (286-287), lect. 1, nn. 678-79; *In Peryerm.* 1.6 (17a26-29), lect. 9, ll. 63-70; *In Met.* 7.17 (1041a27-32), lect. 17, nn. 11, 13-14 (1658, 1660-1661); *In De generatione et corruptione* 1.2, lect. 4, n. 4 (29), in Aquinas, *In Aristotelis libros De caelo et mundo, De generatione et corruptione, Meteorologicorum expositio*, ed. R. Spiazzi (Turin-Rome, 1952). Nevertheless, since in many contemporary contexts, 'exists' and 'existence' have a debased sense, I shall use, where possible, 'is' and 'to be' to translate *est* and '*esse*'; or, I shall use 'actually *to be*' to specify this one among the four senses of 'to be'. For the purposes of this paper, it remains an open question whether '*esse* as the act of all acts, perfection of all perfections' (*QDDP* 7.2 ad 9) signifies more than 'the act and perfection by which all *other* features—whether logically or really other—*are* or have *esse*'.

[3] I use the terminology 'real distinction' between 'essence and *esse*' (='Real Distinction') as familiar labels. Aquinas speaks literally only of a "real diversity" or "real composition" (*Sent.* 1, d. 13.1.3c; *QDDV* 27.1 ad 8), although he also says that *esse* "differs in reality" (*differt re*) from that of which it is the act (*Sent.* 1, d. 9.2.2c); that *esse* and 'that which is' "really differ" (*differunt realiter*) or are "really other" (*aliud realiter*), as opposed to that which "differs in conception" (*differunt secundum intentiones*) or to that which is "really one and the same" (*unum et idem realiter*); Thomas Aquinas, *Expositio libri Boetii De ebdomadibus* [=*In De ebdom.*] 2, ll. 198-220, in *Opera omnia*, vol. 50.2. Cf. Joseph Owens, "Aquinas' Distinction at *De ente et essentia* 4.119-123," *Mediaeval Studies* 48 (1986): 264-87, at 266-73; Cornelio Fabro, "Circa la divisione dell'essere in atto e potenza secondo San Tommaso," in *Esegesi tomistica* (Rome, 1969), 109-36; Cornelio Fabro, "Neotomismo e neosuarezismo: una battaglia di Principi," *ibid.* 137-278, at 190-97. Some, of course, claim that Aquinas affirms only a conceptual distinction; see Francis Cunningham, *Essence and Existence in Thomism: A Mental vs. "the Real Distinction"?* (Lanham, MD, 1988). Aquinas does not hold that *esse* and essence are two subsisting *things* as if we should then ask with Giles of Rome, Can God cause one to be without the other? But 'something', 'thing' and 'real' for him are terms that transcend the categories, as does 'being'; cf. *Sent.* 1, d. 8.5.1-2; *Sent.* 2, d. 37.1.1c; *QDDV* 1.1c, ll. 129-150. I take 'real' in 'real distinction' to mean 'in the nature of things', prior to an act of the mind (without necessarily being separable in reality). Ultimately it would be preferable to speak of a 'real distinction between the individual substance (or supposit) and its *esse*'; cf. *SCG* 2.52-54; *Quodl.* 2.2.1c, ll. 73-76; 2.2.2c, ad 1-2, ll. 93-102, 145-149, 154-158. Yet, even when Aquinas makes such precisions he also speaks of a "composition of essence and *esse*;" cf. *Quodl.* 2.2.1, ll. 5-12, 73-76; 2.2.2c, ll. 99-100.

actuality.[4] I write, then, assuming that it is possible—although it is no mean feat—to defend Aristotle's theory of form and matter.[5] In Aquinas' version of the Aristotelian theory, remember, form and matter together comprise 'essence'. Given form and matter, is it necessary to affirm *esse* or 'to be' as a further ontological principle of real substances—as another feature of our ontology besides essences and properties? Thomists are, in the main, the philosophers who will answer, yes. I maintain that they give this answer usually without hearing the major objection of the non-Thomist against them. I call this the Aristotelian's 'Question-Begging Objection'. Aquinas himself fails to see the force of this objection, hence fails to develop an argument immune to it, hence fails to prove, as I show, that 'to be' is really other than the matter-form composite that is. I propose an alternative argument that addresses the objection, an argument inspired by Aristotle's philosophy and modeled on some neglected argumentation of Aquinas. Something similar to my argument is needed to meet the Question-Begging Objection. Finally, I suggest that the difficulty of refuting this objection and of establishing the Real Distinction reveals that what is at stake are first principles—which can be defended only with probable arguments or with arguments showing that their rejection entails the absurd.

I. The Question-Begging Objection

The form of this objection will not be foreign to readers of Aquinas since it is the same as that of the leading objection that Aquinas himself levels against Anselm's 'Ontological Argument'. For Anselm, That Than Which Nothing Greater Can Be Thought (TTW) is not TTW if it does not exist in reality; for if it does not exist in reality, then something greater than it can be thought, namely, the same thing existing *both* in the mind and in reality.

(1) Suppose that one thinks of TTW, as is possible.

(2) TTW, then, exists in the mind.

(3) But TTW existing both in the mind and in reality is greater than TTW existing only in the mind.

(4) Therefore, if TTW exists only in the mind, then TTW is not TTW (because a greater is thinkable).

(5) Consequently, TTW exists both in the mind and in reality.

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[4] Cf. thinkers as disparate as Henry Leonard, "The Logic of Existence," *Philosophical Studies* 7.4 (1956): 49-64; J. L. Mackie, "The Riddle of Existence," *Proceedings of the Aristotelian Society*, suppl. vol. 50 (1976): 247-67; Peter Geach, *God and the Soul* (Oxford, 1981), 65-74; Gareth Evans, *The Varieties of Reference,* ed. J. McDowell (Oxford, 1982), 345-48; William L. Craig, "Is Presentness a Property?," *American Philosophical Quarterly* 34.1 (1997): 27-40; Barry Miller, *The Fullness of Being: A New Paradigm for Existence* (Notre Dame, 2002).

[5] For a contemporary defense, see James Ross, "The Fate of the Analysts: Aristotle's Revenge," *Proceedings of the American Catholic Philosophical Association* 64 (1990): 51-74.

In Aquinas' judgment, the real problem with this argument is that it begs the question.[6] Most contemporary critics attack Steps (1) through (3), whereas Aquinas concedes that it is possible to think of TTW, and that if TTW is thought, it exists in the mind.[7] For him, the problem lies in Step (4). The contradiction derived there, that TTW is not TTW, results only if one has already assumed:

(6) TTW exists in reality.

As Aquinas puts it, that TTW is not TTW is no problem for one for whom there is no TTW in reality in the first place. That a centaur is not a centaur, we may say, or that a square-circle is not a square-circle is of no consequence outside logic. For Aquinas, then, the conclusion that either TTW exists in reality or it is not TTW depends on the question-begging assumption that there is in reality a TTW in the first place.

Aquinas introduces a number of arguments in defense of a real distinction between essence and *esse*. They each involve the general structure: given that things have essences, and given that there is also in reality the actual being or *esse* of those essences, it follows, for a series of reasons, that *esse* in things must be really other than their essence. Imagine the reaction of the Aristotelian, who can agree with Aquinas that form and matter are really distinct principles within extramental reality.[8] But Aristotle, as nearly everyone today agrees, never theorized about *to einai* as really distinct from matter and form. The Aristotelian can concede, as Thomas can concede in the case of Anselm's TTW, that the reasoning from premise to conclusion in the various arguments for a Real Distinction is valid. Nevertheless, the conclusion depends on one's already having granted, in addition to the familiar substance-level constituents of Aristotelian ontology—namely, matter and form—a third constituent of one's ontology: *esse*, the actuality of essence. For the Aristotelian, however, the *to einai* or 'to be' of material things is nothing apart from form and matter: the term merely the signifies the the

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[6] *SCG* 1.11, n. 2 (*Nec oportet*): "[N]on enim inconveniens est quolibet dato vel in re vel in intellectu aliquid maius cogitari posse, nisi ei qui concedit esse aliquid quo maius cogitari non possit in rerum natura." See also *Sent.* 1, d. 3.2 ad 4; *ST* I.2.1 ad 2.

[7] Aquinas' concession of Step (3) is only implicit. But in one place he apparently concedes what in any case one must concede who grants Steps (1) through (3): that if TTW is thought, it cannot consistently be *thought* not to exist, and so must be thought to exist. Still, it follows not that it exists in reality but only that while thought, it must be *thought* to exist in reality. See Thomas Aquinas, *Lectura romana in primum Sententiarum Petri Lombardi,* ed. L. E. Boyle, OP, and J. F. Boyle (Toronto, 2006), d. 3.1 ad 2. On this reading, just as only if TTW is thought does it follow that either it must be thought to exist in reality or it is not truly TTW in thought; so only if TTW exists in reality does it follow that either it must exist in reality or else it is not truly TTW, but only TTW in thought.

[8] Aristotle in *Metaphysics* Z.17 famously identifies individual essence or *to ti ēn einai* with a substance's form. Aquinas ascribes to Aristotle, based on *Metaphysics* H.1-2, 6, the doctrine that essence includes both form and matter. Aquinas takes the conclusions of *Metaphysics* Z to be provisional insofar as the investigation is preliminary to that of Book H; see *In Met.* 8.1, lect. 1, n. 1 (1681); Lawrence Dewan, "St. Thomas, Metaphysics, and Formal Causality," *Laval théologique et philosophique* 36 (1980): 285-316, at 293-94.

actualized composite of the two. The 'to be' of material things is nothing but whatever comprises their essence, however 'essence' is explicated, whether as individual form alone, as form and matter, or as the actuality of form in matter. There is no *esse* in the Thomist sense as an ontological actuality beside matter and form, beside whatever actuality essence already has of itself. If there is no 'Thomist *esse*' in the first place, runs the objection, there is no need to affirm a real distinction between essence and *esse*. All of Aquinas' arguments beg the question by assuming that there *is* 'to be' as the actuality of an essence in potency to it, that there is Thomist *esse*.[9]

Whether or not this Question-Begging Objection holds must depend on an examination of Aquinas' arguments, to which we shall turn in Part II. Here, however, we may address some initial Thomist reactions. The Thomist asks: how can one question that there is *esse* or 'to be' in the world? Is that fact not obvious? The Aristotelian agrees that it is evident that things 'are' but disagrees that their 'to be' requires more ontological resources than those of Aristotle. After all, was Aristotle blind to the fact that things are? And yet, he affirmed no more than form and matter in accounting for their 'to be'. If Aristotle did not affirm an ontological act of 'to be' to explain why things are, then it is not obvious that such an act is necessary. To this many Thomists have a ready response: the Aristotelian thinks of 'to be' as a state that can be *conceptualized* and therefore reduced to the static principles of form and matter. That things 'are' is not known in the concept of what they are, but is known only in a distinct act of the mind, the act of judgment. Hence, that things are is not reducible to the *conceptualizable* principles of form and matter.

Now, the most sophisticated statement of this Thomist reaction will acknowledge that one is not thereby allowed to affirm a real distinction between the essence of things and the act by which they are.[10] Still, whatever their 'to be' is, it would seem that it cannot be the object of a concept, and therefore that it cannot be reducible to essence, form, or matter, each of which can be conceptualized. The Aristotelian counters that if 'to be'

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[9] The objection need not charge Aquinas with explicitly starting from the assumption of the conclusion, namely, that there is a real distinction between *esse* and essence. Rather, the objection charges that Aquinas assumes without proof the side of the real distinction that is in contention, namely, *esse*. The objector accepts essence.

[10] For this acknowledgment (not this reaction), see Joseph Owens, "Aquinas on Being and Thing," in *Thomistic Papers*, vol. 3, ed. L. Kennedy (Houston, 1987), 3-24, at 10-13; cf. also n. 36 below. For Owens, existence as known through judgment prior to the Real Distinction is not *esse* as actuality or perfection, which is conceptualizable, but is the composing or synthesizing of matter and form or substance and accident reflected in the (non-propositional) 'judgment' that 'x is'—a judgment that is always temporally simultaneous with, though naturally prior to, conceptualization; Joseph Owens, "Aquinas on Knowing Existence," *Review of Metaphysics* 29 (1976): 670-90, at 678, 681-2; Joseph Owens, "Judgment and Truth in Aquinas," in Owens, *St. Thomas Aquinas on the Existence of God*: *Collected Papers of Joseph Owens*, *C.Ss.R.*, ed. J. Catan (Albany, 1980), 34-51, at 35, 43-44, reprinted from *Mediaeval Studies* 32 (1970): 138-58; Joseph Owens, *An Elementary Christian Metaphysics* (Milwaukee, 1963), 47-55, 73-75; Joseph Owens, *Cognition: An Epistemological Inquiry* (Houston, 1992), 168-70, 181, 192-96.

here is a feature of reality that is not reducible to matter and form but is necessary so as to account for the actuality of material things, then this 'to be' is being affirmed as really distinct from essence either by a question-begging assumption or merely on the basis of our mental acts. One may as well label the latter basis the "Judgment of *Esse* Argument" for the Real Distinction. The problem with such an argument is not only that it is not found in Aquinas, but also that its acceptance would ultimately make one wonder why Aquinas has criticized Anselm's Ontological Argument. In effect, the "Judgment of *Esse* Argument" would be a variation of the "Understanding of Essence Argument," to which I shall turn first: as if from an understanding of an essence as matter and form and from the judgment that an essence is, one can know that 'to be' is not essence. Yet, if one can reason thus from one's mental acts, why cannot one infer from a property of TTW-as-thought, that it must be thought to be in reality, to the parallel property of TTW in reality: that it must be in reality? For, one would be inferring from a property of 'to be'-as-thought to a property of 'to be' in reality: that it is other than essence.

All I wish to suggest now is that the Question-Begging Objection is not easily dismissed. But suppose that the objection does turn out to hold, what are the consequences for Aquinas' thought? The Aristotelian will charge Aquinas with having introduced highly dubious innovations into the heart of Aristotle's philosophical theory.[11] 'To be' as actuality emerges in the history of ideas only in the Neoplatonic effort to describe the One beyond Being, beyond intelligibility, beyond Essence.[12] Neoplatonists came to concede that the First actually *exists*, even though it is beyond the Form of Being itself; that is, that there is 'to be' beyond essence. Aquinas participates in an old tradition of blending elements of Aristotle with Neoplatonism,[13] and his principal inspiration for the theory of a really distinct 'to be' appears to be Avicenna.[14] What is especially new in Aquinas is the adoption of the *esse*-essence dichotomy within the Christian project of faith seeking reason, inherited from Augustine. Aquinas uses 'to be' as act in his defense of such theological doctrines as the creation of the world *ex nihilo* and the immortality of the human soul. But, our Aristotelian will argue, Aquinas misleadingly presents his most original claims as conclusions that are *philosophically* justifiable. In Aristotle's philosophy the major metaphysical player is the individual essence, *to ti ēn einai*. The 'to be' of a thing is expressed in its definition, and 'the what it was to be' or essence is a thing's individual

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[11] For the charge developed in this paragraph, see especially Hans Meyer, in *Thomas von Aquin: Sein System und seine geistesgeschichtliche Stellung*, 2nd ed. (Paderborn, 1961), 103, 120-26, 131-33.

[12] See especially the work of Richard C. Taylor, "Aquinas, the Plotiniana Arabica, and the Metaphysics of Being and Actuality," *Journal of the History of Ideas* 59 (1998): 217-39.

[13] See especially Alain De Libera, "Albert le Grand et Thomas d'Aquin interprètes du *Liber de causis*," *Revue des sciences philosophiques et théologiques* 74 (1990): 347-78.

[14] Cf., for example, Anton Pegis, "St. Thomas and the Origin of Creation," in *Philosophy and the Modern Mind* (Detroit, 1961), 49-65.

form.[15] Once Plato's beard has been trimmed, the ontology sufficient to account for all extra-mental 'to be' comprises solely matter, form, and various accidents. *Esse* or *to einai* as an act of 'to be' really distinct from *to ti ēn einai* is unnecessary and therefore superfluous. I would hasten to add that if such *esse* is not philosophically justifiable, it should not be offered as helpful to theology, where it seems to be in no way required for belief. The real distinction between essence and 'to be' has long pitted Thomists against other theologians. If the Question-Begging Objection is correct, it seems opportune to jettison the distinction once and for all.

II. An Existential Crisis: The Failure of Aquinas' Proofs

A major task in Aquinas scholarship is to catalog Thomas' arguments for philosophical theses according to a systematic order that he himself would recognize. We have made great strides in the last fifty years, but the recent book by John Wippel deserves special recognition in this regard. According to my count, there appear to be at least nine different *kinds* of the over forty individual arguments that Aquinas offers, or that Aquinas scholars have defensibly understood him to offer, on behalf of the real distinction between *esse* and essence. In arriving at this number I make no claim to be exhaustive, but I rely mainly on the previous lists of such leading scholars as Cornelio Fabro, Leo Sweeney, Joseph Owens, and John Wippel.[16] In what follows, I reclassify, rename, and reduce Aquinas' arguments to their essential steps, listing them roughly in chronological order, so as to assess his preferred arguments in light of the Question-Begging Objection. I begin with the three stages in Chapter 4 of the early, purely philosophical work, *De ente et essentia*. These three stages can and have been taken to correspond to three different and separable arguments, although in the *De ente* itself they constitute one whole in which each subsequent argument builds upon the one prior to it.[17]

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[15] For a contrast of Aristotle and Aquinas, see Armand Maurer, "Form and Essence in the Philosophy of St. Thomas," in *Being and Knowing: Studies in Thomas Aquinas and Late Medieval Philosophy* (Toronto, 1990), 3-18.

[16] They themselves are indebted to, among others, Norbertus del Prado, *De veritate fundamentali philosophiae christianae* (Freiburg/CH, 1911), 23-70; M.-D. Roland-Gosselin, *Le "De ente et essentia" de S. Thomas d'Aquin* (Paris, 1926; repr. 1948), 187-89; Joseph De Finance, *Être et agir dans la philosophie de saint Thomas* (Rome, 1960), 94-107.

[17] Three arguments are both distinguished and united, for example, in Cornelio Fabro, "Un itinéraire de saint Thomas: L'Établissement de la distinction réelle entre essence et existence," in *Esegesi tomistica*, 89-108, at 94, 99, reprinted from *Revue de Philosophie* 39 (1939): 285-310; Cornelio Fabro, *La nozione metafisica di partecipazione secondo S. Tommaso d'Aquino*, 2nd ed. (Turin, 1950), 218-19.

A. The "Understanding of Essence Argument" and the First Stage of *De ente* 4.

The *De ente* presents the fullest version of a form of argument that stands on its own in at least one other place, in Aquinas' early *Scriptum on Lombard's Sentences*.[18] According to many interpreters, Aquinas intends in this First Stage of *De ente* 4 to establish no more than a conceptual distinction between essence and *esse*. But if the argument is to be taken in defense of the Real Distinction, as would appear *prima facie* to be the case, and as the passage from the *Scriptum* suggests, it may be restated as follows.

(1) Whatever does not belong to the understanding of a thing's essence must be distinct from that essence.

    a. For, no essence can be understood without its parts.

(2) Hence, [if such a feature belongs to a thing,] it must enter into composition with it [as really distinct from it, whether the feature is caused by the essence itself or] comes to it from without.[19]

(3) But one can understand what is a human or a phoenix (or an eclipse; *Sent.* 2, d. 3.1.1) without knowing whether it has 'to be' (*esse*) in reality.

(4) Therefore, the 'to be' of an essence [that exists] enters into composition with it as [really] distinct from it.

There are a number of problems with this argument, some of which can be resolved. Here I am interested only in the Question-Begging Objection. The argument proceeds from the absence of our knowledge of 'to be' or *esse* in knowing essences to the presence of *esse* as really distinct from essence. But the argument presupposes that *esse* is something that must belong to the essence of a thing in order that it be. *Esse* as act of an essence is assumed to be part of our ontology. Consequently, the absence from an essence of its *esse* leaves that essence nonexistent. Thus, there is a tacit Step (5) between Steps (3) and (4) that may be spelled out thus:

(5) 'To be' (*esse*) is a feature that must belong to essences in order that they be.

The Aristotelian objector, however, denies Step (5). For the Aristotelian, it is not the case that things exist because of a 'to be' that, in the words of *De ente* 4, 'belongs to', 'comes to from without', 'enters into composition with', or 'is received by' essence and that thereby actualizes that essence so as to be. 'To be' for material things is simply for form to actualize matter. For an essence to have its constituent parts is for it to be. The Aristotelian, then, can explain one's ignorance of 'to be' in knowing essence merely by

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[18] Aquinas, *De ente* 4, ll. 94-103; *Sent.* 2, d. 1.1.1c; *Sent.* 2, d. 3.1.1c (for this passage as a "God to Creatures Argument," see below, n. 45). In three other early passages, though not again after 1260, Aquinas employs in a comparable way the principle that *esse* is not found in the understanding of a thing. See *Sent.* 1, d. 8.3.3 expos.; *Sent.* 1, d. 8.4.2c; *QDDV* 10.12c, ll. 174-178.

[19] For this step, see *De ente* 4, ll. 94-96, 127-130. The *De ente* makes no distinction between Steps (1) and (2); I have added material in brackets to bring out the argument, on the assumption, again, that a Real Distinction is intended.

appealing to individual matter. Knowing *what* a whooping crane is does not tell me whether one is, because individual material instances are not known in knowing essences. Whether there are whooping cranes is known only by perceiving individual instances of that species. One need not affirm a really distinct 'to be' to explain the difference between knowing a species and perceiving its instances. As a result, the Aristotelian's ontology is sparser here than the Thomist's, requiring only form, matter, and the relevant acts of knowing universals and particulars.

B. The "Hypothetical Essence That Is *Esse* Argument" and the Second Stage of *De ente* 4.

Most interpreters agree that the First Stage of *De ente* 4 fails to establish a real distinction between essence and *esse*. John Wippel is well known for his vigorous defense of the Second Stage,[20] and he has recently isolated and identified the argument of this Stage as a distinct form of argument for the Real Distinction.[21] On at least six other occasions, four in mature works, Aquinas offers what could be taken as an explicit instance of this form of argument. The version in the *De ente* begins by testing an hypothesis that will be affirmed with proof in the Third Stage.

> (1) Suppose that there is something in which *esse* ('to be') is not other than essence, but whose essence is its own *esse*.[22]

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[20] John Wippel, *Metaphysical Themes in St. Thomas Aquinas* (Washington, 1984), 107-32; see also Scott MacDonald, "The *Esse/Essentia* Argument in Aquinas's *De ente et essentia*," *Journal of the History of Philosophy* 22 (1984): 157-72.

[21] John Wippel, *The Metaphysical Thought of Thomas Aquinas: From Finite Being to Uncreated Being* (Washington, 2000), 137, 143, 150-57. For the Second Stage as an independent argument, cf. Fabro, "Un itinéraire," 97-99; *La nozione metafisica*, 219, 221. Wippel groups under this category six instances of the "God to Creatures Argument" as categorized by Leo Sweeney, "Existence/Essence in Thomas Aquinas's Early Writings," *Proceedings of the American Catholic Philosophical Association* 37 (1963): 97-131. Although four of these affirm God as actually existing, not as a mere hypothesis as in the *De ente*, the logic of their argument, based on the uniqueness of subsistent *esse*, does not require this affirmation, as Wippel observes (*Metaphysical Thought*, 136-37, 151-55, 585); for their reasoning, see below, nn. 41-44. Nevertheless, I include in the "Hypothetical Essence That Is *Esse* Argument" only those seven passages that *actually* proceed without the explicit affirmation of God's actual existence. In fact, of the nearly twenty instances of the "God to Creatures Argument" that can claim to be complete (besides *De ente* 4), most have a similar argumentative structure to that of arguments based on the mere hypothesis of God. And, all but one argue from the fact that nothing but God can be its own *esse*, or *esse* itself. Even where this is not explicitly *defended* within the argument, in most cases it could be taken to have been previously established systematically within the work in question. In other words, if any instance of the "God to Creatures Argument" that employs the actual existence of God should be grouped with the Second Stage of *De ente* 4, a good case could be made that nearly all of them should be so grouped. Yet, the "God to Creatures" approach is well attested in Aquinas and is worth retaining as a distinct mode of arguing, a point that I develop below, in Section II.K.

[22] Aquinas, *De ente* 4, ll. 103-126, specifically ll. 103-114; cf. *Sent.* 1, d. 8.5.2c; Thomas Aquinas, *In octo libros Physicorum Aristotelis expositio* [=*In Phys.*], ed. P. M. Maggiòlo (Turin-Rome, 1950), 8.10, lect. 21, n. 13 (1153).

a. This would be '*esse* itself',[23] that is, subsisting *esse*,[24] which is not received in another, but is '*esse* alone' (*esse tantum*).[25]

b. Such a thing cannot participate in anything else; for, *esse* is the ultimate act, which is participable by all but does not itself participate in anything else.[26]

(2) All other things are distinct from this hypothetical being.

a. For, something either is or is not its own *esse*, *esse* itself.[27]

    i. But if there is something that is not its own *esse*, it must acquire its *esse* from another; hence, in itself it is possible with respect to *esse*.[28]

b. Also, there could be only one thing that is its own *esse*.

    i. For, it could not remain '*esse* alone' and be pluralized in any conceivable way of pluralizing, such as by adding a differentia, or by being received in some subject, such as in matter.[29]

    ii. Also, it would be similar to a separate form, which would be unique.[30]

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[23] *In Phys.* 8.10, lect. 21, n. 13 (1153); *In De ebdom.* 2, ll. 216-258, specifically ll. 218-220. The latter passage forms an integral part of an argument that I present separately below, in Section II.E.

[24] *De ente* 4, l. 115; *In Phys.* 8.10, lect. 21, n. 13 (1153); *SCG* 2.52, n. 5 (*Item. Si*).

[25] *De ente* 4, ll. 114-117. It needs to be explained why *esse* could not be merely one conceptually distinct feature of a first essence even though not a really distinct feature; this feature could be unique to it, 'its own'. In other words, why must an existing essence in which there is no Real Distinction be identical to *esse itself*? It also needs to be explained whether identifying an essence with '*its own esse*' is a necessary and/or sufficient step prior to identifying an essence with '*esse* itself'. Cf. *Sent.* 2, d. 3.1.1c: "Alia autem natura invenitur de cujus ratione est ipsum suum esse, immo ipsum esse est sua natura."

[26] Thomas Aquinas, *Quaestiones disputatae de anima* [=*QDDA*] 6 ad 2, ll. 268-277, in *Opera omnia*, vol. 24.1. Cf. also *In De ebdom.* 2, ll. 85-102, 249-251. This step, just as Step (3.a), below, n. 33, forms a "Hypothetical Essence That Is *Esse* Argument through *Participation*," an argument that in *QDDA* 6 ad 2 does not expressly use uniqueness. For this form of argument, cf. below, nn. 48-49, and below, Sections II.H-J.

[27] *Sent.* 1, d. 8.5.2c; *In De ebdom.* 2, ll. 219-220, 249-251; *In Phys.* 8.10, lect. 21, n. 13 (1153). The argument in these passages based on Step (2.a) can be called the "Hypothetical Essence That Is *Esse* Argument through *Disjunction*," which is completed by Step (2.a.i), (2.b.ii), or (3.a).

[28] *Sent.* 1, d. 8.5.2c. For what Aquinas regards as Avicennian reasoning from 'being caused' to the Real Distinction, see below, n. 73.

[29] *De ente* 4, ll. 105-121; *In De ebdom.* 2, ll. 249-258. In these passages together with those in the following two notes is found the "Hypothetical Essence That Is *Esse* Argument through *Uniqueness*," comprising Steps (1) and/or (1.a), and (2.b), perhaps together with Steps (2.a) or (3.b). For this form of argument, cf. below, nn. 41-42.

[30] Thomas Aquinas, *Super Librum de causis expositio* [=*In LDC*], ed. H. D. Saffrey (Louvain, 1954), 4, pp. 29.27-30.30, at 29.27-30; *In Phys.* 8.10, lect. 21, n. 13 (1153); cf. *De ente* 4, ll. 110-113. For this step, cf. below, n. 43.

  iii. Also, subsistent *esse* must be infinite and therefore unique.[31]

 c. Also, to be caused belongs to other things but cannot belong to subsistent *esse*. Otherwise, to be caused would belong to 'a being qua a being', implying an infinite regress of caused causes.[32]

(3) Therefore, in all other things there must be a [real] distinction between essence and *esse*.

 a. For, *esse*'s being participated by diverse natures allows for a plurality.[33]

 b. Also, *esse* that is received by essence is finite and therefore admits of a plurality.[34]

For years I, much as Wippel, taught that this Second Stage successfully moves beyond a mere conceptual distinction to establish a real distinction between essence and *esse*. But I was thinking as does a Thomist, not as does my Aristotelian objector. According to the Question-Begging Objection, why must we think that what lacks a Real Distinction must have Thomist *esse* in the first place? Another way of putting the objection is to ask, Why does Step (1), the supposition of something lacking the Real Distinction, imply Step (1.a), that such a thing must be 'pure' or subsistent *esse*? Are there not alternative ways of lacking a real distinction between *esse* and essence, for example, by being pure essence? In such a case, 'pure essence' would be instantiated, so that the proposition 'pure essence exists' would be justifiable, but one need not ask whether an ontological property 'to be' is identical to that essence—whether it is pure 'subsistent *to be* itself'.

Or, even were one to grant subsistent 'to be', why affirm in Step (3) that all other things also have 'to be' in the sense required; namely, as an actuality over and above what they are? Why not say that such things are judged to be, but that to account for this judgment one need not affirm in reality any feature other than their essence?[35] Even if there were a subsistent 'to be', then, that 'to be' would not compete with other things whose 'to be' is likewise taken to be indistinct from their essence; for, such things 'have *to be*' only in the sense that their essence is *judged* to be instantiated. Thus, the Aristotelian can insist

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[31] *In LDC* 4, p. 30.18-20. This step is completed by Step (3.b). For this form of argument, cf. below, n. 44.

[32] *SCG* 2.52, n. 5 (*Item. Si*). The argument of this passage, constituted by Steps (1.a) and (2.c), is singular in Aquinas' corpus, a "Hypothetical Essence That Is *Esse* Argument through *Causality*," relying on neither uniqueness nor Participation. For other arguments through causality, see below, Section II.G and n. 73.

[33] *In LDC* 4, p. 30.2-8, 28-29; *In De ebdom.* 2, ll. 234-250; cf. *In Phys.* 8.10, lect. 21, n. 13 (1153). This step is implicit in *QDDA* 6 ad 2. Cf. above, n. 26.

[34] *In LDC* 4, p. 30.18-30. This step is the completion of Step (2.b.iii); cf. above, n. 31.

[35] Cf. Daniel Utrecht, "*Esse* Means Existence," in *Saints and Scholars: Studies in Honor of Frederick D. Wilhelmsen*, ed. R. A. Herrera, et al. (New York, 1993), 87-94, at 87: "It is one thing to say *that* something exists. It is something else to say that it exists because it 'has' something called *esse* actuating it. . . . The Thomist needs to show how he knows there *is* such an act."

that 'to be' is simply for there to be form instantiated in matter—and that Thomist *esse* is nowhere in the picture. Joseph Owens has leveled a similar objection against Wippel's reading of this Second Stage: "Nothing has been introduced to show that existing adds a positive content of its own over and above the quidditative content of the thing."[36] Without 'to be' in the picture as an ontological component, the objector is not compelled to draw the consequence that there can be only one instance of what lacks a composition of essence and *esse*. Instead, for the objector, all things lack this composition.

C. The "God to Creatures Argument" and the Third Stage of *De ente* 4.

Joseph Owens defends the view, which he ascribes to Thomas, that it is possible to prove a real distinction between being (*esse*) and essence only after the proof for the existence of God, after the proof, that is, of 'being as a nature'. For Owens, the definitive "God to Creatures Argument" is found in *De ente* 4 in the Third Stage, which after proving that *esse* as a nature exists, concludes to a Real Distinction.[37] In any case, it is widely agreed that the "God to Creatures Argument" is well attested in Aquinas. Apart from the *De ente*, there are at least nineteen instances of the argument, most of which are drawn from eight different mature works. I distinguish three general versions of this argument: some versions argue in a particular way through Uniqueness or Participation, whereas another version is Simplified. Paradigmatic of the "God to

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[36] Owens, "Aquinas' Distinction," 282. Of course, Owens' point is a different one: he rejects the Second Stage only because, for him, it operates with a *concept* of *esse*, not with *esse* grasped in judgment, and its reasoning ends as it begins with purely mental distinctions; see Joseph Owens, "Stages and Distinction in *De ente*: A Rejoinder," *The Thomist* 45 (1981): 99-123, at 108-10, 114-21. Only after the *esse* that is grasped in judgment is known to exist as a nature as in the Third Stage is it possible to establish the Real Distinction. Nonetheless, the reasoning of the Third Stage relies on that of the Second; *ibid.* 109; *Elementary Christian Metaphysics*, 101 (although it could also use the infinity of pure being, as in *ibid.* 103, 106-8). And, Owens sees the first two stages as part of one continuous argument for the Real Distinction; *ibid.* 68-71, 77-82, 101-8; "Aquinas' Distinction," 276, 281, 286. In fact, according to Owens, each of the two Stages could be separated out and taken as concluding to the Real Distinction *after* it is known that God exists whose being is a nature; Joseph Owens, "Quiddity and Real Distinction in St Thomas Aquinas," *Mediaeval Studies* 27 (1965): 1-22, at 19.

[37] Owens, *Elementary Christian Metaphysics*, 71-75, 101-8, 351; for the Third Stage as an independent argument, cf. also Fabro, "Un itinéraire," 104; *La nozione metafisica*, 220. Owens' reading of the Third Stage, as beginning only with a conceptual distinction between a thing and its being, faces the interpretative problem that the reasoning in *De ente* 4 appears to involve the reception of real *esse* from another. If, as is true, an argument *could* be mounted without such reasoning, that argument would still have to address the Question-Begging Objection, as must any "God to Creatures Argument." In other words, what entitles one to infer from the judgment that God exists to the fact that God's *esse* is a nature? Precisely at this point *esse* as an ontological act is introduced. Why is not God understood merely as pure form, which is judged to exist without introducing any further ontological components? The Third Stage at this point runs the risk of arguing from a mental operation to reality in a way that Owens himself has sharply criticized; see Joseph Bobik, "Some Disputable Points Apropos of St. Thomas and Metaphysics," *New Scholasticism* 37 (1963): 411-30, at 425.

Creatures" approach is the argument of *Summa theologiae* I.44.1c. Aquinas, having already systematically shown that God exists, that his *esse* is identical to his nature, and that there can be only one thing that is subsistent *esse*, now argues that therefore everything other than God is not identical to its *esse* but must participate in *esse* and must consequently be caused by the first unparticipated *esse*, the creator. In fact, most instances of the "God to Creatures Argument" are introduced to distinguish creatures, especially, immaterial or everlasting ones from the divine: angels, the human soul, or celestial bodies. For the present purposes, I reduce the various versions of the "God to Creatures Argument" to three steps, while I indicate within the first two steps the directions taken by the different versions.

(1) As is shown elsewhere, something exists that is its own 'to be' or *esse*, that is *esse* itself or *esse subsistens*.[38]

    a. God alone is such a thing.[39]

        i. For, God as the sole first cause is the most perfect and actual thing, and to such a thing alone belongs to be actual in the most perfect way, to be *esse* itself.[40]

    b. Further, there can be only one God, only one thing that is its own *esse* or *esse subsistens*.[41]

        i. For, since *esse* as such cannot be diversified, if it subsists, nothing can be added to it to diversify or pluralize it.[42]

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[38] All instances of the "God to Creatures Argument" have some version of this step, affirming one or more of these designations of God—whether through proof or not. 'Subsisting *esse*' by itself in Aquinas, *Quodl.* 12.4.1c, ll. 16-26 (1272) grounds a distinct version of the "God to Creatures Argument;" see below, n. 49. On the classification of arguments using something whose essence is *esse*, see above, n. 21.

[39] Apart from the aforementioned *Quodl.* 12.4.1c, all instances of the "God to Creatures Argument" use some version of Step (1.a), which affirms divine otherness. Simplified versions of the argument, or those that argue through Participation, may not use Step (1.b), which affirms divine uniqueness; for these see below, nn. 45, 48-49.

[40] *SCG* 2.52, n. 7 (*Item. Cum*). I count this passage as a "God to Creatures Argument Simplified" because it offers no defense of Step (2); cf. below, n. 45. Still, it implies that all things other than God acquire *esse* and as such are in potency; also, that anything that is first in potency, then in act is completed only by the perfect act of *esse*, which God alone is. To this extent the passage is similar to the "God to Creatures Argument through Participation and Becoming" of *Quodl.* 12.4.1c, ll. 16-26; see below, n. 49.

[41] Step (1.b) affirms not merely divine otherness but unicity, the target of the Second Stage of *De ente* 4, which serves as the model for the "Hypothetical Essence That Is *Esse* Argument." I refer to the general argument based on the step as the "God to Creatures Argument through Uniqueness," which is completed by Step (2), Step (2.a) or even (2.b), and some version of Step (3). In addition to the variations of this argument mentioned in the next four notes, I include Thomas Aquinas, *Compendium theologiae* [=*CT*] 1.68, ll. 18-30, in *Opera omnia*, vol. 42; Aquinas, *De substantiis separatis* [=*De sub. sep.*] 9, ll. 102-118, in *Opera omnia*, vol. 40; cf. *SCG* 2.15, n. 5 (*Item. Quod*).

[42] *SCG* 2.52, n. 2 (*Si enim*). Step (1.b.i) together with Step (2.a) forms the "God to Creatures Argument through Uniqueness Proper." For a similar form of argument, see above, n. 29. For Roland-Gosselin (*Le*

ii. Also, it is one, as is a common nature considered in itself or taken to exist by itself.[43]

iii. Also, subsistent being must be infinite, possessing the fullness of being.[44]

(2) But other beings exist, whose essence is not *esse* itself.[45]

a. For, there is a plurality of other beings,[46] whose *esse* is received, contracted to what receives it, and as a result is limited.[47]

b. Also, when some feature, in this case, *esse,* belongs to something according to its own nature, it belongs to all others only by participation.[48]

"De ente," 188), Aquinas develops this argument in light of Avicenna's proof of the uniqueness of the necessary being.

[43] *SCG* 2.52, n. 3 (*Amplius natura*); also *Quodl.* 7.1.1 ad 1, ll. 143-159 (1256); *QDSC* 1c, ll. 357-408; *ST* I.44.1c; Thomas Aquinas, *Questiones disputate de malo* 16.3c, ll. 164-174, in *Opera omnia*, vol. 23; *De sep. sub.* 8, ll. 164-187; *Quodl.* 3.8c, ll. 37-48 (1270). This step forms the "God to Creatures Argument through Uniqueness of a Common Nature." For the reasoning, see above, n. 30.

[44] This step together with some version of Step (2.a) forms the "God to Creatures Argument through the Uniqueness *of Infinite Esse*," used in *SCG* 2.52, n. 4 (*Adhuc. Impossibile*); *QDSC* 1c, ll. 357-408. For this argumentation, cf. above, n. 31.

[45] All instances of the "God to Creatures Argument" use Step (2), but some argue simply through it and Step (1.a) alone: *Sent.* 1, d. 8.5.1c; *Quodl.* 7.3.2c (1256); *Quodl.* 9.4.1c, ll. 115-121 (1257); *SCG* 2.52, n. 7 (*Item. Cum*); cf. *ST* I.47.1. This I call the "God to Creatures Argument Simplified." One "God to Creatures Argument" is unique, defending Step (2) by means of the "Understanding of Essence Argument:" *Sent.* 2, d. 3.1.1c. Hence, I do not introduce it here as a special form of the "God to Creatures Argument," but instead I refer the reader to Section II.A above. This passage, just as *Sent.* 2, d. 1.1.1c, uses reasoning of both the First and Third Stages of *De ente* 4—although the two passages use different parts of the Third Stage: the passage from Distinction 1 argues for the existence of subsistent *esse*, whereas that from Distinction 3 offers proof that all things other than God, including angels, have essence really distinct from *esse*.

[46] This point is barely made explicit, but is used by all of the passages that reason through Step (1.b); see above, nn. 41-44. The conclusion of the Third Stage in *De ente* 4 reasons thus (especially on Owens' interpretation), relying on the conclusion of the Second Stage; see *De ente* 4, ll. 121-126; 143-145.

[47] *Quodl.* 7.1.1 ad 1, ll. 143-159; *QDSC* 1c, ll. 357-408.

[48] This step, together with Step (1.a) forms the "God to Creatures Argument through Participation," whose purest form is found in *SCG* 2.52, n. 8 (*Amplius. Ipsum*); see also Thomas Aquinas, *Expositio libri Posteriorum* 2.7 (92b8-11), lect. 6, ll. 43-50, in *Opera omnia* 1.2*; cf. *Sent.* 2, d. 16.1.1 ad 3; *Sent.* 2, d. 37.1.2c; *In Phys* 8.10, lect. 21, n. 14 (1154); and especially *In De ebdom.* 2, ll. 234-250, recorded in Step (3.b) in Section II.E, below, where participation in *esse* is ascribed to any determinate form, including Aristotle's separate substances, as a condition for its distinction from other things. In other places, the argument is formed with some version of Step (1.b), using uniqueness; hence I call it the "God to Creatures Argument through Uniqueness and Participation:" in fact, participation is defended in this version almost exclusively as an alternative to the uniqueness of subsistent *esse*. This argument is found in *CT* I.68, ll. 18-30; *ST* I.44.1c; *De malo* 16.3c, ll. 164-174; *De sep. sub.* 9, ll. 102-118; and *Quodl.* 3.8c, ll. 37-48; cf. *SCG* 2.15, n. 5 (*Item. Quod*). The same argument is found in one "Hypothetical Essence that is *Esse* Argument:" *In Phys* 8.10, lect. 21, n. 13 (1153). For arguments through Participation, see above, n. 26, and below, sections II.H-J, in addition to the following note.

c. Also, things 'most' come to be in act by participating in the first, pure act: subsisting *esse*.[49]

(3) Therefore, in other beings *esse* and essence are really distinct.

a. Consequently, in such things (i) *esse* as an act must be caused by another and is received by an essence that is in potency to it, so that (ii) quod est is other than 'quo est'.[50]

b. Also, such things participate in being.[51]

Given these three steps, it is easy to see that the "God to Creatures Argument" is vulnerable to the Question-Begging Objection at exactly the same points as was the "Hypothetical Essence That Is *Esse* Argument." Step (1) assumes Thomist 'to be' or *esse* in assuming that God is his own *esse* or *esse* itself. Leo Sweeney has put the objection strikingly: "Granted that the divine essence is *esse*, still for that statement to be meaningful one must have a prior recognition of what *esse* is and of what being is. Whence comes that recognition?"[52]

But even if one admits Thomist *esse* in Step (1), is it necessary to affirm Thomist *esse* in Step (3)? Grant, according to Step (2), that other beings exist whose essence is not *esse* itself. How does it follow that they are not mere essence, but that they also have a really distinct *esse*? In two versions of the "God to Creatures Argument," Aquinas even adds a step between Steps (2) and (3):

(4) But everything that is has 'to be' (*esse*).[53]

The Aristotelian rejects Step (4) in Aquinas' sense: there is no 'to be' or *esse* as a component to be had. That *esse* is a component of reality to be possessed must be proved and not merely assumed. A similar difficulty arises for the version of the "God to Creatures Argument" that uses Participation: does it not presuppose that *esse* is a component of things that is really distinct from essence or substance? Only if so is it

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[49] *Quodl.* 12.4.1c, ll. 16-26. This step forms a "God to Creatures Argument" that does not use divine otherness or uniqueness, but is completed, instead, only by Steps (1) and (3.b). The resulting argument, distinct from the one identified in the previous note, is a "God to Creatures Argument through Participation and Becoming." On this argument, see Lawrence Dewan, "St. Thomas and the Distinction between Form and *Esse* in Caused Things," *Gregorianum* 80 (1999): 353-70. For similar reasoning, cf. above, n. 40.

[50] Step (3.a.i) is found in *Quodl.* 7.3.2, ll. 24-35; and 9.4.1, ll. 115-121; Step (3.a.ii) is found in *Sent.* 1, d. 8.5.1c; whereas many passages witness both (a) and (b): *Sent.* 2, d. 3.1.1c; *De ente* 4, ll. 147-166 (Third Stage); *De sep. sub.* 8, ll. 164-187; *Quodl.* 3.8c, ll. 37-48.

[51] Participation in the "God to Creatures Argument" may be a consequence of rather than a means to establishing the Real Distinction, as for Step (2.b): QDSC 1c, ll. 357-408; cf. *In LDC* 4, pp. 29.27-30.18-30.

[52] Sweeney, "Existence/Essence in Aquinas's Early Writings," 130.

[53] *De sub. sep.* 8, ll. 183-184: "Omne autem quod est esse habet;" *Quodl.* 12.4.1c, ll. 23-26: "Unde esse est completiuum omnis forme, quia . . . habet esse cum est actu; et sic nulla forma est nisi per esse." See also the quotation below, in n. 65; and *SCG* 1.22, n. 9: "Amplius. Omnis res est per hoc quod habet esse."

necessary to affirm a distinct participation in *esse* as opposed to a thing's participation in substance.

D. The "Genus Argument."

Aquinas alludes many times to a doctrine that he ascribes to Avicenna, that the essence of whatever is in a genus must be distinct from its *esse*. In at least seven passages, including from the *Summa theologiae* and three other mature works, Aquinas presents the reasoning behind this conclusion. In each of these seven passages, he must intend not a conceptual, but a real distinction. Admittedly, in none of these seven is Aquinas systematically investigating the metaphysical composition of creatures: in all but one he is taking up the question whether God's essence falls into a genus. Nonetheless, in four instances, including in *De ente et essentia* 5, he *explicitly* uses the "Genus Argument" to conclude to a Real Distinction in all things other than God.[54] The "Genus Argument" can be captured in the following five steps.

(1) [Every essence, with one possible exception, has at least one genus that is predicated essentially of it (namely, its ultimate category), and there is no real distinction between an essence and its genus.][55]

(2) But whatever is identical to a class as such, whether to genus or species, belongs to every member of that class.[56]

(3) Therefore, any essence that is really identical to its 'to be' or *esse* will be identical in *esse* to everything else in whatever class is predicated essentially of it.

(4) This has absurd consequences:

    a. No genus or class will have within it a plurality of essences that actually are (*SCG* 1.25).

    b. Also, either each individual thing that is will be identical to every other, or no two things that are will be of the same kind (cf. *De veritate* 27.1 ad 8).

        i. For, the 'to be' or esse of each thing is proper to it and distinct from the *esse* of anything else.[57]

(5) Therefore, the essence of everything in a genus or class must be really distinct from its *esse*.

Everyone acknowledges the problem with this argument, which lies in concluding from Steps (4.a) and (4.b.i) to Step (5). Grant, in other words, that there are many distinct individuals within each genus. The argument proves only that there must be some really

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[54] *Sent.* 1, d. 8.4.2c; *De ente* 5, ll. 5-14; *QDDV* 27.1 ad 8; *ST* I.3.5c. The other three passages are *CT* 1.14, ll. 12-19; *SCG* 1.25, n. 4 (*Item. Quidquid*); *QDDP* 7.3c. Cf. the allusion in *Sent.* 2, d. 3.1.1 ad 1; Thomas Aquinas, *Super Boetium De trinitate* 6.3c, ll. 133-137, in *Opera omnia*, vol. 50.

[55] A step of this kind is presupposed in Aquinas' reasoning.

[56] *De ente* 5, ll. 10-13; *SCG* 1.25; *ST* I.3.5c.

[57] *QDDP* 7.3c; *De ente* 5, ll. 13-14.

distinct principle to distinguish two things that actually are and that belong to the same genus. Still, is 'to be' or *esse* as an ontological component necessary to make them distinct, or does not individuating matter alone suffice? Whatever is the source of individuality is also the source of pluralization within a class. And, the Aristotelian can say that this is matter, not Thomist *esse*. To assume that it is *esse* is to beg the question, as Wippel has pointed out:

> But as it first appears in the argument, *esse* may signify nothing more than a particular actually existing member of a generic or specific class, that is, a particular concrete existent. One cannot yet assume what remains to be proved, i.e., that *esse* already signifies an act principle which is really distinct from the essence principle of each particular substance.[58]

E. The "Simplicity of *Esse* Argument:" The Exposition of Boethius' De hebdomadibus 2.

Cornelio Fabro is well-known for having identified a "Participation Argument" (or mode of argument) for the Real Distinction, which Fabro considers the most important foundation for the distinction in Aquinas.[59] I see only two instances of the "Participation Argument" that can claim to completeness, that can claim to give grounds for participation in *esse* without presupposing the Real Distinction, and that appear to be actually intended by Aquinas to establish the Real Distinction. Most versions of the so-called "Participation Argument" turn out to be versions of the "God to Creatures Argument," as I have pointed out.[60] Still, one other argument employs non-participation as a key part of its reasoning and uses Participation language, although it cannot be reduced to the "Participation Argument." I name the unique and important argument of the (possibly early, but probably late) *Exposition of Boethius' De hebdomadibus* the "Simplicity of *Esse* Argument."

(1) 'To be' (*esse*) is simple.

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[58] Wippel, *Metaphysical Thought*, 161.

[59] Fabro, *La nozione metafisica*, 217, 222, 243-44. According to Fabro, Participation is used in a fully systematic way in Aquinas' arguments for the Real Distinction only in the mature works, such as in the last argument of *SCG* 2.52 (*ibid.* 217, 221); yet, this use represents not a new argument, but merely a modification of earlier arguments (*ibid.* 243; but cf. below, nn. 67, 88). Only in later writings, however, does Fabro take up the apparent consequence that Aquinas' *Exposition of Boethius' De hebdomadibus*, as opponents of the Real Distinction have charged, is itself marked by Avicenna's 'extrinsicist', dynamic causal reasoning (*ibid.* 217, 222, 227). As Fabro later observes, the *Exposition* evidences the logical and formal character of Boethius' non-intensive notion of *esse*, and we see Aquinas there actually contradicting his own metaphysics, for example, in agreeing with Boethius that "*esse* is not yet;" Cornelio Fabro, "La problematica dello esse tomistico," in Fabro, *Tomismo e pensiero moderno* (Rome, 1969), 103-33, at 104-8, reprinted from *Aquinas* 2.2 (1959): 194-225; Cornelio Fabro, *Participation et causalité selon S. Thomas d'Aquin* (Louvain, 1961), 268-80.

[60] For these versions, see above, n. 48.

a. For, 'to be' is not a subject either of 'to be' or of accidents.[61]

b. Also, 'to be' does not participate in anything else—whether logically, as in something more universal or in something concrete versus abstract, or ontologically, as in a substantial form or in an accident (ll. 68-113, 207-209).

(2) But if 'that which is' is composed of matter and form, it is obviously not simple.[62]

(3) Or, if 'that which is' is not composed of form and matter, either it is absolutely simple or it is in some other way composed (ll. 216-230).

a. But if 'that which is' is absolutely simple, so that its essence is identical to its 'to be', there can only be one such (ll. 216-219, 249-258).

b. Or, if 'that which is' is without matter yet is not absolutely simple, it must have form that is other than, that enters into composition with, and that participates in 'to be' so as to be pluralized and to be distinguished from that which is absolutely simple (ll. 219-249).

(4) Therefore, in every case but one, simple 'to be' is really distinct from 'that which is'.

Aquinas explicitly draws attention to the fact that the early stages of this argument, as he discovers it in Boethius, conclude merely to a conceptual distinction between *esse* and essence, not to a real distinction (ll. 36-39, 198-220). For, the early stages focus on properties of language, on the 'modes of signifying' of words and concepts. '*Esse*' ('to be') unlike 'that which is', says Thomas, signifies in an abstract rather than in a concrete mode; '*esse*' signifies as 'that by which' rather than 'that which', and as a formal part rather than as a subject whole.[63] Accordingly, we do not say that 'to run' (*currere*) runs or that 'to be' (*esse*) is, but 'what runs' (*id quod currit siue currens*) runs and 'that which is' (*ens siue id quod est*) is. Similarly, we do not say that a human is humanity or that 'that which is' is 'to be' or *esse* itself. It follows that 'to be' is conceptually distinct from 'that which is', although not that it is really distinct, observes Thomas.

At the same time, Aquinas believes that his argument establishes a Real Distinction merely by introducing ontological components in place of 'that which is', namely, form and matter. Given a form-matter composite, argues Aquinas, it is evident that its 'to be' insofar as it is simple is really distinct from the composite that is 'that which is'. But has Aquinas managed to evade the Question-Begging Objection? Granted, as the Aristotelian concedes, that all material things are form-matter composites, why do they have or why must there be in them, in addition, simple 'to be' as an ontological component? Why can simple 'to be' not be merely a term or predicate that we ascribe to them? Aquinas introduces no argument to show that simplicity must be a property not

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[61] Aquinas, *In De ebdom.* 2, ll. 48-63, 114-146, 204-212.

[62] *In De ebdom.* 2, ll. 206, 209, 212-213.

[63] *In De ebdom.* 2, ll. 39-45, 48-65, 87-102, 116-146.

only of language or concepts, of the verb 'is' and 'to be', but also of some feature of reality.

F. The "Limitation of *Esse* Argument."

John Wippel first named this as a distinct form of argument in Aquinas' corpus.[64] It is found in germ in at least three passages in Aquinas, including in the *Summa contra gentiles*, although two of the passages do not propose to prove the Real Distinction, and the third cannot as such be ascribed to Aquinas insofar as it is an 'argument *sed contra*'. Despite the infrequency of the "Limitation of *Esse* Argument," its reasoning is entirely consistent with Aquinas' doctrine on *esse* and his Principle of the Limitation of Act by Potency. Given that, it is striking that Aquinas does not give preference to an argument that, if it succeeds, is the simplest and most cogent of all Aquinas' arguments for the Real Distinction. At the same time, this argument is perhaps more obviously susceptible than any other to the Question-Begging Objection. Hence, it is of special interest here. Was Aquinas aware of the vulnerability of this argument?

> (1) All things [except one] must have 'to be' (*esse*) that is finite.[65]
>
>> a. [For, only one thing can be 'to be' itself.]
>
> (2) But 'to be' that is not received in something subsists as absolute and infinite.[66]
>
>> a. For, as is true of any form, 'to be' is of itself common, so that it is limited only by being received in some subject.[67]

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[64] Wippel, *Metaphysical Themes*, 157-61; *Metaphysical Thought*, 170-76; yet the argument was previously identified by Battista Mondin, *St. Thomas Aquinas' Philosophy in the Commentary to the* Sentences (The Hague, 1975), 52. See also Giles of Rome, *Theoremata de esse et essentia*, ed. E. Hocedez (Louvain, 1930), V and XX, 24.21-25.18, 141.16-142.16. The argument was recognized by renaissance scholastics as central to Aquinas' exposition; see Cajetan, *In De ente et essentia D. Thomae Aquinatis commentaria*, ed. M.-H. Laurent (Turin, 1934), 5, q. 12, n. 100.

[65] "Omnis creatura habet esse finitum;" Aquinas, *Sent.* 1, d. 8.5.1 sc. See also above, n. 53. I modify Step (1) and add Step (1.a) to show that the reasoning as such does not depend on the actual existence of God. It is evident, in any case, that all bodies are finite.

[66] *Sent.* 1, d. 8.5.1 sc; *SCG* 1.43, n. 8 (*Amplius. Ipsum*). Cf. also n. 44 above.

[67] See *Sent.* 1, d. 8.2.1c: "[E]sse enim recipitur in aliquo secundum modum ipsius, et ideo terminatur, sicut et quaelibet alia forma, quae de se communis est, et secundum quod recipitur in aliquo, terminatur ad illud; et hoc modo solum divinum esse non est terminatum, quia non est receptum in aliquo, quod sit diversum ab eo. . . . [I]llud enim in quo non est esse absolutum, sed terminatum per recipiens, non habet esse perfectum sed illud solum quod est suum esse: et per hoc dividitur esse aeternum ab esse rerum immobilium creatarum, quae habent esse participatum, sicut spirituales creaturae." Cf. also *ST* I.7.1c; I.7.2c. Notice that Fabro grounds his own résumé of the "Participation (Mode of) Argument" on the *finitude* of all created substance; see above, n. 59; Fabro, *La nozione metafisica*, 243-44; cf. also Cornelio Fabro, "Sviluppo, significato e valore della 'IV via'," in *Esegesi tomistica*, 351-85, at 366-69, reprinted from *Doctor Communis* 1-2 (1954): 71-109. In fact, Fabro's exposition of *esse* as act in which all things participate as in a 'separate perfection' seems to fit well with the passage from *Sent.* I, d. 8.2c quoted above (cf. Fabro, *Participation et causalité,* 195-202). Perhaps he does not invoke it because it uses 'dynamic' terms of 'reception' rather than merely terms of static Participation.

(3) Therefore, 'to be' must be received in something other than it so as to limit it.[68]

(4) Or, therefore, 'to be' must be limited by something other than it that is in some way its cause [formal].[69]

(5) [Consequently, 'to be' and the essence that receives and limits it are really distinct.]

This argument sharply reveals its dependence on a principle implicit in Step (1): that all things have Thomist 'to be' or *esse*.[70] If this is denied, as by our Aristotelian objector, then the argument fails. The Aristotelian can agree that things have finite being, can even accept in theory the Principle of the Limitation of Act by Potency. But why cannot the finitude of things be accounted for by the fact that form is received in matter in the case of material things? And, if a plurality of immaterial forms is admitted, distinction within the plurality can be preserved by the finitude of the forms alone: each form has a different definition, as does each prime number, for Aristotle.

G. The "Effect to Cause Argument."

One other explicit defense of the Real Distinction is well-known since it falls within Aquinas' catalog of seven arguments for the Real Distinction in spiritual substances in *Summa contra gentiles* 2.52. Nonetheless, scholarly lists of Aquinas' arguments typically fail to classify it distinctly.[71] This is probably because, not unlike the "Limitation of *Esse* Argument," it is obviously vulnerable to objections, including the Question-Begging Objection.

(1) Substance belongs to each thing through itself, not through another.[72]

(2) But 'to be' (*esse*) belongs to each created [or caused] thing through another.[73]

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[68] Aquinas, *Sent.* 1, d. 8.5.1 sc; cf. also *De sub. sep.* 8, ll. 255-273.

[69] *SCG* 1.43, n. 8 (*Amplius. Ipsum*).

[70] See above, n. 53.

[71] Thomas Dillon, *The Real Distinction between Being and Essence in the Thought of St. Thomas Aquinas*, Notre Dame diss. (Notre Dame, 1977), 215, lists this as a fifth argument beyond the standard four summarized by Sweeney; cf. also Roland-Gosselin, *Le "De ente,"* 188: "proofs from the nature of created being;" Fabro, *La nozione metafisica*, 214-15, 220-21. The argument was central in medieval and renaissance Thomism; cf., for example, Norman Wells, "Capreolus on Essence and Existence," *Modern Schoolman* 38 (1960): 1-24.

[72] Aquinas, *SCG* 2.52, n. 6 (*Amplius. Substantia*).

[73] For other places where such causal reasoning is reflected, see above, nn. 28, 40, and 49, as well as Step (2) in Section II.H below, and Steps (1.a) and (4.b) in Section II.J; for causal reasoning in general, cf. above, n. 32. Aquinas' "Effect to Cause Argument" grows out of *his reading* of Avicennian arguments regarding the possible versus necessary being—according to which arguments a caused thing is only possible in itself and must receive *esse* from another in order to be; see *Sent.* 1, d. 8.5.2c; *Sent.* 2, d. 1.1.5 ad sc 2; *ST* I.3.7 ad 1, but especially *QDDV* 8.8c, ll. 121-126: "Omne autem quod aliquid non habet a se ipso sed ab altero, est ei praeter essentiam suam; et per hunc modum probat Avicenna quod esse cuiuslibet rei praeter primum ens est aliquid praeter essentiam ipsius quia omnia ab alio esse habent; *In Met.* 4, lect. 2, n. 9 (556): "[Avicenna] dicebat, quia in qualibet re quae habet esse ab alio, aliud est esse

> a. Otherwise, 'to be' [would belong to each such thing through itself, and] would be uncaused.
>
> > i. [For, x is uncaused if it does not depend on another so as to be, just as for substance P to be a substance needs no cause.][74]
>
> (3) Therefore, the 'to be' of each caused thing is really distinct from its substance

The Aristotelian may admit, of course, that 'being caused' requires a really distinct cause. But the objector denies that 'being caused' implies that *esse* or 'to be' as an ontological component other than form and matter comes to belong to what is caused, as in Steps (2) and (2.a). Instead, why cannot a substance's being caused 'to be' merely mean that its matter is actualized by form, without introducing Thomist *esse* at all? Then the argument shows that effects depend for their being on causes, not that they receive really distinct *esse* or being from their causes.

H. The "Participation Argument:" ST I.75.5 ad 4.

As mentioned in Section II.E, I see only two instances of an argument through Participation in Aquinas, which I present in Sections H and K. The other purported instances either rely on the hypothetical or actual existence of God, or they assume outright Participation as an ontological reality, that is, they assume a participant and a really distinct *esse* participated by it.[75] One of the two instances, that from *Summa theologiae* I.75.5 ad 4, is nothing more than the core of the "God to Creatures Argument through Participation," extracted from its starting point assuming God's existence. This passage is the "Participation Argument" in its pure form.[76]

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rei, et substantia sive essentia eius." See especially Avicenna, *Liber de philosophia prima sive scientia divina*, ed. S. Van Riet (Louvain-Leiden, 1977-1980), vol. 2, 8.3, pp. 395.12-396.28; cf. 8.4, pp. 400.7-402.47. Notice, though, that Avicenna's reasoning here, if it can be taken as a proof of the Real Distinction, proceeds from God to creatures. Fabro takes it as crucial that Aquinas departs from Avicennian causal and 'extrinsicist' lines of argumentation for the Real Distinction, such as mark Aquinas' early works, in favor of 'static and intrinsicist' lines through Participation; Fabro, *Participation et causalité*, 216; cf. Mario Pangallo, *L'essere come atto nel tomismo essenziale di Cornelio Fabro* (Roma, 1987), 34-37, 49-52. As Pangallo observes, however, Aquinas' shift is not as absolute as Fabro suggests; *ibid*. 36. Of course, the second half of Fabro's *Participation et causalité* develops in Aquinas' mature thought a causal line of reasoning *subsequent* to the Real Distinction that owes something to Avicenna but is completely rethought in terms of intensive *esse*; cf. Fabro, *Participation et causalité*, 341, 381-88, 431-41.

[74] The brackets contain one way of completing the argument. For this step, cf. Aristotle, *Metaphysics* Z.17, 1041a15-24. For a cause as that from which the *esse* of another follows, see Thomas Aquinas, *De principiis naturae* 3, ll. 76-79, in *Opera omnia*, vol. 43.

[75] See above nn. 26, 48-49.

[76] Compare the version of this argument in Giles of Rome, *Theoremata* V, 25.19-26.5: were a creature its own unparticipated *esse*, it would be entirely simple.

(1) [No created form is subsistent 'to be'.][77]

(2) [Therefore,] any created form participates in 'to be' or *esse*.

(3) But everything that participates is compared to that in which it participates as potency to act, an act limited by the capacity of what receives it.

(4) Therefore, every created form is composed of *esse* as act and essence as receiving it.

I have already raised the difficulty with the "Participation Argument" in discussing the "God to Creatures Argument through Participation." Step (2) seems to beg the question. It assumes that 'to be' or *esse* is a component of things that can be or must be participated in. But one can admit that created forms are beings and deny that they participate in *esse* as an ontological component distinct from form. Whatever Participation such things have, then, would be purely logical and would presuppose no Real Distinction—a possibility that Aquinas expressly allows in the *Exposition of Boethius' De hebdomadibus* 2.[78]

J. The "Participation in *Ens* Argument:" *Quodlibet* 2.2.1.

The second instance of an argument through Participation is worth considering separately because of its singular form: the argument found in a famous passage from the late Quodlibet, question 2 (1269). What makes this passage unique? It can claim to be a strong argument for the Real Distinction because it begins with participation as a fact about predication alone. I believe that Aquinas is aware that to assume ontological participation in *esse* is to assume a Real Distinction, and he does not intend passages where such an assumption is made, thought-provoking and suggestive as they are, as self-standing arguments. The same cannot be said, however, of the following five steps of *Quodlibet* 2.2.1.

(1) Everything [except one possible thing] is said to be 'a being' (*ens*) in a participative sense.[79]

    a. For, no caused thing is subsistent 'to be' (*esse*).[80]

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[77] I add Step (1) to show that the argument, although it uses 'created form', need hinge only on there being something *other* than subsistent *esse*—whether or not such a thing is seen as caused.

[78] Aquinas, *In De ebdom.* 2, ll. 36-39, 55-113, 198-206; cf. also Step (3) in the following Section.

[79] *Quodl.* 2.2.1c, ll. 33-37. Aquinas contrasts "predicatur per participationem" or "predicatur participative" with "predicatur essencialiter;" for the distinction, see *In Met.* 7.4, lect. 3, n. 23 (1328). Aquinas elsewhere contrasts properties possessed "participative" with properties possessed "integraliter," "originaliter," "plenarie," and "secundum suam plenitudinem."

[80] "[N]ulla enim creatura est suum esse, set est habens esse;" *Quodl.* 2.2.1c, ll. 37-38. I modify Steps (1) and (1.b) to make it clear, contrary to first appearances, that the argument need not presuppose either God's actual existence or the Real Distinction, unlike for Wippel, *Metaphysical Thought*, 169; cf. 105. Aquinas need maintain only the negative claim that nothing caused is subsistent 'to be', and the argument does not need divine creation. As is clear from Step (4), "habens esse" need not be taken by itself to *signify* an *esse* really distinct from the *habens*, any more than "animal" predicated in a participative sense of "human" need *signify* a really distinct animality; cf. Aquinas, *In De ebdom.* 3, ll. 58-68. Aquinas has not yet ruled out logical participation, much as a species participates in its genus.

(2) But whenever one thing is said of another in a participative sense, there be must something besides that which is participated; in this case, namely, besides 'to be' (ll. 46-52).

    a. [This distinction will be conceptual if the participation is only logical; but if the participation is not logical, the distinction will be real and the participation ontological.][81]

(3) A being' (*ens*) can be said of 'substance' or 'accident' in a participative, yet essential sense, as the more of the less universal; this is logical participation, implying no Real Distinction (ll. 52-54, 67-72).

(4) But 'a being' can be said of an efficiently caused thing only in a participative and accidental sense, not in an essential sense.[82]

    a. For, 'a being' (ens) is not a genus or a difference.

    b. Also, no efficiently caused essence 'is' by definition or explains its own 'to be'.

        i. Hence the questions 'whether it is' and 'what it is' are different.

(5) But by applying Steps (2) and (2.a), accidental participation therefore implies that a thing's essence is [really] other than its 'to be' (*esse*), which is 'accidental' or beside the essence, but which comes to belong to it. Such participation must be ontological (ll. 73-75).

The argument has intriguing features. It recognizes the difference between participation as found in language and as found in reality; only the latter requires a real distinction between participant and what is participated. Also, the argument seems to use causality in order to establish a real participation and a real distinction. Thus, from the fact that something is a creature (ll. 37-38) or is efficiently caused, the argument infers in Step (4) that it is called 'a being' (*ens*) in an accidental, participative sense, and therefore that it has 'to be' (*esse*) as a really distinct feature. Nevertheless, as in the case of the "Effect to Cause Argument," does the "Participation in *Ens* Argument" not beg the question by assuming that to be caused is to receive 'to be' as an ontological component other than form and matter? What amounts to the same, can one assume that the only other kind of participation besides essential participation is ontological, as in Step (2.a)? It seems that Averroes himself, according to Aquinas' own account here, admits an *accidental* predication of 'to be' that introduces only conceptually distinct 'to be': that affirms only 'to be' 'in the sense of propositional truth', as in 'Socrates is' (ll. 63-66). Even Aquinas admits that the proposition 'God is' signifies for us only 'to be' in the sense of truth, an accidental predicate.[83] In this life we cannot know God's nature, hence nor the *esse* that is identical to his nature. The term 'is' in 'God is', then, seems to be an accidental predicate, conceptually distinct from 'God' without implying any Real Distinction in

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[81] Step (2.a) is implied by Aquinas' use of Step (3).

[82] *Quodl.* 2.2.1c, ll. 54-66. For the proposition that a caused being or 'creature' is called 'a being' as participating 'to be' or *esse*, see also *Sent.* 2, d. 16.1.1 ad 3.

[83] See *ST* I.3.4 ad 2; *QDDP* 7.2 ad 1.

God. Why can one not hold that the same is true for other predications of 'is', such as those in question in the argument?

K. Summary Observations

All nine of Aquinas' arguments for the Real Distinction that we have reviewed seem vulnerable to the Question-Begging Objection. Aquinas seems never to have been aware of the objection. At the same time, his *Exposition of Boethius' De hebdomadibus* shows his awareness of the sharp difference between reasoning that establishes only a conceptual distinction, and reasoning that establishes the Real Distinction. And, there is some evidence that over the course of his career, Aquinas embraced less and less the 'logical reasoning' of the "Genus" and "Understanding of Essence" Arguments in favor of 'metaphysical' reasoning, such as has been distinguished by Fabro.[84]

It appears to me that Aquinas did originally believe that his "Understanding of Essence Argument" and the First Stage of *De ente* 4 established a Real Distinction. But he does not repeat this reasoning in the mature works, and this practice appears to be deliberate. He continues to use the "Genus Argument" until 1265, but not as his preferred argument for the Real Distinction. The "Simplicity of *Esse* Argument" of the *Exposition of Boethius' De hebdomadibus*, much as the "Participation in *Ens* Argument" of the late *Quodlibet* 2, begins 'logically' with properties of the words '*esse*' and '*ens*', although it must be said that both make a transition to ontology: by introducing matter and form in the *Exposition of Boethius' De hebdomadibus* 2, and by introducing the contingency of a creature in the Second Quodlibet. The comparatively less logical, more ontological reasoning of the "Hypothetical Essence That Is *Esse*" and "God to Creatures" Arguments appear to be preferred by Aquinas if mere numbers are considered. I see no good reason to think, however, that Aquinas in the mature works regards the "God to Creatures Argument" as standing on its own, as does the "Hypothetical Essence That Is *Esse* Argument." I would argue, in other words, that on the most plausible reading of the *De ente* and the *Summa theologiae* alike, Aquinas thinks it is first necessary to prove the Real Distinction in material things prior to proving both God's existence and the identity of God's *esse* and essence; afterwards these conclusions can be used to show that *all* things other than God, notably, all everlasting or immaterial things, must be caused by God by receiving *esse* as something really distinct from their essence. This is the singular role of the "God to Creatures Argument" and the reason for its frequency.

A final point could be made concerning the "God to Creatures" and "Hypothetical Essence That Is *Esse*" Arguments. Much of the central reasoning in the different versions of these arguments does not depend on the actual or possible existence of God and could be extracted from this context to form an independent argument for the Real Distinction. Aquinas has already made this extraction in the case of the "Effect to Cause" and "Participation" Arguments, and less clearly in the case of the "Limitation of

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[84] Fabro, *La nozione metafisica*, 215-222; see below, n. 88.

Esse Argument."[85] In my view, however, the reasoning of these arguments is even more obviously vulnerable to the Question-Begging Objection after the extraction is made.

III. Help from Aristotle

If Aquinas' own arguments for the Real Distinction fail to meet an Aristotelian objection, in what sense do I speak of receiving "help from Aristotle?" The greatest names in Thomist scholarship have seen the need for help, I believe, but have found it in Scripture and/or in Plato. For Étienne Gilson and Cornelio Fabro alike, Aquinas fails to demonstrate the Real Distinction only in the sense that he never tried to demonstrate it in the first place. Gilson denies that anyone has ever proved the Real Distinction, and he cites what approximates the Question-Begging Objection as the reason that a proof should not even be attempted: "[A]ll the arguments one can use to establish the distinction between being and essence in Thomas Aquinas's doctrine presuppose the prior recognition of the notion of the 'act of being' (*esse*)."[86] For Gilson, Aquinas came to the Real Distinction in a theological rather than in a purely philosophical way, proceeding from God to creatures, reflecting on the words of Exodus 3:14: 'I am Who Am'.[87] Similarly, Fabro denies that the Real Distinction can be known through intuition, judgment, or deduction.[88] It is reached only in a dialectical analysis[89] that

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[85] Cf. above, nn. 48-49, 66, 72-75.

[86] Étienne Gilson, *Elements of Christian Philosophy* (Garden City, N.Y., 1960), 130. See *ibid.* 128: "[N]o one has ever been able to demonstrate the conclusion that, in a caused substance, existence is a distinct element, other than essence, and its act." Cf. also Étienne Gilson, *The Christian Philosophy of St. Thomas Aquinas*, tr. L. Shook (New York, 1956), 82.

[87] Gilson, *Elements of Christian Philosophy*, 130-35.

[88] Fabro, *Participation et causalité*, 75, 79-81; Cornelio Fabro, "Notes pour la fondation métaphysique de l'etre," in Fabro, *Tomismo e pensiero moderno*, 291-317, at 292, 312, 314, reprinted from *Revue thomiste* 2 (1966): 214-37; cf. Luis Romera, *Pensar el ser: Análisis del conocimiento del "Actus Essendi" según C. Fabro* (Bern, 1994), 99-100. Notice the evolution in Fabro's thought and expression on this issue. In his 1939 article on the Real Distinction, he defends both what he calls the 'logico-metaphysical argument' of the First Stage of *De ente* 4, and the two 'metaphysical arguments' of the Second and Third Stage; Fabro, "Un itinéraire," 94-97. In the 1950 revision of *La nozione metafisica*, 217-22, 243-44, Fabro still distinguishes Aquinas' two logical arguments (*De ente* 4, First Stage, and the "Genus Argument") from two early metaphysical arguments (*De ente* 4, Second and Third Stages), though the logical arguments must not be taken to stand on their own (*ibid.* 219); but Fabro favors Aquinas' third and subsequently developed *mode* of metaphysical argument, couched in Participation, such as is offered in the last argument of *SCG* 2.52. In 1954, Fabro highlights the centrality of three moments of the 'dialectic of participation' for Aquinas' metaphysics of the creature, within which *dialectic* the *argument* through participation becomes for Aquinas the *exclusive* way to *demonstrate* the Real Distinction; Fabro, "Sviluppo della 'IV via'," 368-69. By contrast, *Participation et causalité* in 1960 does not speak of 'an argument' or 'demonstration' for the Real Distinction, except in reference to Aquinas' original Avicennian reasoning; see *Participation et causalité*, 216, 625. For three stages of development in Fabro's thought on the Real Distinction, beginning with *La nozione metafisica*, see Pangallo, *L'essere come atto*, 43-48, 67, 147-49. Only in the final stage, reacting to existentialism, does Fabro criticize and renounce the use of 'existence' as an unphilosophical term; *ibid.* 149. In this final stage, Fabro takes *existentia* to be a term of anti-Thomistic origin, foreign to the semantics of Thomistic metaphysics, whose

starts from the intensive act of being, which is also identifiable with God.[90] The first source of this properly Thomistic analysis is thus Genesis and Exodus, but it subsequently proceeds with Dionysius and the Platonic metaphysics of Participation to see all other essences as participating in this intensive act.[91]

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appearance in Henry of Ghent and Giles of Rome is a landmark in the 'forgetfulness of being' lamented by Heidegger; Cornelio Fabro, "Platonismo, neoplatonismo, e tomismo," in Fabro, *Tomismo e pensiero moderno*, 435-60, at 449; Cornelio Fabro, "Il nuovo problema dell'essere e la fondazione della metafisica," in *St. Thomas Aquinas, 1274-1974: Commemorative Studies*, ed. A. Maurer et al. (Toronto, 1974), vol. 2, 423-57, at 454-55.

[89] Fabro, *Participation et causalité*, 73-75, 479, 625. Fabro speaks there of a 'metaphysical reflexion', 'resolutive dialectic', or 'theoretic resolution', but elsewhere of a 'dialectical' or 'transcendental resolution'; Cornelio Fabro, "L'Emergenza dello *esse* tomistico sull'atto aristotelico: Breve prologo," in *L'Atto aristotelico e le sue ermeneutiche*, ed. M. Sánchez (Rome, 1990), 149-77, at 174, 176. For the stages of the resolution and its evolution in Aquinas, see also Fabro, "La problematica dello esse," 107-10; *Participation et causalité*, 79-83; 195-244.

[90] Sometimes Fabro suggests that he does not intend to reduce his approach to the Real Distinction to a simple "God to Creatures Argument," even when he accepts such an argument (Fabro, *La nozione metafisica*, 192-205, 243-44; *Participation et causalité*, 35, 76, 83, 198-202); yet, insofar as his 'resolution' begins from pure act, which is identified with *esse*, which therefore must exist and must exist separately and uniquely, the identification of this *esse* with God is natural (cf. *ibid.* 198-208; "La problematica dello esse," 109-10). Elsewhere Fabro is explicit about the "God to Creatures" approach: Cornelio Fabro, "Elementi per una dottrina tomistica della partecipazione," in *Esegesi tomistica*, 421-48, at 433, reprinted from *Divinitas* 11 (1967): 559-86; Cornelio Fabro, *Introduzione a san Tommaso: La metafisica tomista e il pensiero moderno*, 2nd ed. (Milan, 1997), 89-90 (the 1st ed. appeared in 1983). Observe, though, that *Participation et causalité* focuses not on the Real Distinction, but on the emergence of '*esse* as act' and on the subsequent dynamic causality and semantics in Aquinas' thought. Fabro's most thorough account of the 'foundation' of the Real Distinction at the final stage of his own development is found in "Notes pour la fondation métaphysique de l'etre," where he explicitly does not appeal to God at the moment of the 'foundation', but only subsequently in completing the causal account; Fabro, "Notes pour la fondation métaphysique de l'etre," 291-93, 309-14.

[91] Fabro, *Participation et causalité*, 15, 51, 169, 198, 207-208, 216-19, 229, 537. It does not contradict Fabro's position to add that the 'first moment' of Thomist metaphysics is the Aristotelian concept of act; for, the ultimate foundation of the newly emergent *esse ut actus* versus the potency of essence is the Platonic notion of Participation; Fabro, *Introduzione a san Tommaso*, 85, 91. Giacon criticizes Fabro's acceptance of a biblical origin and of a "God to Creatures" approach in his account of the Real Distinction; Carlo Giacon, "S. Tommaso e l'esistenza come atto: Maritain, Gilson, Fabro," in Giacon, *Itinerario tomistico* (Rome, 1983), 137-65, at 162-63. Late Fabro seems to have changed his position, insisting that Aquinas differs from previous Christian thought in that the evidence of the event of creation for him is founded on *esse* as act, rather than vice versa; Fabro, "Intorno al fondamento dell'essere," in *Graceful Reason*: *Essays in Ancient and Medieval Philosophy Presented to Joseph Owens, C.Ss.R.*, ed. L. Gerson (Toronto, 1983), 229-37, at 237. In any event, Fabro's account of the Real Distinction turns on his establishing that there is an *esse* as act containing all things *intensively* at a transcendental level, whereas essences at the predicamental level have this act only by Participation. The intensity of *esse* is what makes it possible to establish the Real Distinction, whereas all other accounts take *esse* in a 'logical' or 'formal' sense as containing merely the minimal base of what makes something to be (*existence*). So thin a notion of *esse* makes the Real Distinction vulnerable to objections such as those of Descoqs or the Question-Begging Objection.

Both Gilson and Fabro end by denying that the Real Distinction can be known through proof. But their approach to the Real Distinction leaves it open, again, to the objection that the distinction is a theological or Neoplatonic accretion, unjustifiable on philosophical grounds. As both Gilson and Fabro would admit, the Real Distinction is not per se known: from the understanding alone of essence, substance, or form, on the one hand, and of 'to be', on the other, it is not obvious that *in reality outside the mind*, 'form' is other than 'to be'. To say otherwise will raise the Question-Begging Objection. The Real Distinction, I conclude, needs to be defended by argument but cannot be deduced from prior principles without assuming 'to be' as an ontological component, without assuming '*esse*' in the Thomist sense. In this situation, it appears that one must resort to indirect argumentation such as through effects or through a *reductio ad absurdum*. Are there any impossible consequences for one who would affirm Aristotelian principles but reject really distinct *esse*? I submit that the Aristotelian Question-Begging Objection *helps* us by leading us to reconsider Aristotle's notions of essence and form, which notions underpin the Real Distinction and without which the distinction cannot be drawn with any philosophical cogency.

A. Aristotle's Conceptual Distinction

The first point that needs to be made, which I cannot defend at length here, is that Aristotle himself maintains a *conceptual* distinction between mere 'to be' and 'that which is'.[92] Thus, Aquinas, insofar as he begins his discussions of the Real Distinction by first establishing a conceptual distinction, as in the *Exposition of the De hebdomadibus*, follows Aristotle even more than he follows Boethius or Avicenna. It is

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[92] One may find strong defenses of the position—and not merely to favor Aquinas—that there is no hint of an existential notion of 'to be' in Aristotle, that 'to be' always means 'to be so and so', as in the statement of the principle of non-contradiction; see Joseph Owens, "An Aristotelian Text Related to the Distinction of Being and Essence," *Proceedings of the American Catholic Philosophical Association* 21 (1946): 165-72, at 164; see also G. E. L. Owen, "Aristotle on the Snares of Ontology," in *New Essays on Plato and Aristotle* (New York, 1965), 69-95; Alfonso Gomez Lobo, "The So-Called Question of Existence in Aristotle, *An. Post.* 2.1-2," *Review of Metaphysics* 34 (1980): 71-90. Still, many today ascribe to Aristotle propositions that affirm existence; see Milton Munitz, *Existence and Logic* (New York, 1974), 59-62; David Demoss and Daniel Devereux, "Essence, Existence, and Nominal Definition in Aristotle's Posterior Analytics II 8-10," *Phronesis* 33 (1988): 133-54; Thomas D'Andrea, "Essence and Existence in Aristotle's *Posterior Analytics*," in *Saints and Scholars*, 15-21; Owen Goldin, *Explaining an Eclipse: Aristotle's Posterior Analytics 2.1-10* (Ann Arbor, MI, 1996), 52-71; Jaakko Hintikka, "On Aristotle's Notion of Existence," *Review of Metaphysics* 52 (1999): 779-805, at 785-90; David Charles, *Aristotle on Meaning and Essence* (Oxford, 2000), chs. 2-3; and David Charles, "Some Comments on Prof. Enrico Berti's 'Being and Essence in Contemporary Interpretations of Aristotle'," in *Individuals, Essence and Identity: Themes of Analytic Metaphysics*, ed. A. Bottani, et al. (Dordrecht, 2002), 109-26. Linguistic studies reveal an existential sense for *einai* in classical Greek and in Aristotle, although Aristotle does not articulate a concept of existence or distinguish it carefully from other senses of *einai*; A. C. Graham, "'Being' in Linguistics and Philosophy: A Preliminary Inquiry," *Foundations of Language* 1 (1965): 223-31, at 223-24, and Charles Kahn, "The Greek Verb 'To Be' and the Concept of Being," *Foundations of Language* 2 (1966): 245-65, at 247-48, 265.

often observed that Aristotle identifies essence or *to ti ēn einai* with being or *to einai*, as in the formula *to kuklōi einai* (the being of a circle), used for the essence of a circle.[93] Admittedly, *to einai* in the principal sense for Aristotle means essence, a sense that Aquinas himself admits as one of three main senses of *esse*.[94] But *Posterior Analytics* 2 holds that the question 'whether *x* is?' is different from and prior to the question 'what is *x*?'; that the 'to be' of a thing in this sense is other than its substance.[95] Accordingly, Aristotle states: "The whatness of a human [*ti estin anthrōpos*] is *other* than that a

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[93] Aristotle, *Metaphysics* Z.10, 1036a1-19; for *to ti ēn einai*, see H.3, 1043b1-4.

[94] See especially Aquinas, *Sent.* 1, d. 33.1.1 ad 1: "Sed sciendum, quod *esse* dicitur dupliciter. Uno modo dicitur *esse* ipsa quidditas vel natura rei, sicut dicitur quod definitio est oratio significans quid est *esse*; definitio enim quidditatem rei significat. Alio modo dicitur *esse* ipse actus essentiae; sicut vivere, quod est *esse* viventibus, est animae actus; non actus secundus, qui est operatio, sed actus primus. Tertio modo dicitur *esse* quod significat veritatem compositionis in propositionibus, secundum quod est dicitur copula: et secundum hoc est in intellectu componente et dividente quantum ad sui complementum; sed fundatur in *esse* rei, quod est actus essentiae. . . ."

[95] For Owens, the question 'whether something is' in *Posterior Analytics* 2 in fact asks about a thing's generic or quasi-generic character: Joseph Owens, *The Doctrine of Being in the Aristotelian Metaphysics: A Study in the Greek Background of Mediaeval Thought*, 3rd ed. (Toronto, 1978), 289-94; or about its logical possibility: Joseph Owens, "The Accidental and Essential Character of Being in the Doctrine of St. Thomas Aquinas," in Owens, *St. Thomas Aquinas on the Existence of God*, 52-96, at 59. The work of Graham, Hintikka, Kahn, and Suzanne Mansion helps elucidate the difficulty to which Owens points, even while it admits an existential sense to *einai* in the *Posterior Analytics*. For Graham, "'Being' in Linguistics," 224-25, *einai* in the existential sense in *Posterior Analytics* 2 is a great exception in the corpus, and Aristotle must signal its use by adding *haplōs* (2.1-2, 89b33; 90a5, 10-12, 33; *De Sophisticis Elenchis* 5, 166b37-167a7); elsewhere in *Posterior Analytics* 2, *einai* may include existence but cannot merely be translated by 'exists' since it also may imply a predicate, whether a thing's essence or properties (2.7, 92b20-25). Similarly, Hintikka, "On Aristotle's Notion," 785-87, ascribes to Aristotle the valid inference from 'Homer is human' to 'Homer is' in a jointly existential and essential sense—a fused Aristotelian sense supported by Riek Van Bennekom, *Journal of the History of Philosophy* 24 (1986): 1-18, but opposed by Russell Dancy, "Aristotle and Existence" in *The Logic of Being: Historical Studies*, ed. S. Knuuttila and J. Hintikka (Dordrecht, 1986), 49-80, at 59, 64-67; cf. also Richard Ketchum, "Being and Existence in Greek Ontology," *Archiv für Geschichte der Philosophie* 80 (1998): 321-32. Contrary to the suggestion of *Posterior Analytics* 2.1-2, then, Aristotle offers no existential syllogisms—which are impossible since being is not a genus; yet existence can form *part* of the middle term; Jaakko Hintikka and Ilpo Halonen, "Aristotelian Explanations," *Studies in History and Philosophy of Science* 31 (2000): 125-36, at 132. For Kahn, "The Greek Verb 'To Be'," 248-49, 263-65, although *einai* has an existential sense, there is no universal concept of existence, such as would allow it to be a subject of predication, either in classical Greek or in Aristotle, and such a concept is not found in or required by Aristotle's conceptual scheme, as is indicated by *Metaphysics* Delta 7. By contrast, Suzanne Mansion, *Le jugement d'existence chez Aristote*, 2nd ed. (Louvain, 1976), 253-74, explains that the question 'whether *x* is' plays a central role in Aristotle's scientific method, since scientific knowledge, though of the universal, attains, not merely abstract universals, but real essences of things already judged to be. Yet, Mansion admits that 'that *x* is' in Aristotle's example of geometrical objects really means 'that *x* can be constructed based on the principles of geometry' (*ibid.* 263); whereas for Charles, the point is that a triangle can be proved to exist; Charles, *Aristotle on Meaning and Essence*, 58-75. For an alternative position to Mansion's, see Mario Mignucci, *La teoria aristotelica della scienza* (Firenze, 1965), 58-60.

human is [*to einai anthrōpon*]. . . . 'To be' [*to einai*] is not the substance of anything, since 'a being' [*to on*] is not a genus."[96]

But why, once again, must even Aristotle himself hold that 'to be' is distinct from whatness not only conceptually but also 'in the nature of things', as Thomas would say?[97] We can ask this question without begging it precisely because of the conceptual distinction between what and whether *x* is. We may ask, Can the principles of form and matter alone (and their efficient and final causes) 'account for actually *to be*', that is, explain what it is about *x* that constitutes *x*'s actually being at all, in addition to explaining what *x* is? Do form and matter and the causes of becoming alone account for why *x*'s actually being, *x*'s 'actually *to be*,' differs from *x*'s non-being or only potentially being? Notice that this is not Aristotle's question. Aristotle asked only, What brings it about such that *x* comes to be or ceases to be? whereas the question now is, What is it about *x* that 'accounts for its actually *to be*' while it is?

B. A "Form-Matter Argument" for the Real Distinction Inspired by *SCG* 2.54

I propose an argument of my own for the Real Distinction based on an examination of Aristotle's notions of form and matter. The inspiration for my argument is Aquinas' dichotomous procedure in *Contra gentiles* 2.54. Aquinas' reasoning there should not be regarded properly as an argument for the Real Distinction, which distinction he presupposes as established two chapters before. Instead, Aquinas argues that the real composition of substance and *esse* that has already been proved cannot be identical to the composition of matter and form. Thomas gives two reasons why matter is not substance, then two reasons why form is not *esse*. I adopt his reasons regarding matter, and I adopt his format, while modifying it to generate the trichotomy required. The Question-Begging Objection must be met ontologically by showing through a *reductio ad absurdum* that neither matter alone, nor form alone, nor matter and form together can 'account for actually *to be*'. Once again, I assume that matter and form are principles of the real, and I argue as follows.

> (1) If Aristotle does not need really distinct 'actually to be', then form and matter alone 'account for actually to be' (assuming that 'actually to be' does not merely name an extrinsic relation).
>
> (2) But, first, matter alone as matter cannot account for 'actually to be'.
>
> > a. For, matter alone is pure potency; but what is in potency as such is not yet.[98]
> >
> > b. Also, matter alone does not explain why things come to be, since pure potency, which is not yet, cannot as such act.

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[96] Aristotle, *Posterior Analytics* 2.7, 92b10-13.

[97] Aquinas, *In Peryerm.* 2, lect. 2, ll. 35-40.

[98] Cf. *SCG* 1.16, n. 7 (*Item. Videmus*).

      c.   Also, we do not say that matter alone is, but that the composite is; if matter alone in the genus of substance were to be, then all form would be accidental.[99]

(3) Second, form alone as form cannot account for 'actually to be'.

      a.   For, although form is actuality, form as form in material things 'is not'.

          i.   For, otherwise, the form of material things would not need matter to be.

          ii. Also, just as for Aristotle form does not come to be, but only the composite, so form as such in material things does not have 'actually to be',[100] but only the composite.[101]

      b.   Also, form alone does not explain why things come to be. Otherwise, material substances would not need separate moving causes.

      c.   Also, even if the cause of coming to be were nothing but the cause of form's being actualized in matter, the source of continuing to be cannot be form alone.

          i.   For, otherwise, the form of material things would never be destroyed, as in the case of 'separate form', but would continue to be after the destruction of the composite.[102]

(4) Third, form and matter together cannot alone account for 'actually to be'.

      a.   For, either form and matter account for it insofar as each as such 'actually is', contra Steps (2.a), (2.c), and (3.a).

      b.   Or, they account for 'actually to be' by form's actualizing matter, making one substance.[103] But if so, form alone as form accounts for 'actually to be', contrary to Step (3).

          i.   For, only what is actual as such can account for 'actually to be'.

               1.   But the only actuality by which matter as in potency is actualized by form as act is the act of form.[104]

              2.   Also, there is no real distinction between form and 'matter just insofar as it is actualized'; for, since nothing can be both in potency and act in the same respect, matter just insofar as it is actualized is solely in act. Consequently, the

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[99] *SCG* 2.54, nn. 2-3. See also below, nn. 122-123.

[100] See below, nn. 122, 124. That the composite alone, unlike matter or form by themselves, is "separate not only in formula (*logos*), but also absolutely speaking (*hapl⌢s*)," see Aristotle, *Metaphysics* H.1, 1042a29-31; that the composite properly acts, not the soul or intellect, see *De anima* 1.4, 408b13-15; 3.8, 432a1-3.

[101] I reverse the argument found in Aquinas; see below n. 122, in addition to Aquinas, *QDDP* 6.3c.

[102] See below, nn. 112, 113.

[103] Aristotle*, Metaphysics* H.2, 1042b9-11; H.6, 1045a14-33, b16-24; *De anima* 2.1, 412a7-11.

[104] This actualization simply results from form as form; see below, nn. 117-120. Cf. Aristotle, *Metaphysics* H.6, 1045a14-33, b16-24.

(5) Therefore, form and matter alone do not account for 'actually to be'.

(6) But since 'actually to be' must be accounted for, there must be some component that accounts for it that is really distinct from form and matter.

What has been accomplished by this argument? The most compelling 'purely Aristotelian' account of the 'actually *to be*' of material things may appear to be *prima facie* that 'actually *to be*' is nothing but form and matter together, that is, form's actualizing matter thanks to moving and final causes in the case of composite things.[105] The "Form-Matter Argument" seeks to reduce this third member of the trichotomy to one of the previous two, namely, to the position that form alone accounts for 'actually *to be*'. First, that matter alone accounts for 'actually *to be*' seems obviously false: since matter is pure potency, whereas 'actually *to be*', whatever it is, is an actuality. But on the same grounds, second, the 'actually *to be*' of the composite cannot be reduced to the composite itself insofar as it includes matter, which is in potency.[106] The form-matter composite accounts for 'actually *to be*' only insofar as the composite is in act. But just insofar as it is in act in the genus of substance, the composite is form: there is no real distinction in composites between form and 'matter just insofar as it is actualized'.[107] Consequently, if 'actually *to be*' is the very actuality of matter by form, this is, again, no other *actuality* than the actuality that is form.[108] Hence, *either* 'actually *to be*' is

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[105] Cf. the reduction of Siger of Brabant, *Quaestiones in Metaphysicam*, ed. W. Dunphy (Louvain-la-Neuve, 1981), Introduction, q. 7 (Munich *reportatio*), 45.114-20: *esse* is either form, matter, the composite, or an accident. Of course, the Aristotelian would hold that 'actually *to be*' is form alone in the case of the separate first substances or prime movers—which are not under consideration here.

[106] Notice the similarity between this approach and Aristotle's reduction of *ousia* to form, not matter or the composite; Aristotle, *Metaphysics* Z.3, 1029a7-33.

[107] Cf. Aquinas' view that the soul is what makes the body to be a body, and that matter 'is' only because substantial form makes it actually be; Aquinas, *ST* I.76.4c, ad 1; I.76.6c; *De ente* 2, ll. 135-150. See also Christopher Hughes, "Matter and Actuality in Aquinas," in *Thomas Aquinas: Contemporary Philosophical Perspectives*, ed. B. Davies (Oxford-New York, 2002), 61-76.

[108] It may be thought that this is Aquinas' position, as the following points suggests. (1) Through form, which is the act of matter, matter is made a being in act and 'this something'; Aquinas, *De ente* 2, ll. 31-35; *ST* I.29.2 ad 5; I.66.1c. (2) Thus, form gives *esse* to matter, which receives it; *Sent.* 3, d. 1.1.1 ad 3. (3) Similarly, the soul gives living to the body, that is, 'to be' for what is alive; *QDSC* 1 sc 4, ll. 231-237; 3c, ll. 405-412; 11 ad 14; ll. 421-428. (4) Hence, the only 'to be' that matter or the body has is through form; *De ente* 4, ll. 41-50. (5) Form also gives 'to be' to the *body*; *QDSC* 3c, ll. 408-409; 6 ad sc 6, ll. 430-431. (6) Thus the soul *makes*—formally, not efficiently—the substance to be, the body to be, and the animated body to be; Thomas Aquinas, *Sentencia libri De anima* 2.1, lect. 1, ll. 265-288, in *Opera omnia*, vol. 45.1; *Quodl.* 1.4.1 ad 2, ll. 111-118. (7) The 'to be' that the body has is the same as the soul's 'to be'; *Sent.* 1, d. 15.5.3c. (8) By being given substantial 'to be' from the soul, the composite is generated, and the body is constituted in the genus of substance; *Sent.* 4, d. 44.1.1 qc 1 ad 4; *ST* I.76.4c. Nonetheless, in other places it is clear that for Aquinas the 'to be' given by form, although only one for form and matter, is really distinct from both form and matter; see *De ente* 4, ll. 185-192. 'To be' is a per se consequent of form, the result of form, just as is a property; see also below, nn. 116, 119, 121. Form as form gives

reduced to the actuality of form alone,[109] *or,* if 'actually *to be*' does not merely name a thing's relation to an external cause, the argument reaches its conclusion: 'actually *to be*' is accounted for only by an actuality that is really distinct from both form and matter.

Can form alone, then, in the third place, account for 'actually *to be*'? If so, the Aristotelian finds that form has been substantified or partially Platonized as what 'is' on its own, and that a central Aristotelian tenet has been denied: that form ceases to be upon the destruction of the composite.[110] For if form alone accounts for 'actually *to be*', why should the form of material things, any less than the form of the immaterial prime movers, ever cease to be?[111] As Aquinas himself argues, any form of a composite that 'is' on its own right will be everlasting;[112] only if form 'is', not through itself, but through the distinct 'to be' of the composite, can it cease to be.[113]

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matter its '*esse specificum*'; see below, n. 120. Notice also soul's relation to divine *esse* in human nature hypostatically united to the divine; *ST* III.17.2c.

[109] This view can be found among Aquinas scholars. For Hans Meyer, *Thomas von Aquin*, 133, on Aristotelian principles form is so close to *esse* that a Real Distinction is impossible; furthermore, even Thomas and Albert hold that form is *actus essendi*.

[110] See, for example, Aristotle, *Metaphysics* H.3, 1043b19-21.

[111] For a defense of the view that all form is everlasting, although not without actualizing the thinnest slice of matter, see James Ross, "Together with the Body That I Love," *Proceedings of the American Catholic Philosophical Association* 75 (2001): 1-20. I owe this argument to the suggestion of Lawrence Dewan. Hints of such reasoning can be found in Dillon, *The Real Distinction*, 183; Fabro, "Notes pour la fondation métaphysique de l'etre," 293; Giles of Rome, *Theoremata* XII, 68.2-8; 75.23-77.13.

[112] Aquinas, *Quodl.* 10.3.2 ad 3, ll. 146-151: "[A]nima [intellectualis] esse suum communicat corpori, quod quidem ita acquiritur anime in corpore ut secundum ipsum subsistere possit, quod non est de aliis formis; et sic ipsum esse anime fit esse compositi, et tamen manet, composito destructo." Thomas Aquinas, *De unitate intellectus* 1, ll. 644-653, in *Opera omnia*, vol. 43: "Forma igitur que habet operationem secundum aliquam sui potentiam uel uirtutem absque communicatione sue materie, ipsa est que habet esse, nec est per esse compositi tantum sicut alie forme, sed magis compositum est per esse eius. . . . non autem oportet quod destruatur ad destructionem compositi illa forma per cuius esse compositum est, et non ipsa per esse compositi." Cf. also the relation of form and 'to be' in the following. *ST* I.50.5c: "si ipsa forma subsistat in suo esse, sicut est in angelis, ut dictum est, non potest amittere esse." *QDDA* 14c, ll. 179-183: "Si igitur sit aliqua forma que sit habens esse, necesse est illam formam incorruptibilem esse: non enim separatur esse ab aliquo habente esse nisi per hoc quod separatur forma ab eo. Vnde si id quod habet esse sit ipsa forma, impossibile est quod esse separetur ab eo." Notice the objection that if form is the source of 'to be', then subsistent form cannot be caused; *QDDP* 6.6 ob 4. Given the Real Distinction, Aquinas easily handles the objection without denying that form is a source of 'to be'.

[113] *Sent.* 2, d. 19.1.1 ad 2: "Si vero forma non habeat esse absolutum in quo subsistat, sed sit per esse compositi, tunc ex quo compositum desinit esse, oportet quod forma etiam esse amittat, et per accidens corrumpatur." *Sent.* 4, d. 49.2.3 ad 6: "Sed forma quae non est per se subsistens . . . non habet esse nisi inquantum est actus talis subjecti." *SCG* 2.91, n. 5 (*Item. Si*): "Formae autem quae sunt in materiis, sunt actus imperfecti: quia non habent esse completum. Sunt igitur aliquae formae quae sunt actus completi per se subsistentes, et speciem completam habentes." *QDDA* 14c, ll. 169-179: "Manifestum est autem

In short, in accounting for 'actually *to be*' with Aristotle's principles of substance, it seems necessary to allow for the possibility of ceasing to be without ascribing this to form or matter alone. Accounting for 'actually *to be*' must be detached from form as such—which is really identical to 'form as the actuality of matter'—and cannot be ascribed to matter or to what is composed of matter as such. Either 'actually *to be*' is a mere relation, accounted for by something entirely extrinsic, as I shall consider in a moment, or it must be a third component, 'given', so to speak, *through form* to the composite of form and matter under the influence of extrinsic efficient and final causes.[114]

In Aristotelian philosophy it is correct that wherever there is form, there is 'actually *to be*', and vice versa.[115] For Aquinas, it is correct that *esse always* accompanies form, following it as its principle.[116] Hence, to identify form as that to which 'actually *to be*' is reducible is the 'right mistake' to make. But 'actually *to be*' cannot be reduced to form as such. Certainly, form is not the 'source whence is *to be*' (as if it were *hothen hē archē tou einai*), whether at the outset, at the continuation, or at the cessation of 'actually *to be*'. In what sense, then, is it accountable for 'actually *to be*'? Form as such is the actuality of matter, the source of unity, unity of action, and intelligibility in the body.[117] It is the *formal* cause of the 'to be' of the whole, 'shaping' what is. It is the

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quod esse per se consequitur formam: unumquodque enim habet esse secundum propriam formam. Vnde esse a forma nullo modo separari potest. Corrumpuntur igitur composita ex materia et forma per hoc quod amittunt formam ad quam consequitur esse; ipsa autem forma per se corrumpi non potest; set per accidens, corrupto composito, corrumpitur in quantum deficit esse compositi quod est per formam, si forma sit talis que non sit habens esse, set sit solum quo compositum est." *De unitate intellectus* 1, ll. 630-650: "Forme igitur que nullam operationem habent sine communicatione sue materie, ipse non operantur, sed compositum est quod operatur per formam; unde huiusmodi forme ipse quidem proprie loquendo non sunt, sed eis aliquid est. . . . Et similis ratio est de formis substantialibus que nullam operationem habent absque communicatione materie, hoc excepto quod huiusmodi forme sunt principium essendi substantialiter. . . . Et ideo destructo composito destruitur illa forma que est per esse compositi."

[114] I am thinking of the Avicennian tag *forma dat esse materiae*, which is not surpassed by Thomas as containing only Aristotle's predicamental notion of being, as is sometimes suggested (Fabro, *Participation et causalité*, 266, 357, 630), but is integral to Aquinas' exposition and refers to 'actually *to be*', even though it does not express the Real Distinction; see above, n. 108. Notice also that even in Aquinas the efficient 'cause of being' (*causa essendi*) as opposed to the 'cause of becoming' is the cause of form as such, as opposed to the cause of why this matter has this form; Aquinas, *ST* I.104.1-2.

[115] *QDDA* 14c, ll. 171-172: "esse a forma nullo modo separari potest."

[116] See, for example, *ST* I.90.2 ad 1: "[I]n anima est sicut materiale ipsa simplex essentia, formale autem in ipsa est esse participatum, quod quidem ex necessitate simul est cum essentia animae, quia esse per se consequitur ad formam." *QDDA* 6c, ll. 232-235: "Sic igitur esse consequitur ipsam formam, nec tamen forma est suum esse, cum sit eius principium." See also *In Met*. 4.2, lect 2, n. 11 (558).

[117] Note especially the following: "[Q]uia omnes formae, sive accidentales, sive substantiales, quae non sunt per se subsistentes, sunt, quantum est de se, communes multis;" *In Met.* 7.15, lect. 15, n. 13 (1618). "Forma autem per seipsam facit rem esse in actu, cum per essentiam suam sit actus; nec dat esse per aliquod medium. Unde unitas rei compositae ex materia et forma est per ipsam formam, quae secundum

formal cause of '*to be* in the sense of essence or of what *x* is',[118] but it is not what *as such* 'accounts for actually *to be*'. As Aquinas puts it in an underused passage, form as form is not non-being but is act; yet, compared to *'esse* in act', form is a non-being, which 'is' only by participating in *esse*.[119] Form tells us not whether *x* is, but what the being of *x* is, what *kind* of 'to be' *x* has.[120] Form is that *through which* a thing has the 'actually *to be*' that it has. Yet, for Aquinas, 'actually *to be*' is the actuality, not of matter, but of the whole substance, a *consequence* of form, the very act of separate form or of the form-matter composite so that it 'is', just as living is the act of the soul.[121] Thus, insists Thomas, just as neither matter alone nor form alone comes to be, as Aristotle showed,[122] so neither matter alone[123] nor form alone within the composite

seipsam unitur materiae ut actus eius. Nec est aliquid aliud uniens nisi agens, quod facit materiam esse in actu, ut dicitur in VIII *Metaphys*.;" *ST* I.76.7c.

[118] Aristotle, *Metaphysics* Z.17, 1041a27-32, b12-31; H.2, 1043a2-12.

[119] Aquinas, *De sub. sep.* 8, ll. 236-244: "Si igitur per hoc quod dico 'non ens' removeatur solum esse in actu, ipsa forma secundum se considerata est non ens, sed esse participans. Si autem 'non ens' removeat non solum ipsum esse in actu sed etiam actum seu formam per quam aliquid participat esse, sic materia est non ens; forma vero subsistens non est non ens, sed est actus qui est forma participativus ultimi actus, qui est esse."

[120] *De unitate intellectus* 1, ll. 493-495: "[A]nima per se ipsam est actus corporis dans corpori esse specificum." *Sent.* 1, d. 49.1.1 qc 1 ad 6: "[L]icet homo ex anima et corpore consistat, tamen esse specificum habet ex anima, non ex corpore, quia forma cujuslibet rei est principium esse ejus specifici." See also *Sent.* 4, d. 36.4 ad 3; d. 44.2.2 qc 1c; d. 44.2.3 qc 1c; *In De an.* 2.1, lect. 1, ll. 285-288; *QDDA* 9c, ll. 293-295; *QDSC* 2c, ll. 264-272; 4c, ll. 178-190.

[121] See, for example, *Sent.* 1, d. 23.1.1c: "[C]um esse consequitur compositionem materiae et formae, quamvis forma sit principium esse, non tamen denominatur aliquod ens a forma sed a toto. . ." *Quodl.* 9.2.2c, ll. 41-43, 58-63: "Alio modo esse dicitur actus entis in quantum est ens, id est quo denominatur aliquid ens actu in rerum natura. . . . Esse ergo proprie et uere non attribuitur nisi rei per se subsistenti. Huic autem attribuitur esse duplex. Unum scilicet esse resultans ex hiis ex quibus eius unitas integratur, quod est proprium esse suppositi substanciale." *Super Boetium De trinitate* 5.3c, ll. 102-105: "[Ipsum esse rei] quidem resultat ex congregatione principiorum rei in compositis, uel ipsam simplicem naturam rei concomitatur, ut in substantiis simplicibus." See also *SCG* 2.55, n. 3 (*Amplius. Quod*); *ST* I.50.5c.

[122] Aristotle, *Metaphysics* Z.8, 1033a24-b26; Z.9, 1034b8-16. Aquinas, *ST* I.65.4c: "Sed sicut probat Aristoteles in VII *Metaphys.*, id quod proprie fit, est compositum, formae autem corruptibilium rerum habent ut aliquando sint, aliquando non sint, absque hoc quod ipsae generentur aut corrumpantur, sed compositis generatis aut corruptis, quia etiam formae non habent esse, sed composita habent esse per eas, sic enim alicui competit fieri, sicut et esse." *SCG* 3.69, n. 21 (*Rationes autem*): "Cum enim ad hoc aliquid fiat ut sit, sicut forma non dicitur ens quasi ipsa habeat esse, sed quia per eam compositum est; ita nec forma proprie fit, sed incipit esse per hoc quod compositum sit reductum de potentia in actum, qui est forma." See also *ST* I.110.2c; *QDDP* 3.8c; Thomas Aquinas, *Quaestio disputata de caritate* 12 ad 20, in *Quaestiones disputatae*, vol. 2; Thomas Aquinas, *De operationibus occultis naturae*, ll. 142-147, in *Opera omnia*, vol. 43; *In Met.* 7.8, lect. 7 (1033b7-8), n. 7 (1423).

[123] *Sent.* 3, d. 6.2.2 ad 1: "[F]orma facit esse; non ita quod illud esse sit materiae aut formae, sed subsistentis;" *Sent.* 1, d. 8.5.2c; d. 8.5.3, exp.; *De ente* 2, ll. 51-66; *In Met.* 7.3, lect. 2, n. 23 (1292).

actually is.[124] The composite alone 'is', not its principles, by an act distinct from either matter or form, by an act consequent upon form, and therefore by an act distinct also from the form-matter composite itself.

This conclusion, however, rests on excluding an alternative that was mentioned above but not addressed in the "Form-Matter Argument" properly speaking. Why cannot 'actually *to be*' be 'accounted for' by something entirely extrinsic to the form-matter composite, while it itself is the mere relation of a thing to its cause, a relation that belongs to but is not really distinct from the thing caused? This is the alternative put forth shortly after Aquinas' death by Henry of Ghent, in reaction to Giles of Rome. For Henry, no creature has *esse* considered absolutely in itself, but only insofar as it is considered in relation to its ultimate cause—as an effect and as a likeness of the divine *esse*.[125] Therefore, 'to be' is not something added as though to something else that already is, but is simply the creature itself insofar as it is related as an effect to the divine essence in the order of efficient causality, just as essence is the creature itself as related by way of likeness to the divine essence in the order of formal causality. To exist, Henry would say, is simply for a thing to be posited outside its causes. No less than the greatest critic of the Real Distinction, Francisco Suárez, has shown the inadequacy of this alternative, however. To say of a thing 'it is' predicates not something relative but something 'absolute' of the thing, observes Suárez.[126] Otherwise, to say that God is would also be to introduce a relation to a cause. It remains that if we must account for 'actually *to be*' by something other than form, 'actually *to be*' must be a really distinct component intrinsic to things that are.

C. A Return to the Question-Begging Objection

Unquestionably, the Aristotelian should and will object. Why speak of 'actually *to be*' or 'accounting for actually *to be*' in the first place as if there were something 'real' other than form, form in matter, and their accidents? Does not the very project of the "Form-Matter Argument" tacitly beg the question as do all of the other arguments of Aquinas? Why the urgent need to account for 'actually *to be*' as if the reality of form and matter were not enough?

To this point I have presented the Question-Begging Objection as if it were unassailable. The objection helps us see that one cannot prove the real distinction between 'actually *to be*' and essence without showing the real distinction between form and 'actually *to be*', as Aquinas has not sufficiently done. The objection causes the

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[124] In addition to the texts of Aquinas cited in n. 122, see *De ente* 2, ll. 51-66; *Quodl.* 9.2.2c, ll. 51-59; *De unitate intellectus* 1, ll. 633-634.

[125] Henry of Ghent, *Quodlibet* 10.7, ll. 145-159, in Henry of Ghent, *Opera omnia* (Leuven, 1979-), vol. 14; Henry of Ghent, *Quodlibet* 1.9, ll. 89-92, in *Opera omnia*, vol. 5.

[126] Francisco Suárez, *Disputationes metaphysicae* 31.6.17-18, in Francisco Suárez, *Opera omnia* (Paris, 1856-1877), vol. 26.

Thomist to return to first principles. But should one expect of an argument for the Real Distinction that it exclude altogether from the picture 'actually *to be*', that it start with form and matter alone and seek to show that they are *not* the exhaustive principles of substance? Under this scenario, an argument for the Real Distinction becomes impossible before it begins. Aquinas would respond, I believe, that 'actually *to be*' has always been in the picture and cannot be excluded, but that this fact, rather than begging, mandates the question, mandates the inquiry into whether form accounts for 'actually *to be*'.

Aquinas cites many times in his own name the Avicennian formula that 'a being' is the first concept that falls into the mind.[127] Admittedly, the temporally first concept, which is also the most universal,[128] contains confusedly all other things within it, unlike the philosopher's systematic formula 'a being qua a being'. Nonetheless, Aquinas is committed to the fact that what first falls into the mind (*ens*) signifies and names something through its *esse* in the primary sense, through its 'actually *to be*', namely, through its 'to be' in the sense of 'that by which it is versus is not', 'that by which it actually is versus only potentially is'.[129] Present at the beginning of intellectual life, just as at the beginning of philosophy, is the distinction between what is and what is not.[130] Parmenides mistakenly identified 'a being' with 'that which actually is', yet even for Aquinas, it is a per se known first principle that 'a being' (in one sense of the word) is.[131] In light of the original intellectual grasp of 'actually *to be*', even a child can judge that *x* is or is not. Form is introduced late in the intellectual life, just as it is introduced well after Parmenides by Plato and Aristotle, to account for the unity behind perceptible reality and behind corporeal parts and their action. Form is a highly questionable philosophical principle, as any empiricist knows. Most of those who reject the Real Distinction do so because they do not take form seriously. Given form, however, as has been our procedure from the outset, one must ask, is this 'late arrival' really distinct from 'actually *to be*' which preceded it?

This question does not presuppose the Real Distinction, does not presuppose an 'actually *to be*' that is *really distinct* from form, does not assume '*esse* in the Thomist sense'. The knowledge of 'human' and 'animal' precedes the knowledge of 'rational'. Once the concept of 'rational' is achieved, one asks, is rationality really distinct from humanity? Aquinas will answer, no, without giving up on the fact that there is

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[127] E.g., Aquinas, *ST* I.5.1c.

[128] *ST* I.85.3.

[129] For the meaning of *ens* see *In Peryerm*. 1.3 (16b20-26), lect. 5, ll. 355-376. For the primary sense of esse, see *ibid*. ll. 394-405.

[130] *Sent*. 1, d. 24.1.3 ad 2; *In Met*. 4.2, lect. 3, n. 2 (566); 10.3, lect. 4, n. 15 (1998). For the foundation of the principle of non-contradiction, the first judgment, on *ens*, see *In Met* 4.3, lect. 6, n. 10 (605).

[131] *QDDV* 10.12 ad 3. For the multiple senses of *ens*, see *In Met*. 5.7, lect. 9.

something in reality corresponding to both, that each has a foundation in reality.[132] Similarly, to ask whether 'actually *to be*' is really distinct from form is to remain open to the possible answer: no, although each has a foundation in reality. To ask this question does not beg it. I have argued that Aquinas' nine kinds of argument for the Real Distinction fail to remain open to the answer 'no' by assuming without proof 'actually *to be*' as an ontological component that is the act of form, that is, by assuming Thomist *esse*. To this extent I have admitted both the thrust of the Question-Begging Objection and that it has landed a blow. But it would be unwarranted for the objector to exclude all talk of 'actually *to be*'. To assume that 'actually *to be*' has some foundation in reality does not beg the question by assuming Thomist *esse*. It would be odder to deny this foundation because of posterior difficulties than it would be to deny that there is a real foundation for 'humanity' because of difficulties with 'rationality'. Rationality is a highly doubted and dubious concept; the radical empiricist and scientific realist alike even reject humanity. Form (and essence) is far more subject to doubt than rationality; but if form is conceded, the question whether 'actually *to be*' is form (or essence) is precisely what needs to be asked.

At the same time, the ultimacy or primacy of 'actually *to be*' indicates the difficulty faced by the project of 'proving' the Real Distinction. The project rests on a first principle, and first principles cannot be proved, but have to be defended dialectically. To this extent Gilson and Fabro are correct to question the very project of a proof of the Real Distinction. 'Actually *to be*' and that things actually are must be defended dialectically as ontologically and epistemically primary. In drawing attention to 'actually *to be*' as such, the Scriptural notion of creation *ex nihilo*, I would argue, has only helped highlight principles that were already obvious.

On the other hand, Aquinas scholarship has been correct to emphasize the essential and central role of the "God to Creatures" approach in Aquinas. Once form has been *really* distinguished from 'actually *to be*' in material composites, Aquinas' conclusion that God is 'actually *to be*' itself can take on an ontological significance. As a result, once the Real Distinction is established for *material* things, the "God to Creatures Argument" can establish cogently that for *all* things except one (whether possible or actual), including for all immaterial beings except one, 'actually *to be*' is really distinct from essence. The universal scope of the "God to Creatures Argument," not the evidentness of its starting point, is the reason that Aquinas frequently employs it.

IV. Résumé

The project of arguing for the Real Distinction begins only after essence and form have been accepted to account for what is. Is form or are form and matter together the same in reality as 'actually *to be*'? The majority of Aquinas' nine kinds of arguments for the Real Distinction are cogent except insofar as they fail to address precisely this question.

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[132] *Sent.* 1, d. 19.5.1c; *QDDV* 21.1c, ll. 94-110.

Form is so close to 'actually *to be*' that Aquinas fails to worry sufficiently about detaching one from another.

I propose an argument that compensates for this lacuna by reducing the alternatives to absurdity. The argument proceeds "from effects" to their explanation, where the effect to be explained is just the 'actually *to be*' of the form-matter composite, initially understood as conceptually distinct from the composite itself. The question is, what real principle within the composite might account for its 'actually *to be*'? By a process of elimination, the argument shows that the conceptually distinct 'actually *to be*' can be accounted for only by some principle really distinct from form and matter. 'Actually *to be*' cannot be form and matter together; for, matter is only in potency, and 'actually *to be*' cannot be matter's actuality—which is nothing but form. It cannot be form because what form brings to the corporeal whole is not needed and is not wanted once that whole ceases to be. What form brings properly *as form* is not 'actually *to be*'—even if wherever there is form there is 'actually *to be*', and it is only because of form and through form that composites with really distinct matter 'are'. If 'actually *to be*', then, signifies something 'absolute' and not merely the relation of a thing to its cause, it follows that it must be an intrinsic, really distinct component of a thing. Consequently, if form as a philosophically explanatory principle can be defended and must be restored, 'actually *to be*' will also need to be defended and restored so that we do not lose sight of what came first. This is the lesson that Gilson and Fabro continue to teach us.

I conclude that the real distinction between being and substance, although not drawn by Aristotle, is a natural development required by his philosophical principles weighed against reality. The actuality of form cannot be identified in reality with 'actually *to be*'. Form does not of itself bring 'actually *to be*' to corruptible things. This is not the role of formal causality. Otherwise, the forms of material things should 'be' forever. To protect against this consequence, 'actually *to be*' must be seen as really distinct from form. If things do have Aristotelian essence, it must be really distinct from their 'to be'.[133]

Thomas Ward:

How Aquinas could have argued that God is really related to creatures

1. Introduction

In this paper I focus on a narrow but important topic in Aquinas's metaphysics of God and creation: the ontology of relations. The paper consists of two main parts. In the first part (section 2), I present the main features of Aquinas's understanding of the ontological status of relations. With respect to relations, Aquinas takes his philosophical cue from Aristotle. In *Categories* VII, the Philosopher defined a relation as something for which to be is to be toward another.[1] Many medieval thinkers reflected on the nature of relations in this vein, also with respect to problems concerning Augustine's understanding of divine persons as subsistent relations of origin. Aquinas utilized this aspect of the Aristotelian philosophical machinery not only to discuss the Trinity, but also to clarify certain aspects of the metaphysics of created being. In the course of these theological projects, Aquinas added nuance and sophistication to Aristotle's and earlier scholastics' theories of relations. Accordingly, it is possible to glean a philosophical view about relations from several of Aquinas's theological texts, including especially the first book of *Scriptum super Sententiis*, *De Potentia*, *Summa contra Gentiles*, and *Summa Theologiae*, in addition to the philosophical commentaries on Aristotle's *Physics* and *Metaphysics*.[2] What I have to say about Aquinas's theory of relations will adequately prepare us for the second main part of the paper (sections 3-5), in which I examine Aquinas's utilization of his theory in his teaching on the relations between creatures and the Creator.

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[1] Aristotle, Categories 8a35, trans. J.L. Ackrill (Oxford: Clarendon, 1963), p.23

[2] Works of Aquinas cited in the notes and in the body of the text are abbreviated as follows (listed in chronological order):

In I Sent.	*Scriptum super sententiis, Liber I* (*Sentences Commentary*, Book I)
QDV	*Qauestiones disputatae de veritate* (*Disputed Question on Truth*)
SCG	*Summa contra gentiles* (*Summary Against the Gentiles*)
QDP	*Quaestiones disputatae de potentia dei* (*Disputed Question on the Power of God*)
ST	*Summa theologiae* (*Summary of Theology*)
In V Phys.	*Commentaria in octo libros Physicorum, Liber V* (Physics *Commentary,* Book V)
In V Met.	*Sententia libri Metaphysicae, Liber V* (Metaphysics *Commentary,* Book V)

As is well known, Aquinas defines creation in the creature as a real relation of dependence on God. As is also well known, Aquinas denies that the relations between creatures and God are mutual, that is, he denies that God has a real relation (or has real relations) to creatures. Instead, God is related to creatures by relations of reason. By denying that God has real relations, Aquinas does not mean to suggest that God is not really the cause of creatures, or does not really act on his creatures. However, for various reasons, Aquinas does not assay God's causal activity as involving real (causal) relations in God. In other words, Aquinas wants to affirm that many relation-statements made about God are true, but that the truth of such statements does not require real relations in God. In what follows, I will argue against Aquinas, but from within a Thomistic framework. In particular, I wish to show that Aquinas's own theory of real relations should allow him to affirm that God has real relations to his creatures.

I will proceed in the following way. After outlining the main features of Aquinas's understanding of real relations, I will explain how the theory of real relations functions in Aquinas's account of the relation of creation in the creature, or what Aquinas calls creation taken passively or passive creation. I will then go on to explain how the theory of relations of reason functions in Aquinas's account of the relation of creation in the Creator, namely, creation taken actively or active creation.[3] I will criticize this view, and propose that Aquinas's theory of real relations could have been used to describe active creation. Finally, I'll argue that my revision of Aquinas's doctrine of active creation does not compromise the salient features of Aquinas's teaching on a trio of divine attributes: immutability, simplicity, and aseity.

2. Real Relations

Among thinkers who were realists about relations in the medieval period, such as Duns Scotus, a relation was held to be that form in reality which answered to a relational predicate, or by virtue of which a relation statement was true.[4] For example, if the statement, "Sophroniscus is the father of Socrates," is true, realists about relations working in the Aristotelian tradition would say that Sophroniscus has a relative form, *fatherhood*, which answers to the predicate "is the father of Socrates", and by virtue of which Sophroniscus is related to Socrates in the way indicated by the relational statement. That Sophroniscus begat Socrates at some past time was held to be

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[3] *QDP* q.3, a.3, ad 2

[4] Recent studies have greatly added to our knowledge of medieval views of relations. Cf. Jeffrey Brower, "Abelard's Theory of Relations: Reductionism and the Aristotelian Tradition," *Review of Metaphysics* 51:3 (1998), pp.605-31; "Medieval Theories of Relations," *Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, http://plato.stanford.edu/entries/relations-medieval/ (2005); *Medieval Theories of Relations Before Aquinas:* Categories *Commentaries A.D. 510-1250*, unpublished dissertation (1996); "Relations without Polyadic Properties: Albert the Great on the Nature and Ontological Status of Relations," *Archiv fur Geschichte der Philosophie* 83:3 (2001), pp.225-57; Mark Henninger, *Relations: Medieval Theories 1250-1325* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1989); *Some Late Medieval Views of the Category of Relation*, unpublished dissertation, (1984).

inadequate to explain Sophroniscus's being the father of his son *right now*, or at any time after the procreative activity. This is because Socrates and his father are related in an accidentally ordered efficient causal series, so that Sophroniscus's causal activity with respect to begetting his son ceases by the time his son comes into being. So, the relation of fatherhood begins to exist in Sophroniscus when he completes begetting his son, and the relation of sonhood begins to exist simultaneously in Socrates.

Also, by way of conceptual background, it is important to recognize that Aristotelians did not and would not consider relations to be accidents that inhered in more than one subject at once. A modern way of putting this is that medievals denied that relations were *n*-place properties, where *n* has a value greater than one. For Aquinas, an accident could only be an accident of one substance.[5] This entails that, when *a*R*b*, then *b*R'*a*, where R and R', a relation and its converse, are numerically two relations.

If relations are accidents that inhere in subjects, how do they differ from other, absolute accidents? At this point, the views of medieval thinkers diverge, so we will narrow our view to Aquinas.[6] For Aquinas, the *ratio* of a real relation (as opposed to a relation of reason) consists of two aspects: a *fundamentum* in the subject (hereafter "foundation"), and a *respectus* toward a term (hereafter "respect toward").[7] The foundation of a real relation is always something absolute; it is that with respect to which a subject is related to a term. For example, if *a* and *b* are two pieces of white chalk, then *a* has a similarity relation to *b* with respect to whiteness. The foundation can be an accident (as in the case of the preceding similarity relation), or it can be the substantial form (as in the case of relations of co-specificity), or it can be the supposit or primary substance (as in the case of the creation relation in the creature). Aquinas characterizes the *respect toward* in terms of metaphors of activity or motion; such as looking at, or being in transit toward, a term. Whereas a real relation exists extra-mentally and so must have some foundation in the subject, the *ratio* of the relation considered abstractly in itself consists only of this respect toward another.[8] It is the *whatness* of a relation. The *respect toward* is the aspect of a real relation that answers to our sense that relations *connect relata*, that they are the metaphysical "hooks" or "glue" that account for the order between parts in the universe.

Intuitions about the nature of relational change lead Aquinas to deny that the *respect toward* is a form really distinct from its foundation. Consider two mutually related *relata*, *a* and *b*. By definition, *a* has a foundation with respect to which it is related to *b*, and *vice versa*. Should the foundation in *a* change, then the relations between *a* and *b* cease. In this scenario, *a* undergoes real or *per se* change, inasmuch as it has gained or lost some absolute form. Nevertheless, though *b* has lost its relation to *a*, Aquinas

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[5] *In I Sent.*, d.27, q.1, a.1, ad 2

[6] My presentation of Aquinas's view often accords with, and is indebted to, Henninger's.

[7] *In I Sent.*, d.26, q.2, a.1, ad 3

[8] *In I Sent.*, d.20, q.1, a.1, corp.; d.26, q.2, a.1, corp.; d.30, q.1, a.3, corp.; d.33, q.1, a.1, corp.

explicitly denies that *b* undergoes real or *per se* change.[9] The conclusion is that the gain or loss of a relation in a subject is not a change *per se* of that subject. This conclusion seems to be motivated by the Aristotelian physical principle that there cannot be action from a distance; two mutually related things might not be in contact with one another, so it cannot be that a change in *a*, that changes the relations between *a* and *b*, should also cause a change in *b*. But if the gain or loss of a relation is not a *per se* change in a subject, but only change *per accidens*, it follows that there are no relative forms. Aquinas, then, understands motion *per accidens* to be motion that pertains to a subject or is true of a subject but that cannot be described accurately in hylomorphic terms as change *in* or *of* a subject.

Now, if there are no relative forms, is a relation just identical with its foundation? Not quite. The *rationes* of something absolute and something relative are distinct and exclusive. The *ratio* of something absolute includes being or being in a subject, while the *ratio* of relation includes having or being a respect toward another. Aquinas lays down as a necessary but insufficient condition of real distinction that *a* has a *ratio* that does not pertain to *b*, or *a* lacks a *ratio* that pertains to *b*.[10] Furthermore, the existence conditions of an absolute thing are not the same as the existence conditions of a relative thing, for a relative thing, though it is an Aristotelian accident and therefore belongs to a subject, nevertheless requires for its existence a term's being in a certain way. A real relation is therefore distinct in *ratio* from its foundation, and has distinct existence conditions from its foundation. Do these differences between a relation and its foundation constitute real distinction of one from the other? Aquinas lays down as a necessary but insufficient condition of real distinction that, if *a* and *b* are really distinct, either *a* has a *ratio* that does not pertain to *b*, or *a* lacks a *ratio* that pertains to *b*.[11] The condition is insufficient because, for example, the divine attributes are all identical with the divine essence, and yet they may be considered under distinct and exclusive *rationes*. In such cases, there is said to be a distinction of reason that is nevertheless *ex parte rei*.[12]

A condition that is usually considered sufficient for real distinction is that *a* and *b* are separable: that *a* can exist without *b*, and that *b* can exist without *a*. For Aquinas and many other medieval metaphysicians, a primary substance and its accidents are really distinct because it is within the power of God to conserve the being of an accident without its inherence in a substance.[13] But only absolute accidents can be construed as able to exist without a substrate. If a real relation and its foundation are really distinct (meaning *separable*), then a relation can exist without a foundation—an absurd

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[9] *In I Sent.*, d.26, q.2, a.1, ad 3

[10] *In I Sent.*, d.26, q.2, a.2, corp.

[11] Ibid.

[12] *In I Sent.*, d.2, q.1, a.2, corp.

[13] *ST* III, q.77, a.1

outcome. If we weaken the separability requirement so that *a* and *b* are really distinct if just one of the following two conditions are met:

> (i) a can exist without b but not b without a, or

> (ii) a and b can exist separately from one another,

then it is fair to say that a real relation and its subject are really distinct, according to condition (i): a subject (*a*) can exist without its real relation (*b*), but not *b* without *a*.[14]

Is this a good notion of real distinction? The weakened separability requirement purports to show that a subject and its real relation are really distinct. However, it is more accurate to say that the weakened requirement shows only that a subject is really distinct from its real relation. It seems awkward, on both the first as well as the weakened requirements, to say that a real relation is *really distinct* from its subject. Nevertheless, the distinction between a real relation and its subject is more distinct than a distinction of reason. Aquinas's notion of a distinction of reason *ex parte rei* seems only to have been used in theological contexts, where the items that are held to be distinct in reason *ex parte rei*—the divine attributes—are inseparable. Therefore, the distinction between a subject and its real relation is not easily classifiable. As a term of art, I will somewhat grudgingly call the distinction between a subject and its real relation a real distinction in the weak sense, by which is understood a distinction such that a subject can exist apart from its real relation, but not *vice versa*. On this view, it will be perfectly consistent to assert that Aquinas denies that a real relation is separable from its subject, and I will shortly make use of this and similar locutions.

Since Aquinas is concerned to affirm that relations exist extra-mentally, and since he denies that there are relative forms separable from the absolute forms on which relations are founded, he must come up with some other way of explaining how a new relation statement may be true of *a* when *b* undergoes some *per se* change and *a* acquires a new relation. Aquinas theorizes that absolute forms have *powers* to be related that are "rooted in" the absolute form, and are "determined" when a term changes in the relevant way. He writes, "For since I have a certain quantity, it happens that I am equal to all those who have the same quantity. When therefore someone newly takes on this quantity, this common root of equality is determined in regard to him."[15] In the same section of text, Aquinas identifies the root of a relation as the foundation, and says that the root is the *esse* of the relation. That roots should be determined when subjects exist in relevant ways is for Aquinas a matter of necessity. Just as it is not possible that two white things should be dissimilar with respect to color, so also it is not possible that the whiteness of each should not have respect toward the other.

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[14] For a similar formulation of the weak version of the real distinction criterion, see Mark Henninger, *Some Late Medieval Theories of the Category of Relation*, pp. 34-38.

[15] *In V Phys*., lect.3, n.8

Roots or foundations are described in causal or quasi-causal terms. Aquinas says that relations are operations,[16] and he says that the foundations of relations are the causes of relations.[17] Only when a term exists in a certain way is a foundation or root determined with respect to its relating operation. This activity or operation is one among several of the form whose activity it is. Thus, the form by which Socrates is a man is the same form by which he is co-specific with Plato and by which he is co-generic with a horse. But because a *respect toward* and a foundation are really distinct in the weak sense, a relation is not reducible to its foundation.

To sum up, Aquinas affirms that real relations exist extra-mentally, but he denies that there are separable relative forms, since he is convinced that the gain or loss of a relation should not be described as a change *per se* in the subject. Instead, he theorizes that absolute foundations have powers to be related that are determined to actuality when other terms exist in relevant ways. When a foundation is so determined, and has a respect toward a term, the foundation and the *respect toward* are identical in *esse*, but really distinct in the weak sense.

3. Real Relations in Creatures toward God

Having laid out Aquinas's general treatment of real relations, it remains to consider the way in which he utilizes—and sometimes fails to utilize, as I contend—his distinctive theory. Accordingly, in what follows I will briefly consider how Aquinas's theory functions in his understanding of creation "in the creature." I hope to show that my interpretation of Aquinas's theory provides a nice solution to some problems that arise when creation is understood as a real relation to God. We shall then look at what I take to be Aquinas's failure to utilize his sophisticated theory to help understand the puzzle of God's relations to creatures.

Aquinas explicates the creaturely relation to God in several texts. In *SCG* II, c.18, n. 2, having concluded that creation involves no change, and hence that creation is in the genus of relation, Aquinas explains this relation as the dependency of created being on the principle by which it is established. Elsewhere he says that this relation does not follow from the principles of the subject's being.[18] This is to note that being dependent for its existence on God is not included in the absolute *ratio* of any essence; it is simply a necessary condition of existence for anything other than the divine essence. The creation-relation is a non-definitional, yet necessary property of every created substance. In *De Potentia* q. 3, a. 3, ad 2, Aquinas responds to the objection that if the creation relation is something real in the creature, then it too is created and must therefore have a real relation to God, and so on *ad infinitum*. Aquinas responds that the relation, taken strictly, is not created but *co-created*, and is not properly speaking a

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[16] *In V Met.*, lect.17, n.24

[17] *QDP* q.7, a.8, ad 5

[18] *QDP,* q.3, a.3, ad 3

being (a *suppositum*), but something *inhering*. In the third response he adds that, since a relation is an accident, according to its *esse* it inheres in a subject (the created *suppositum*) and is posterior to its subject. But according to the *ratio* of this unique relation—the divine action taken passively—the relation is in some way prior to its subject.

Aquinas shows his awareness of the awkwardness of relational statements when the foundation of the relation is the *suppositum* itself, and not something in the *suppositum*, such as whiteness. If *a* and *b* are both white, then *a* is similar to *b* with respect to whiteness. If *a* is the father of *b*, then *b* is the son of *a* with respect to human nature. But the creation relation is a somewhat different case. The created suppositum has a relation of dependence on God as the source of its being, and the foundation of this relation is the suppositum itself.

But *being a foundation of* implies *being prior to*, and it may be objected that something cannot be the foundation of the very relation that is supposed to be the condition of its existence. And if someone argues on Aquinas's behalf that the relation is prior to the *suppositum*, it can be objected that this renders Aquinas's model of creation unintelligible, since relation is an accidental category.

This *aporia* suits my purposes. On my interpretation of Aquinas's theory of relations, the quandary is resolvable. Aquinas treats the passive creation relation as a real relation, and I have argued that these are identical in *esse* with and inseparable from their foundations. Therefore, passive creation and the created *suppositum* are one in *esse* but have distinct *rationes*. When it is understood as the *suppositum* of a given essence, then only the definition of its essence is included in its *ratio*; however, when it is understood as a created *suppositum*, then its *ratio* also includes the *ratio* of being dependent on God. This interpretation avoids the strange scenario of a created relation that is identical to the act of creation but is not identical to the intended product of that act, which would generate an infinite progression of relations. I admit that this reductive interpretation of Aquinas on relations is not a natural reading of the passages where he deals explicitly with the creation relation, such as where he claims that the creation relation *inheres* in the created suppositum. But in the light of other passages, in which Aquinas is more directly concerned with the nature of relations in general,[19] the texts on the creation relation gain intelligibility that is not otherwise available. The objection that there is a vicious circle of priority on Aquinas's account is resolved once the identity of suppositum and relation is asserted, since the reason for holding the priority of the suppositum over the relation—that it is the subject of inherence of the relation—on this interpretation is moot.

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[19] Cf. *In I Sen*t., d.26, q.2, a.1; q.1, a.1, ad 3; *In V Phys*., lect.3; *In V Met*., lect.17; *QDP*, q.7, aa.8, 9

4. Real Relations in God toward Creatures: Objections Answered

Aquinas consistently and emphatically denies that God has a real relation to creatures.[20] The only real relations he attributes to divinity are the interpersonal relations of the Trinity.[21] Now, as far as I can tell, three features of the godhead are supposed to make real relative accidental predication repugnant: immutability, simplicity, and aseity. No matter how God is related to creation, one must be able to say on Thomistic terms that God is immutable, simple, and completely independent from anything other than God. If real relations introduce an inhering accident, if they introduce *per se* change, or if they make God dependent on creation, then He does not have real relations. *In the context of denying relations of God*, Aquinas thought that real relations would introduce all three of these things.

Aquinas frequently precedes his conclusion that God is not really related to creatures by arguing from analogy: just as the knowable is not really related to the knower, so too God is not really related to creatures. But he has at least two ways of using the knower-knowable analogy. The weaker and less interesting is stated in *De Potentia* q. 3, a. 3, corp.: in related things, where one depends on the other, but not conversely, there is a real relation in the one that is dependent, while in the other there is a merely logical relation. This claim is false, since if it were true, then all dependence relations would have to be non-mutual with regard to reality, whence all relations of active (efficient) causation would be relations of reason, and so a real relation of fatherhood would not be in Sophroniscus toward Socrates.

The second way is not as clearly false. Suppose a relation were a really distinct inhering accident. Aquinas is concerned that if the object known is really related to the knower, then in knowing the knowable, the knower causes there to be a new accident in the knowable—in short, the intellect partially determines or shapes reality. Analogously, Aquinas is at pains to maintain that God is not determined by or modified or changed by creatures, and therefore denies that in God's act of creating, the existence of the creature introduces a new accident in divinity.

4.1.Immutability

If one assumes that when *a* causes a change in *b* and becomes really related to *b* as its actual cause, then *a* changes, then God cannot be really related to creatures, at the risk of compromising divine immutability. However, is Aquinas committed to thinking that acquiring a new real relation is a change *per se*?

To answer this question, it is necessary to recall Aquinas's distinction between *per se* and *per accidens* change with respect to relations, made in *In V Physics*, l. 3, n. 8. On

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[20] Cf. *QDP* q.3, a.3, corp.; q.7, a.10, corp.; q.7, a.11; *QDV* q.3, a.2, ad 8; q,4, a.5, corp.; *SCG* II, c.12, n.3; *ST* Ia., q.45, a.3, ad 1; *In I Sent.*, d.26, q.2, a.3, ad 1; d.30, a.1, ad 1, ad 2

[21] *QDV*, q.4, a.5, corp.

the basis of this text and *De Potentia* q. 7, a. 8, corp., I concluded that a subject, *a*, changes *per accidens* when both (i) something can be newly affirmed or denied of *a*, and (ii) *a* neither acquired nor lost any substantial, quantitative, or qualitative form. Thus, the acquisition or loss of a real relation in a subject, *a*, is a change *per accidens* in *a*.

For this reason, if a real relation is newly attributed to God when *x* is created and becomes really related to God, then there is not *per se* change, but only *per accidens* change. But Aquinas introduced this distinction precisely to deny that *b* changes *per se* when *a* changes and *a* and *b* are newly co-related. Therefore, it does not seem repugnant to divinity to claim that when *x* is created, *x* and God are co-related. In this case, something new can be affirmed of God (he creates), and yet God does not acquire any new substantial, quantitative, or qualitative form.

Recall that Aquinas describes real relations as activated powers to be related, which is to say that the *respect toward* of a real relation is the actualization of a power of a foundation to make its subject, *a*, really (categorically) related to a term, *b*, when *b* exists in the relevant way. This understanding of relations as activated powers of foundations serves to flesh out Aquinas's otherwise rather paltry account of *per accidens* change. On this interpretation, among the powers that a subject has in virtue of its being, say, hot, is not only the power to make other things hot, but also the power to be similar in quality to other hot things. In the case of God, we can say that in exercising his causal power in creation, he becomes really causally related to that which he creates.

4.2. Simplicity

If one assumes that a relation is a kind of accidental form that is really distinct from its foundation, then God cannot be really related to creatures, at the risk of compromising divine simplicity. Is Aquinas committed to thinking that a real relation is really distinct from its foundation?

The nature of the distinction of a real relation from its foundation is closely connected to the conclusion that the acquisition or loss of a relation is merely a *per accidens* change. If the change that occurs in *a* when it gains a new relation to *b* is meant to be understood in non-hylomorphic terms (*per accidens* and not *per se* change), then Aquinas is not picturing a relative accident as a distinct form that is separable from its subject. Indeed, Aquinas says that the *esse* of a real relation is founded on something absolute in the subject.[22] Moreover, Aquinas also denies that a real relation makes composition with its subject.[23] From this, and from Aquinas's insistence that the acquisition or loss of a relation is only change *per accidens*, I concluded that, for Aquinas, a real relation is identical in *esse* with, and is really distinct only in a

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[22] *In I Sent.*, d. 26, q. 2, a.1, corp., & ad 3

[23] *QDP* q. 7, a. 8, ad 5

weakened sense from, its foundation, so that the foundation can exist without the real relation, but the real relation cannot exist without the foundation.

On this basis, I contend that there is nothing repugnant to divinity in the thesis that God has real relations that do not make composition with their subject, and whose *esse* is the divine essence itself, inasmuch as the divine essence creates. Aquinas admits that God's simplicity can accommodate some form of distinction, what he calls a distinction of reason *ex parte rei*.[24] For example, Aquinas says that the divine attributes are identical with the divine essence but are distinct from each other in reason *ex parte rei*. Of course, the divine attributes are identical with the divine essence and are inseparable from it. But no one doing philosophical theology in the spirit of St. Thomas would dare to advance a thesis that entailed that the creation relation is like a divine attribute, that is, that it is distinct in reason *ex parte rei* from and also inseparable from the divine essence. This would be tantamount to claiming that God necessarily creates. Accordingly, the claim that there is nothing repugnant in attributing a real relation to God that is founded on and identical in *esse* with God, can only be judged in the context of deciding whether or not Aquinas's theory of real relations would compromise divine aseity, the thesis that God is in no way dependent on anything besides Himself.

4.3. Aseity

If one assumes that real relations to creatures are in God, but remembers that whatever is in God is in God essentially, then the unacceptable conclusion would seem to follow that God is essentially related to his creatures. This view would make the existence of the creature an essential condition of God's being. Accordingly, God could only be really related to creatures at the risk of compromising divine aseity. So if it is possible to argue on Thomistic grounds, as I do, that God has a real relation to creatures, it must be possible to characterize this real relation without making it one among many divine attributes which are identical in *esse* with the divine essence but distinct in reason *ex parte rei* from each other. The active creation relation must be contingent, while God's attributes such as wisdom will be necessary.

If God is really related to creatures, then the kind of real relation he bears to them is clearly an active causal relation to the created effects. For Aquinas, creation taken actively is the divine action itself (on account of divine simplicity). It is a feature of Aquinas's theory of real relations that the *esse* of the relation is the *esse* of its foundation—in this case the divine essence—but that the foundation considered with its respect toward another has a *ratio* different from that which it has when considered as absolute being. The reality of the relation is the foundation itself expressing its power to be so related. On this view, the divine action itself—again, identical with the divine essence—is the foundation of the real relation to creatures that begins with God's creative act. This change is neither substantial nor accidental in hylomorphic terms, but

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[24] In I Sent., d. 2, q. 1, a. 2, corp.

can be described as a *per accidens* change, where this is understood as the new applicability of a *ratio* (of being related to creation) to God.

This conclusion does not neglect Aquinas's assertion that God's agency in creation is to be understood analogically, not univocally.[25] Aquinas understands univocal agency to be that whereby an effect has the same specific nature as its cause, as when a man generates a man, or heat makes things hot.[26] God's nature, *ipsum esse*, is not communicated in creation (because God is simple and infinite), but what is created is something *similar* to divine essence in an imperfect way, such as wisdom, which exists in rational creatures accidentally and deficiently but in God substantially and perfectly. Furthermore, this similarity between divine agent and creaturely patient is similar enough, so that predicates affirmed of both can be taken together as middle terms in cosmological demonstrations of God's existence.[27] Applying this similarity-with-difference to the real relations that, I have argued, can be affirmed of God on Thomistic grounds, we must characterize these relations primarily in negative terms, that is, as *not* implying composition in God and *not* implying God's dependence on creation. But, as we have seen, they do not fail to be *real* relations in any important sense.

5. Conclusion

I have intended to show that Aquinas's theory of real relations, as I understand it, adds coherence to Aquinas's account of the creation relation in creatures, and could have been used in a more robust account of how God is related to creatures. Aquinas's theorizing, I have argued, makes room for affirming real relations of God, and in general allows us to speak of divine mutability (*per accidens* change) that doesn't compromise the *desiderata* of Aquinas's doctrine of God. Such a revision of Aquinas as I have espoused also helps us to avoid some of the more awkward features of Aquinas's theology, for example, that Christ really is the son of the Blessed Virgin, but does not have the real relation of sonhood toward her. Additionally, Aquinas describes sacramental presence in the Eucharist as a kind of *habitus* of Christ toward the place of

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[25] Mark Henninger argues that Aquinas's primary reason for denying that God has real relations to creatures has to do more with the transcendence of God than with any of the attributes I have considered here. (Cf. *Some Late Medieval Theories of the Category of Relation*, pp.46,7) Henninger cites *QDP* q. 7, a. 10, in which Aquinas stipulates that for any two things to be mutually related by real relations, the foundations of the relations must be of the same genus. God, being outside all categories of being, shares no genera with creatures. Therefore, God has no real relations to creatures. In response, I note that Aquinas's analogy of being requires that, even though God is outside all genera, God is yet similar enough to created being such that analogous predicates affirmed of creatures and of God can function as a middle term in syllogistic reasoning about the existence of God (*In I Sent.*, d.8, q.1, a.2, corp.). In creation, God communicates being analogously: God's esse is the foundation of his causal relation to created esse. On my view, then, the relations predicated of God toward creatures are *analogical real relations*.

[26] In I Sent., d. 8, q. 1, a. 2, corp.

[27] ST Ia., q. 13, a. 5, corp.

the species. On my interpretation, we can understand this *habitus* as a real relation, which would provide a (metaphysically) more robust account of sacramental presence. But these and other examples are topics for further research.

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Scott M. Williams:

God's knowledge of individual material creatures according to Thomas Aquinas

1 Introduction

This paper looks at three strategies that Thomas Aquinas uses in order to affirm God's knowledge of individual material creatures. One of these strategies implies that God does not know individual material creatures perfectly. This implication is something Thomas would deny,[1] but given his use of this particular strategy, he cannot avoid this entailment. This strategy appears (perhaps) most explicitly in Thomas's early *Scriptum* on the *Sentences* (1 *Sent.* 36.2.3. ad 3), though it seems Thomas abandons this sort of strategy in later writings (e.g. *De Veritate* 2.5-6, *ST* 1a.15.1-3) in order to avoid the unpalatable conclusion that God's knowledge of individual material creatures is imperfect. However, the other two strategies that Thomas employs, as will be shown in the conclusion, are in danger of this same undesirable entailment. I intend to show that Thomas could argue for God's perfect knowledge of individuals with these other two strategies, but at the cost of abandoning his account of the unintelligibility of the prime matter of an individual creature in his account of the individuation of material creatures. In the conclusion, I will argue that Thomas must either alter his account of the unintelligibility of prime matter in the individuation of material creatures in order to uphold the more successful strategies for arguing for God's perfect knowledge of individual creatures, or let this part of his account of individuation stand and be stuck with the (unacceptable) implication that God does not know individual material creatures perfectly.

One strategy Thomas uses to argue that God knows individual material creatures is to claim that God knows the divine essence as able to be imitated in this or that way.[2] So

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[1] 1 *Sent.* 35.1.5. ad 1-2; 36.1.1.co. (All Latin texts of Thomas Aquinas are from *Corpus Thomisticum, S. Thomae de Aquino, Opera Omnia*, ed. Enrique Alarcón <http://www.corpusthomisticum.org/iopera.html> accessed November 2006-January 2007.)

[2] *ST* 1a.15.2.co.: "Ipse enim essentiam suam perfecte cognoscit, unde cognoscit eam secundum omnem modum quo cognoscibilis est. Potest autem cognosci non solum secundum quod in se est, sed secundum quod est participabilis secundum aliquem modum similitudinis a creaturis. … Sic igitur inquantum Deus cognoscit suam essentiam ut sic imitabilem a tali creatura, cognoscit eam ut propriam rationem et ideam huius creaturae." See sect. 2 below for further references.

God's perfect knowledge of his own essence and of all the ways it can be imitated explains how God knows individual creatures. I will call this strategy for explaining God's knowledge of individual material creatures Thomas's 'participatory view'.[3] What is critical to understand about the 'participatory view' is that, when employing it, Thomas may make reference to 'form and matter' but there is no critical engagement with the intelligibility of form and *especially* with the intelligibility of prime matter. It is fair to say that the question of the intelligibility of the prime matter of an individual creature is not an issue that Thomas raises when he employs the 'participatory view'. We can say then that 'participatory view' is more or less indifferent to this particular issue regarding prime matter.

In another strategy, Thomas applies the conclusions of his physics to explain just what God would know in knowing individual material creatures, namely the two *per se* principles of form and prime matter, as well as dimensive quantity. Thomas holds that form is the principle of knowledge and that prime matter with (determinate or indeterminate) dimensive quantity is the principle of individuation.[4] By paying close attention to his conclusions from physics,[5] on this strategy Thomas employs his Aristotelian account of the individuation of material creatures in order to explain precisely what God knows in knowing an individual material creature as individual, namely a total composite of form and matter. I will call the sort of strategy where Thomas strictly employs the conclusions arrived at in his physics, which explain just what is known in God's knowledge of individual creatures, Thomas's 'satisfied criteria strategy' [SCS].

To say that God knows the (substantial) form of a creature makes sense on the understanding that form is intellectually knowable because it has 'complete being', but then the implication of saying that the prime matter of an individual creature has 'incomplete being' (and so is unknowable) is that the individual is unknowable by any knower.[6] The question then arises: is it metaphysically possible for God to know the prime matter (while also knowing the substantial form and dimensive quantity)[7] of

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[3] See Richard Cross, *Duns Scotus on God*, (Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2005) 61-2.

[4] E.g. 4 *Sent.* 12.1.1.ad 3. On the issue of determinate and indeterminate (*interminata*) dimensive quantity, see John Wippel, *The Metaphysical Thought of Thomas Aquinas: From Finite Being to Uncreated Being*, (Catholic Univ. of America Press, Washington, D.C., 2000) 358-63; Joseph Owens, 'Thomas Aquinas' in *Individuation in Scholasticism, The Later Middle Ages and the Counter-Reformation*, ed. Jorge J. E. Gracia (State University of New York Press, NY: 1994) 173-94.

[5] 1 *Sent*. 36.2.3 ad 3.

[6] 1 *Sent.* 36.2.3 ad 2: "in se vero considerata, habet in Deo imperfectam rationem ideae; hoc est dictu, quia essentia divina est imitabilis a composito secundum esse perfectum, a materia secundum esse imperfectum, sed a privatione nullo modo. Et ideo compositum, secundum rationem suae formae, habet perfecte ideam in Deo, materia vero imperfecte, sed privatio nullo modo." *ST* 1.15.3.ad 3: "Nam materia secundum se neque esse habet, neque cognoscibilis est."

[7] The issue of whether Thomas thinks dimensive quantity as determined or indeterminate (*interminata*) is the secondary part of the principle of individuation, although necessary for understanding Thomas's

particular creatures, and thus to know the very individuality of material creatures? It is important to notice that Thomas's use of the SCS in 1 *Sent*. 36.2.3 ad 3 has an (unwanted) implication. Thomas claims that God knows species (e.g. humanity) more perfectly than individual human persons. Next, he says that God has an imperfect idea of the prime matter of an individual of a species. If the imperfect idea of prime matter is prime matter understood in the 'broad sense' (i.e. as an abstraction, see 1.1 below), then God would need to apply this 'broad sense' to a universal in order to know an individual. But this is discursive knowledge, which Thomas denies of God.[8] So, in the face of what must be known according to the SCS, namely form and the principle of individuation, Thomas is committed to saying that God knows an individual imperfectly because God knows the prime matter of an individual 'imperfectly'. In other words, God does not know the prime matter of an individual, but rather God knows prime matter (in the 'broad sense') as applicable to individuals. This, then, is the unwanted implication of Thomas's SCS.

Thomas has another sort of strategy, like the 'participatory view', that does not (necessarily) lead to the unwanted implication of the SCS. Rather, this other strategy asserts that a divine idea is of individuals without critically engaging the question of the intelligibility of the prime matter of an individual creature. This strategy argues that (i) God creates all individual creatures (who are composed of form and the principle of individuation), (ii) God knows whatever he creates, therefore, (iii) God knows all individual creatures (who are composed of form and the principle of individuation).[9] I will call this strategy Thomas's 'creator view'. This argument presupposes that God knows whatever it is that renders creatures individual; like in the 'participatory view', there is no trifling with the details of the intelligibility of the prime matter of an individual material creature.

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account of the individuation of material creatures, is not at issue in this paper. I grant that Thomas's account of the intelligibility of 'dimensions' whether as determined or undefined is not problematic. Further, taking Owens's claim into account, that "matter and dimensions function indeed as principle of individuation, but only on account of the 'exigency' that the form has for them," does not explain how God's knowing the 'exigency' of form for prime matter (and dimensive quantity) includes precise knowledge of the prime matter of an individual as individual (see Owens's 'Thomas Aquinas', 185). The focus here is just on prime matter as co-constitutor of the principle of individuation. For the SCS, I take it that both prime matter and dimensive quantity must be known in order that an individual material creature as such be known.

[8] 1 *Sent*. 36.2.1.ad 4.

[9] *ST* 1a.14.11.co.: "Et ideo aliter dicendum est, quod, cum Deus sit causa rerum per suam scientiam, ut dictum est, intantum se extendit scientia Dei, inquantum se extendit eius causalitas. Unde, cum virtus activa Dei se extendat non solum ad formas, a quibus accipitur ratio universalis, sed etiam usque ad materiam, ut infra ostendetur; necesse est quod scientia Dei usque ad singularia se extendat, quae per materiam individuantur. Cum enim sciat alia a se per essentiam suam, inquantum est similitudo rerum velut principium activum earum, necesse est quod essentia sua sit principium sufficiens cognoscendi omnia quae per ipsum fiunt, non solum in universali, sed etiam in singulari. Et esset simile de scientia artificis, si esset productiva totius rei, et non formae tantum." Also, *De Ver*. 2.3.co.

In this paper, I first discuss (sect. 1) Thomas's 'satisfied criteria strategy' [SCS]. This strategy attempts to explain God's knowledge of individual creatures by strictly adhering to Thomas's account of form and the principle of individuation, namely prime matter and (undetermined or determined) dimensive quantity. I then compare (in sect. 2) the SCS with two other strategies, namely the 'participatory view' and the 'creator view'. I find that these two other strategies use his account of form and individuation in a broad and peripheral way and thereby without strictly adhering to the demands that the SCS aims to meet. I will claim that the 'participatory view' and 'creator view' partially eliminate the unwanted implication of the SCS, given their broad use of Thomas's account of form and individuation. However, the 'participatory view' and 'creator view' do not completely eliminate the implication insofar as they fail to meet the strict criteria set by Thomas's account of the individuation of material creatures for God's perfect knowledge of the form and prime matter (with dimensive quantity) of a particular creature.[10] My conclusion (sect. 3) is that Thomas's account of God's knowledge of individual material creatures is impaired by his Aristotelian hylomorphism and so Thomas either needs to alter his account of the unintelligibility of prime matter in his account of the individuation of material creatures in order to uphold a strategy for arguing for God's perfect knowledge of individual material creatures, or else remain, unhappily, with the implication that God has imperfect knowledge of individual material creatures.

2 Physics, the SCS and its unwanted implication

2.1 Descriptions of prime matter

In his *Physics Commentary*, Thomas gives an account of 'prime matter'.[11] Thomas indicates that 'prime matter' *secundum se* signifies the sheer capacity for a subject to undergo change. It is 'prime matter' understood in this way that counts as the first principle of individuation for material creatures.[12] Yet, this discussion of prime matter should be understood as a discussion about prime matter in abstraction (*secundum se*), as applicable to many individual creatures, and not properly and strictly of one instance

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[10] There is a doubt about the meaning of 'perfect' knowledge here. One might be tempted to say that for Thomas there is only perfect knowledge of a perfect object (God) and only imperfect knowledge of imperfect imitators of God (i.e. creatures). Yet Thomas says God has a perfect idea of form and an imperfect idea of prime matter; so the use of 'perfect' has to do (it seems to me) with complete knowledge of an intelligible object, in the case at hand the object is an individual creature as such. Prime matter is not perfectly intelligible in the individual, it is only intellectually known by any knower in a 'broad' sense (see §1.1 below). So (God's) knowledge of the prime matter of an individual is imperfect because the prime matter of an individual creature is not perfectly intelligible as such.

[11] *In Phys*. 1.13.n.9.

[12] 4 Sent. 12.1.1.ad 3: "Et dico primum individuationis principium est materia, qua acquiritur esse in actu cuilibet tali formae sive substantiali sive accidentali. Et secundarium principium individuationis est dimensio, quia ex ipsa habet materia quod dividatur."

of prime matter (and of form and dimensive quantity) constituting an individual creature.

Similarly, when discussing divine cognition, Thomas says that God has a 'broad idea' of prime matter *secundum se* and this 'broad idea' is not an exemplar of a total composite creature.[13] For a divine idea is an exemplar of a total composite, a possible creature, inclusive of its form and its principle of individuation. It is clear, then, that the 'broad idea' of prime matter, whether in divine or human cognition, does not properly account for intellectual knowledge of individuals as such; rather, this 'broad idea', if applied to different instances of individuals, could render indirect knowledge of the individual as such (as in human cognition by a reflexive act of the intellect toward the phantasm stored in the imagination).[14] However, it goes against Thomas's denial of discursive knowledge in God to say that a divine idea of an individual creature results from an application of this 'broad idea' of prime matter to a given instance of some universal form (e.g. humanity or bovinity).

The second principle of individuation for material creatures is 'material dimensions', namely dimensive quantity. Although Thomas says in some places it is '*indeterminate* dimensive quantity' and in other places '*determinate* dimensive quantity' which is what counts as the second principle of individuation, whichever is the case for Thomas, all that matters for considering God's knowledge of individual material creatures is whether either or both of these are intelligible in regards to an individual as such. In the case of indeterminate dimensive quantity, it is more intelligible than prime matter in that it has a certain general range of determination for an individual creature because of the 'exigency' (i.e. formal causality) of the form, which requires a general (indeterminate) amount. After all, there is a difference between the indeterminate dimensive quantity of an ant and that of a lion.[15] So, undefined dimensive quantity does have some general determination given the sort of form in question, and, in turn, in an individual creature it is intelligible as such. Similarly, 'determinate dimensive quantity' is intelligible in regards to an individual creature because it is a discrete formal determination. So by rendering 'dimensive quantity' either as a determined or as an undetermined formal determination, in both cases there is an intelligible formal determination. What follows from this is that the second principle of individuation (dimensive quantity) is not as problematic for giving an account of God's knowledge of individual creatures[16] as is the first principle of individuation, namely prime matter.

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[13] *De Ver.* 3.5.co.; 1 *Sent.* 35.1.5.ad 1.

[14] *De Ver.* 10.5.co.; *De Ver.* 2.6.ad 3; *ST* 1.84.7.co.

[15] See Owens, 'Thomas Aquinas', 183-6.

[16] I do not address an objection against Thomas's claim that quantity (partially) explains the individuation of a substance, namely the objection: how can an accident, which follows after a substance, individuate what it presupposes, namely an individual substance.

Given that prime matter and dimensive quantity are what explain the individuation of material creatures, when Thomas employs his 'satisfied criteria strategy' [SCS] he would say that when we say God knows an individual creature, we are saying that God knows a creature's (a) form, (b) its capacity for change and (c) its dimensive quantity. Since there is no individual material creature without form, prime matter and dimensive quantity, it is clear that God's idea of an individual creature should be explained as being the exemplar of the composite of form, prime matter and dimensive quantity.[17] If the SCS were to succeed in showing how God perfectly knows (a)-(c) then as a strategy it would succeed in concluding that God perfectly knows individual material creatures.

In what follows below, I discuss the form and prime matter of an individual creature and not dimensive quantity because dimensive quantity is not nearly as problematic as is the case with prime matter. If Thomas could account for God's knowledge of prime matter, then there would be a point to going on to ask about God's knowledge of dimensive quantity; but if not, then successfully arguing for God's knowledge of dimensive quantity would not suffice, on Thomas's view of individuation, to account for God's knowledge of individual material creatures.

2.2 Cognition of composites

Thomas says that God creates composites of matter and form. In following Aristotle, Thomas holds that humans have intellectual knowledge of universals with their immaterial intellects and have sense-knowledge of particulars with their sense-organs.[18] But Thomas holds that God is immaterial, intellectual, and knows *individuals*. According to Thomas, Avicenna and Ghazali denied that God has proper knowledge of individual material creatures because they held that (i) material individuals are known only through sense-knowledge obtained by sense-organs, (ii) but God is an immaterial intellectual agent who does not have sense-organs, therefore, (iii) God does not know individual material creatures.[19] With them, Thomas holds that prime matter, which (partially) explains the individuation of material creatures, is not knowable in itself whether in regards to human or divine cognition. However, Thomas differs from Avicenna and Ghazali by saying that God does know individual creatures, for (Catholics hold that) God immediately creates individual creatures. By implication, then, Thomas posits that God must know the form and matter of an individual creature. But what does it mean to say that God knows the (prime) matter of an individual creature?

In clarifying what it means to say God knows the form and (prime) matter of an individual, Thomas claims that God knows an individual material creature in virtue of

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[17] 1 *Sent*. 36.2.3.ad 2: "et ideo perfectam rationem ideae non habet nisi secundum quod est in composito, quia sic sibi a Deo esse perfectum confertur."

[18] *In Phys*. 1.10.n.7.

[19] 1 *Sent*. 36.1.1.co.

an idea known perfectly in regard to form and *imperfectly* in regard to prime matter. But how does God perfectly know individuals if God does not perfectly know the principle of individuation which (purportedly) renders the known form individual? As was said above, a 'broad' idea of prime matter *secundum se* does not account for proper knowledge of an individual creature. But Thomas says that there is a proper idea for an individual creature.[20] So although Thomas posits a (non-exemplary) 'broad' idea of prime matter this does not truly speak to his account of how the one proper idea of an individual creature is inclusive of form *and* prime matter. If there is one proper divine idea of an individual creature, it still seems that for Thomas the SCS would show that that idea is perfectly known in one regard (form), though imperfectly known in another regard (prime matter). Further, it is not right to say that the form that God knows of an individual creature just is a universal (e.g. humanity), for Thomas denies that God knows individuals by means of universals[21] or that knowing an aggregation of universals provides knowledge of individuals.[22] Rather, God is said to know the individual properly, inclusive of its own particular form and matter.

In addition to Thomas's statement about how universals do not bring about knowledge of individuals, there is more to be said about how definitions generally presuppose individuals, for a definition can be applied to certain individuals but it itself is not knowledge of individuals as such. For Thomas says that definitions of natural substances (consisting of genus and specific difference) as they are known by the human intellect are predicated of concrete subjects and that the definitions apply to form *and* matter. The predicable definitions of natural substances express form but presuppose prime matter.[23] Definitions of natural bodies must presuppose prime matter, for otherwise the natural definitions would not differ from mathematical definitions. What is evident from this is that there is not proper or perfect intellectual knowledge (for humans, and for God according to the SCS) of the prime matter of a concrete subject because the definition by which or in which a subject is known (i.e. categorical definitions from substance and accidents) presupposes but does not formally express the prime matter of the particular subject.

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[20] 1 *Sent*. 36.2.2.co.: "Unde cum hoc nomen idea nominet essentiam divinam secundum quod est exemplar imitatum a creatura, divina essentia erit propria idea istius rei secundum determinatum imitationis modum." Also, 1 *Sent*.. 35.1.5. ad 1.

[21] 1 *Sent*. 35.1.5.ad 1: "ideo cognitio quae est per talem causam non est scientia in universali, sed in propria natura cujuslibet rei."

[22] 1 *Sent.* 36.1.1.co.: "Cognoscere enim hoc modo singulare in universali, non est cognoscere propriam naturam hujus singularis vel illius; eo quod quocumque modo universalia aggregentur, nunquam ex eis fiet singulare, nisi per hoc quod individuantur per materiam."

[23] *De Ente* 1: "Nec potest dici materia in diffinitione substantiae naturalis ponatur sicut additum essentiae eius vel ens extra essentiam eius, quia hic modus diffinitiones proprius est accidentibus, quae perfectam essentiam non habet. Unde oportet quod in diffinitione sua subiectum recipiant, quod est extra genus eorum. Patet ergo quod essentia comprehendit materiam et formam."

This situation, where definitions of natural substances presuppose prime matter but do not formally express it, brings up a question for the case of the divine ideas of individual creatures.[24] Does God's knowledge of the divine essence as imitable in various ways (i.e. ideas) formally *express* and include anything with regard to the prime matter of individual creatures? If exemplary divine ideas are of instances of universal forms inclusive of the 'broad' idea of prime matter, then there is no similitude of the prime matter of an individual creature in the divine idea of that particular creature. If this were true, then God does not know individuals because He does not know their prime matter (even if God knows their dimensive quantity). However, against the notion that God knows individuals *by means* of the 'broad idea' of prime matter, Thomas's stated position is not that a divine idea is a means *by which* God knows an individual creature, but rather that an exemplary divine idea just is the individual creature *as known*.[25] This perhaps is Thomas's way of trying to get around the problem, in the SCS, of whether and how the exemplary idea sufficiently includes the form and prime matter. If we look at Thomas's claim that a divine idea just is the individual creature as known and that it is not an intellectual means discursively *expressing* its principles, then Thomas should be understood as saying that what God knows of individual material creatures includes their definitions and (somehow) exceeds them.

Perhaps one way to understand the content of a divine idea of an individual creature (and thus seek out how Thomas's SCS might be successful) would be to look at some of the things that God creates. God creates natural bodies (e.g. Ferdinand the cow) with (a) their own principle of motion and (b) *per se* unity,[26] whereas human artisans make artificial bodies (e.g. houses) with *per accidens* unity.[27] The substantial form and prime matter of a natural body are immediately joined together, so that there is no accidental relation "between" prime matter and its substantial form.[28] In contrast, an artificial body does *not* have (a) its own principle of motion, but it does have (c) *per accidens* unity. Artificial bodies do not move of themselves, but are moved insofar as some natural body contributes to the constitution of an artificial body. Thomas gives the example of a knife (having the accidental form of the shape of a knife) made out of iron (a natural body). He says that an iron knife can fall to the ground insofar as it is iron because iron has a natural capacity to fall down; but the knife as knife does not fall down. The unity of a knife is *per accidens* because an extrinsic agent causes some natural body and some

[24] Pasnau asks, "How can something in different genera (one material, the other immaterial) have the identical formal definition?" from *Thomas Aquinas on Human Nature: A Philosophical Study of Summa Theologicae, 1a 75-89*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001, 315-17.

[25] *ST* 1a.15.2.co.

[26] *De Ente* 1.

[27] *De Ver.* 3.5.co.

[28] *De Ente* 1: "Non autem potest dici quod essentia significet relationem, quae est inter materiam et formam vel aliquid superadditum ipsis, quia hoc de necessitate esset accidens et extraneum a re nec per eam res cognosceretur, quae omnia essentiae conveniunt."

intelligible form to be joined together which are not naturally united.[29] But God creates natural bodies with *per se* unity and which, therefore, have one motion naturally.

The *per se* unity of a natural body is a unity of *per se* principles, namely form and prime matter. It is not right to say there are two naturally diverse 'things' called 'form' and 'prime matter' in a natural body in the same way that there are two naturally diverse 'things' in an artificial body (e.g. iron and the accidental form of 'knife'). Aquinas, following Aristotle, uses an analogy of proportionality from an artificial body (e.g. a bronze statue) to a natural body in order to talk about the *per se* principles of a natural body (i.e., the shape of the statue is to the bronze it is made of as the form of the natural body is to its matter). This analogy may give the appearance that the *per se* principles of a natural body are distinct like the components of an artificial body; but this is false. The need for an analogy of proportionality suggests the inability of human intellectual cognition to know the unity of a natural body properly and directly. But divine cognition does not require such an analogy from an artificial body to a natural body in order to know the *per se* unity of the *per se* principles. God knows the total creature *in re* (including and exceeding its definition) immediately in virtue of knowing the divine essence as imitable in diverse ways (as stated by the 'participatory view'). God immediately creates natural bodies, unlike human artisans who mediate between natural things to produce the *per accidens* unity of an artificial body.

But is God's knowledge of the *per se* unity of the form and prime matter of a natural body successful for explaining how a divine idea properly is of an individual if its prime matter is not perfectly knowable? This is the way the SCS would put the question. (On the other hand, as will be seen below, Thomas's 'participatory view' and 'creator view' would put the question differently, namely by asking, 'how is a divine idea proper to an individual creature?') In order to answer the question of whether knowing the *per se* unity counts as knowledge of both of the *per se* principles it is necessary to take divine simplicity into account.

If the divine essence is one simple act and the divine intellect is identical with the divine essence,[30] then we cannot posit that the divine ideas are intellectually distinct *by* many *acts* of thought, but rather by the simple act of the divine intellect's knowing the divine essence as imitable in this way or that way.[31] Thomas argues that each possible creature 'is assimilated by God *in a certain way* in which others are not assimilated by God'.[32] Thus, a divine idea is the term of a certain intellectual relation in God between the

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[29] *In Phys*. 2.1.n.3. On the analogy from artificial to natural bodies see *In Phys*. 1.13.n.9.

[30] *ST* 1.14.2.co.: "Cum igitur Deus nihil potentialitatis habeat, sed sit actus purus, oportet quod in eo intellectus et intellectum sint idem omnibus modis."

[31] 1 *Sent*. 36.2.2.co.: "oportet quod essentia sua sit similitudo singularium rerum, secundum quod diversae res diversimode et particulariter ipsam imitantur secundum suam capacitatem."

[32] 1 *Sent*. 35.1.3.ad 3.

divine essence and the divine intellect.[33] It is through a peculiar relation of reason between the divine essence and intellect that the idea, as a term of *this* or *that* relation of reason, is intellectually distinct from other divine ideas. Given the SCS, one interpretation of 'a certain way the divine essence is known as imitable' would be to say that 'a certain way' means the *per se* intellectual unity of each divine idea. On this view, a divine idea just is inclusive of form and prime matter and the *per se* united idea cannot be reduced to its constitutive *per se* principles as though built up as an aggregation or bundle.

What, then, would explain how a divine idea is inclusive (as a similitude) of form *and* matter? Unfortunately, this interpretation of 'a certain way' as equivalent to '*per se* intellectual unity' does not actually explain how prime matter is known; it only seems to explain how one idea is not reducible to other ideas.[34] (The irreducibility of one idea to another, as we will see, is one thing the 'participatory view' focuses on.)

Given that another interpretation of how a divine idea is inclusive of form *and* prime matter is not manifest, it seems evident that the SCS, where Thomas tries to explain that what God knows in knowing individual creatures is form and prime matter (with dimensive quantity) fails. For Thomas has not explained how a divine idea of an individual creature is inclusive of that creature's own prime matter; he has not explained how the prime matter purported to be known in a divine idea is *not* the 'broad idea' of prime matter. In 1 *Sent*. 36.2.3 ad 3, Thomas says:

> particulars have proper ideas in God, hence there is one definition [ratio] of Peter and another of Martin in God, just as there is one definition of a man and one of a horse. But yet there is a diversity of man and of horse according to form, to which an idea corresponds perfectly. But the distinction of singulars of one essential species is according to matter, which does not perfectly have an idea. And therefore, the distinction of the definitions [i.e. ideas] corresponding to diverse species is more perfect than that corresponding to diverse individuals.[35]

Here Thomas states that the distinction between universal natures (i.e. man and horse) is more perfect than the distinction between the individuals of a nature (i.e. Peter and

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[33] In knowing divine power, God knows actual creatures (what Cross calls the 'power view'), but in knowing the divine ideas (known imitability relations), God knows all possible creatures (the 'participation view'). Thus, contra Cross, Aquinas holds both the power and participation views. See Cross, *Duns Scotus on God*, 61-2. Although the 'power view' is similar to the 'creator view', it differs in that the latter only discusses creatures actually made by God. Since this paper is on God's knowledge of real material creatures, it seemed more pertinent to discuss what I call the 'creator view', which can be understood as based on the 'power view'.

[34] 1 *Sent*. 36.2.1.ad 4.

[35] 1 *Sent*. 36.2.3.ad 3: "quod particularia habent proprias ideas in Deo; unde alia est ratio Petri et Martini in Deo, sicut alia ratio hominis et equi. Sed tamen diversitas hominis et equi est secundum formam, cui perfecte respondet idea: sed distinctio singularium unius speciei essentialis, est secundum materiam, quae non perfecte habet ideam; et ideo perfectior est distinctio rationum respondentium diversis speciebus quam diversis individuis."

Martin). Since prime matter, which explains individuation (in part), is imperfectly known, it follows that the distinction between individuals of a species is not perfectly known. How then would God perfectly know the difference between Peter and Martin if the distinction between their ideas is imperfect? If prime matter is not perfectly known (and its 'broad idea' does not explain knowledge of individuals), then is there anything positive in addition to the universal form that would differentiate Peter from Martin? On Thomas's view, this would be prime matter (and dimensive quantity), but, as has been shown, God does not perfectly know prime matter. Despite Thomas's claims against Avicenna and Ghazali that God does know individuals properly or perfectly, the implication that God does not perfectly know (i.e. know as distinct) individual creatures deriving from his SCS seems inevitable.

3 Avoiding the implication

I will now turn to the 'participatory view' and the 'creator view', which seem to be more successful strategies for concluding that God perfectly knows individual material creatures. Whereas the SCS tries to show that God knows form and prime matter (with dimensive quantity) in order to argue that God knows individual creatures, the 'participatory view' and 'creator view' take different routes to this conclusion, namely without strict concord with, or focus on, the details of Thomas's account of individuation. The 'participatory view' goes as follows: (i) God perfectly knows his own essence, (ii) perfect knowledge of the divine essence includes knowledge of all the ways it can be imitated by individual creatures, therefore (iii) God perfectly knows all the ways it can be imitated by individual creatures.[36] In this argument, the object of divine cognition just is the divine essence known in different imitable ways. There is no premise requiring that individuals be understood precisely as composites of form, prime matter and dimensive quantity. According to the 'participatory view', God knows individuals in virtue of knowing the divine essence perfectly, without explaining what is required for knowing form and prime matter. Thus, when Thomas gives the 'participatory view', although he may mention (in different passages) form and matter as though they constitute individual creatures, these details are not necessary to *this* argument. The main focus of this argument is on individuals as particular imitators of the divine essence, not on individuals as composites of form and prime matter. The explanatory work in this argument is done by what Thomas says of knowledge of the divine essence and imitation (participation), not on the details of how a divine idea is an exemplar of form and prime matter.

The 'creator view' differs from the 'participatory view' in that it starts from actual individual creatures that God has created, rather than God's knowledge of the divine essence and ways it can be imitated by possible creatures. The 'creator view' argues as follows: (i) God creates all individual creatures (who are composed of form and the

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[36] 1 *Sent.* 36.1.1.co.; *De Ver*. 2.4.ad 2; *ST* 1a.15.1.co., ad 3; *ST* 1a.15.2.co. On 'imitation' and 'participation' see Wippel, *Thomas Aquinas*, 94-134.

principle of individuation),[37] (ii) an intelligent agent (as God is) can only make what he or she knows, therefore (iii) God knows all individual creatures (composed of form and the principle of individuation).[38] Again, we can see that in the 'creator view' the hylomorphic explanation is non-essential. Although the hylomorphic explanation is Thomas's own way of explaining the individuation of material creatures, in this context any mention of form and matter merely serves as an indicator that Thomas is talking about concrete particular creatures and not about universals or *per accidens* aggregates, etc.

Although neither the 'participatory view' nor the 'creator view' explains how God knows what Thomas's physics would have God know in knowing individual material creatures, they do explain, whatever the principle of individuation, *that* God knows individual creatures because (a) God perfectly knows whatever imitates the divine essence and (b) God has created individual creatures. Whatever we make of the peculiar explanation of individuation of material creatures, it is a further issue, after the prior issue of whether or not God knows and creates individuals. So, on this count both the 'participatory view' and the 'creator view' manage to avoid the unwelcome implication of the SCS.

Still, if Thomas holds firm to the claim that it is prime matter and dimensive quantity that individuate form, then there is a problem in saying that the 'participatory view' and the 'creator view' do avoid this implication. They do not avoid the implication insofar as they do not explain *how* God knows prime matter, the very requirement necessary for his perfect knowledge of an individual as such. It could be inferred from the 'participatory view' and the 'creator view' *that* God does know prime matter, but they do not explain *how* God knows that which is intellectually unknowable of an *individual* creature. So, on this score, the 'participatory view' and the 'creator view' do not avoid the unwelcome implication. What would be required for the 'participatory view' and the 'creator view' to fully avoid the unwelcome implication would be for Thomas to change the 'requirements' for knowing individual material creatures as such, namely, to change what he says about the intelligibility of prime matter, or his theory of individuation.

It seems clear, then, that with the 'participatory view' and the 'creator view' Thomas can and does offer arguments that conclude with God's knowledge of individual material creatures. However, the SCS does not successfully conclude with God's *perfect* knowledge of individual creatures. Thomas (of course) would have been unhappy with the implication of God's imperfect knowledge of individual creatures, as this would mean he did not successfully differentiate his view from Avicenna's and Ghazali's, whom Thomas reported as saying that God knows individuals only in a universal way. It is not surprising, then, that in Thomas's later writings (*Summa Theologica*) he seems to aim to avoid this implication by employing the 'participatory

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[37] Cf. "God's essence is the operative principle of all [creatures]," *ST* 1a.15.2.ad 2.

[38] *De Ver*. 2.3.co.; *ST* 1a.15.11.co.

view' and the 'creator view', and by abandoning the SCS. Yet, if the 'participatory view' and 'creator view' are successful in reaching the conclusion that God knows individual material creatures, and Thomas abandons the SCS in his later writings, then something of significance follows for what Thomas says of the unintelligibility of prime matter, and his theory of individuation. What follows is that Thomas must abandon the claim that the prime matter of an individual material creature is not knowable, in order to be able to uphold his successful arguments for God's knowledge of individual material creatures. But this is something he does *not* do.

4 Conclusion: physics vs. theology

As was mentioned above, if Thomas is to hold on to his 'participatory view' and 'creator view' for God's perfect knowledge of individual material creatures, then it is problematic for him to retain his theory of the individuation of material creatures. For if he asserts the unintelligibility of prime matter, as he does, then the 'participatory view' can easily slip into a version of the SCS in trying to explain *the content* of the 'particular ways' God knows the divine essence as imitable (which in the case of a material individual *has to* involve some representation of its form, plus its principle of individuation, namely, its designated matter). But, since we have already seen the failure and abandonment of the SCS because of its infelicitous implication of *imperfect* knowledge on God's part, it would seem perhaps foolish to subject the 'participatory view' to the same fate. Likewise, the 'creator view' could also slip into a version of the SCS if a reader of Thomas were to ask: 'what does God create when he creates an individual?' Inevitably, this reader would find Thomas saying that when God creates material creatures, God creates total composites of form, prime matter and dimensive quantity.[39] Therefore, the 'creator view' in this context would also have the same implication, as found in 1 *Sent*. 36.2.3. ad 3. Thus, in order to prevent the 'participatory view' and 'creator view' from sharing the fate of the SCS, Thomas would have to alter his claim about the unintelligibility of prime matter, which he does not do, or abandon his theory of individuation. It is not surprising then, that other theologians, such as Henry of Ghent or Duns Scotus devised their own, different ways to argue for God's perfect knowledge of individual material creatures, based on radically different theories of individuation.[40]

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[39] *ST* 1a.44.1.co.; 44.2.ad 3, 44.3.ad 1

[40] See Martin Pickavé, 'Henry of Ghent on Individuation' *PSMLM* 5 (2005) 38-49; Giorgio Pini, 'Scotus on Individuation' *PSMLM* 5 (2005) 50-69.