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Paul Thom:

Trinitarian Semantics in Gilbert of Poitiers

The account of the Holy Trinity given by Gilbert of Poitiers (c.1085-1154) in his commentaries on Boethius's theological tractates belongs to a tradition of thought going back to Saint Augustine's *De Trinitate*, a work which models the doctrine of the Trinity into an ontology that is partly derived from Aristotle's *Categories*. Gilbert's account is fundamentally of the same type as Boethius's, and even retains some of the elements of Boethius's account. At the same time, it introduces new elements, and it is these which account for the censures that befell Gilbert in his own time. In the present paper I outline a semantic framework within which Gilbert's account can be compared with Boethius's, and can be assessed as a piece of ontological theorising.

Boethius

Boethius (following Augustine's *De Trinitate*) aims at making the doctrine of the Trinity intelligible – to the extent that it can be grasped by human intelligence. His aim is to show the compossibility of the following four propositions:

    A. there is one and only one God;

    B. each of the Persons of the Trinity is substantially God;

    C. the Persons of the Trinity are really distinct from one another;

    D. God is utterly simple.

The key element in his account (as it had been in Augustine's) is the notion of substantial predication. John Marenbon remarks that predications of the type which Boethius called substantial record 'the fundamental way the world is set up', and likens the impossibility of their denial to 'what some contemporary philosophers call "metaphysical impossibility"'.[1] I shall propose a formal semantics that captures this notion.

Boethius treats the three Persons of the Trinity as belonging to the Aristotelian category of relatives. According to Aristotle,

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[1] John Marenbon, *Medieval Philosophy: an historical and philosophical introduction* (London: Routledge 2007) p.40.

> ...those things are relatives for which being is the same as being somehow related to something ....[2]

This definition is standardly expounded through examples such as "A father is a son's father" and "A son is a father's son". According to Boethius, whatever is predicated as a relative is not predicated substantially. Accordingly:

> Hence neither Father, nor Son, nor Holy Spirit, nor Trinity is predicated substantially of God, but only relatively, as we have said. But God, truth, justice, goodness, omnipresence, substance, immutability, virtue, wisdom and all other conceivable predicates of the kind are said of the divinity substantially.[3]

He notes that while the substantial predicates apply equally to all three Persons of the Trinity, the 'relative' ones do not: the Father, for instance, is truly wise and great but cannot truly be called Son.[4]

Semantics

A semantic analysis of Trinitarian language has to begin by assigning values to the name 'God', as well as to the names of the divine Persons 'Father', 'Son', 'Holy Spirit', and the names of divine perfections such as 'great' and 'good'. If we wish to represent Boethius's notion of substantial prediction, we will have to go beyond the simple assignation of values to these terms. We need, not just a way of identifying what a term is true of, but also a way of identifying what it is essentially true of. This can be achieved as follows. Given any term 't' we distinguish among beings that are t those that are *essentially* t. Of special interest is the case in which the class of beings that are essentially t is identical with the class of beings that are t. This case is exemplified in the created world by any term, such as 'horse', that names a species or genus: there are no horses that are not essentially horses. Let's call terms like this essential terms.

Now, it turns out that only essential terms are terms which Boethius takes to be predicated substantially. In order for a term 't' to be predicated essentially of a term 't'', it is necessary and sufficient that whatever is t' is t, and 't' is an essential term, but 't'' is not an essential term. To say what something is substantially is to state a metaphysical foundation for its existence.

This notion of substantial predication has application in the created world. The Morning Star and the Evening Star are both substantially Venus. 'Venus' is an essential term, and whatever is either the Morning Star or the Evening Star is Venus, but neither 'Morning

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[2] *Categories* 7, 8a31-32. Ackrill translation.

[3] Quo fit ut neque pater neque filius neque spiritus sanctus neque trinitas de deo substantialiter praedicetur, sed ut dictum est ad aliquid. Deus vero veritas iustitia bonitas omnipotentia substantia inmutabilitas virtus sapientia et quicquid huiusmodi excogitari potest substantialiter de divinitate dicuntur.

Boethius, *Utrum Pater et Filius* 62-68.

[4] Ibid., 5-40.

Star' nor 'Evening Star' would be counted within an Aristotelian metaphysics as an essential term, any more than 'Socrates in the morning' and 'Socrates in the afternoon' are essential terms.

Boethius argues that neither 'Father' nor 'Son' nor 'Holy Spirit' is predicated substantially of God.[5] That which is God is not essentially Father etc. But surely if that which is God is not essentially Father, nothing is essentially Father. Using this reasoning we can now introduce a sophistication into our basic semantics, whereby we specify for each term, not only the individuals of which the term is true, but also those of which it is essentially true. In the following matrix the terms 'God', 'Father', 'Son' and 'Holy Spirit' are respectively abbreviated 'd', 'p', 'f', 's'. The matrix shows 'd' as an essential term, but shows the names of the Persons as not essential. The matrix indicates that each of the Persons is substantially God.

Boethius$_A$	*	
d	x	x
p	x	$-$
f	x	$-$
s	x	$-$

This matrix gives metaphysical as well as semantic information about the four terms with which it deals. For each one of those terms, it shows which individuals the term applies to, and which individuals the term applies essentially to. It also shows of which terms any of the four terms is predicated substantially. Such a matrix I call foundational.

Boethius thinks that the particular way in which substantial predications are configured in the semantics of the Trinity is not replicated anywhere in the created world:

> But if a relation of this kind cannot be found in all other things, this is because of the otherness natural to all perishable, transitory objects.[6]

However, we may doubt that he is right about this in the light of the Morning and Evening Star example. We will return to this question.

Boethius takes divine simplicity to imply that God is the same as Divinity and as the divine perfections:

> But the Divine Substance is form without matter, and is therefore one, and is its own essence…. Wherefore that is truly one in which is no number, in which nothing is present except its own essence.[7]

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[5] Boethius, *Utrum Pater et Filius* 14ff.

[6] Quod si id in cunctis aliis rebus non potest inveniri, facit hoc cognata caducis rebus alteritas.

Boethius, *De Trinitate* VI:22-24. Stewart, Rand & Tester translation.

VII. The being of every Simple is one and the same as that which it is.[8]

This doctrine is represented in the following matrix, where '*m*' stands for 'great' and '*b*' for 'good'.

Boethius$_B$		*	^
d	*x*	*x*	*x*
m	*x*	*x*	*x*
b	*x*	*x*	*x*

Ontology

From this semantic analysis we can read off what entities Boethius's analysis of the Trinity commits him to. This ontology is very sparse. The only essential being is God (who is identical with the divine perfections). The Persons exist, but not as essential beings: their being reduces substantially to that of God. The divine relations of Paternity etc. receive passing mention in Boethius, but there is no fully developed analysis of them. In Figure 1, essential beings are represented by filled circles, non-essential beings by unfilled circles. Correlatives are joined by a double arrow marked 'ad'. Substantial predication is represented by an arrow marked 'est'.
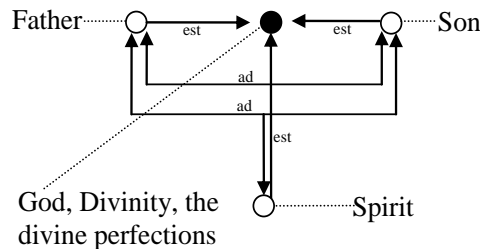

Figure 1. The ontology of the Trinity according to Boethius

Boethius's account of the Trinity is only partially successful. It succeeds in showing the compossibility of (A), (B) and (D), but it does not succeed in giving a clear justification for (C) – the distinctness of the Persons. It gives us a way of distinguishing the Persons from God but not a way of distinguishing the Persons among themselves. Boethius

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[7] Sed divina substantia sine materia forma est atque ideo unum et est id quod est…. Quocirca hoc vere unum in quo nullus numerous, nullum in eo aliud praeterquam id quod est.

Boethius, *De Trinitate* II:29-42. Stewart, Rand & Tester translation.

[8] VII. Omne simplex esse suum et id quod est unum habet.

Boethius, *De Hebdomadibus* 45-48.

thinks that the Persons are distinguished by the ways in which they stand to one another, but he offers no theoretical account of what this means.

Gilbert

Gilbert agrees with much in Boethius's account. He goes beyond Boethius in three ways. He develops a theory of abstraction which allows him to give an account of the distinctness of the Persons; he disagrees with Boethius on the nature of divine simplicity; and he deepens the notion of substantial predication.

Semantics

Abstraction

Gilbert devotes considerable attention to the semantics of abstraction, especially through his distinction between subsistents (*quod est*s) and subsistences (*quo est*s).[9] Marenbon emphasises that for Gilbert all beings, both *quod est*s and *quo est*s, are singular. This implies that we can think of the extension of an abstract name as comprising a set of singular subsistences (*quo est*s). Marenbon also emphasises the interdependence of *quo est*s and *quod est*s.

> …as their meanings suggest, *quo est*s and *quod est*s have a correlative, causal relationship. There can be no *quod est*s without the *quo est*s which make them what they are …, and no *quo est*s exist in act apart from a *quod est* ….[10]

Gilbert believes that in the Trinity there is enumeration of subsistents (*quod est*s) but repetition of subsistences (*quo est*s):

> When the words 'God, God, God' are used, applying in turn to the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, then those which are God are enumerated, that by which they are God is repeated.[11]

He believes that the Persons are distinguished by their properties:

> Now he wants to show by natural arguments that those same ones, whose essence is none other than simple, are different by different properties.[12]

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[9] Cf. Boethius, *Contra Eutychen* III.

[10] Marenbon, *Medieval Philosophy: an historical and philosophical introduction* 153.

[11] Cum uero dicitur "Deus Deus Deus" – primum de Patre secundum de Filio tercium de Sipiritu sancto. Quod et ipse aperit dicens: "Deus Pater Deus Filius Deus Spiritus sanctus" – eorum quidem, qui sunt Deus, numeration facta est: eius uero, quo sunt Deus, repeticio.

Gilbert of Poitiers, *De Trinitate* I,3,37.

Translation from John Marenbon, 'Gilbert of Poitiers', in John Marenbon, *Aristotelian Logic, Platonism, and the Context of Early medieval Philosophy in the West* (Aldershot: Ashgate 2000) XIV:345. Cf. Boethius, *De Trinitate* III:29-40.

[12] Nunc diuersis proprietatibus esse diuersos eosdem, quorum non nisi singularis ac simplex est essencia, naturalium rationibus uult demonstrare.Gilbert of Poitiers, *De Trinitate* I,3,34.

Thus, his semantics of God and the Persons can be represented by the following foundational matrix, in which the letters 't' to 'w' stand for the singular beings that are respectively divinity, and the abstracts of the Persons.

Gilbert_A	$*$		$\wedge$
d	x	x	t
p	x	$-$	u
f	x	$-$	v
s	x	$-$	w

In this matrix each of the Persons is represented as having a distinct abstract (the divine relations of Paternity, Filiation and Connexion); each of those abstracts is represented as being different from the Person whose abstract it is; and divinity is represented as being different from God. These ways of representing Gilbert's doctrine of the Trinity are consistent with the content of the charges brought against him at Rheims in 1148:

1. That the divine nature, which is called the divinity, is not God but the form by which God is, just as humanity is not man but the form by which man is.

2. That when Father, Son and Holy Spirit are said to be one, they are understood to be only by one divinity; but this cannot be converted, so that one God or one substance or one something may be said to be Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

3. That the three Persons are three by three unities and three distinct properties which are not those Persons but are three distinct eternal things numerically different from one another and from the divine substance.[13]

That these are indeed Gilbert's views is clear. The distinctness of the divine relations from each other is necessary if the distinctness of the Persons is to be based on those relations.

That Gilbert does not think the Father is identical with Paternity is clear from the prologue to his commentary on Book 2 of Boethius's *De Trinitate*, where he writes:

But some people of little understanding, hearing that God is simple, take Him and any of the diversity of names said of Him (such as 'God', 'one', 'eternal', 'Person', 'principle', 'author', 'father', 'Son', 'Connection' and others like this) to be of the same nature and

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[13] 1. Quod divina natura, que divinitas dicitur, Deus non sit, sed forma, qua Deus est, quemadmodum humanitas homo non est, sed forma, qua est homo.

2. Quod cum Pater et Filius et Spiritus Sanctus unum esse dicuntur, nonnisi una divinitate esse intelligantur, nec converti possit, ut Deus unus vel una substantia vel unum aliquid Pater et Filius et Spiritus Sanctus esse dicatur.

3. Quod tres persone tribus unitatibus sint tria et distincte proprietatibus tribus, que non sunt ipse persone, sed sunt tres res eterne et ab invicem et a divina substantia numero differentes.

Lauge Olaf Nielsen, *Theology and Philosophy in the Twelfth Century: a study of Gilbert Poreta's thinking and the theological expositions of the doctrine of the incarnation during the period 1130-1180* (Leiden: E.J. Brill 1982) p.34.

ratio, so that God is both the essence by which He is said to be and the unity by which he is said to be one and the eternity by which He is said to be eternal and similarly for the others, and likewise the Father himself is paternity and the one unity and the eternal eternity and conversely, and in the same way for all the other things that for whatever reason are predicated of Him; and because of all this, the same Boethius writes to Deacon John the Roman particularly about what is predicated by the names 'Father', 'Son' and 'Holy Spirit'.[14]

Divine simplicity

That Gilbert takes Divinity to be distinct from God is also clear. His understanding of divine simplicity differs from that of Boethius, who takes divine simplicity to imply that God *is* the perfections that He has. Of the divine substance Boethius that it "est id quod est";[15] and he contrasts God with non-divine things, where the attribute differs from its subject, which depends for its being on something other than itself.[16] Subject and attribute are divided in non-divine things, but conjoined and united in God.[17]

We can distinguish two types of integration that together comprise Boethius's notion of divine simplicity. On the one hand there is the vertical integration of God with the divine attributes (Divinity, divine Goodness etc.), so that God is the same as God's attributes. On the other hand there is the horizontal integration of all the divine attributes with one another: God's greatness is the same as God's goodness etc. The horizontal integration follows from the vertical. If each of God's attributes is the same as God then all are the same as one another. It is worth observing, however, that the reverse implication does not necessarily hold.

Gilbert endorses the horizontal but not the vertical integration of the divine perfections. He holds that divinity is the same as divine greatness, divine goodness, etc.; but in commenting on Boethius's analysis of divine simplicity[18] he denies that God is divinity, or is the divine essence, except in the following sense:

> Whence also there is a linguistic usage such that it may be said of God not only that He is but also that He is the essence; and rightly indeed. For if it is said of someone who is

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[14] Quia tamen aliqui sensu paruuli – audientes quod Deus est simplex – ipsum et quecumque de eo nominum diuersitate dicuntur – ut: Deus unus eternus persona principium auctor Pater Filius Conexio et huiusmodi alia – eiusdem nature eiusdemque rationis esse ita accipiunt ut et essentia qua dicitur Deus sit et unitas qua unus est et eternitas qua eternus est et similiter cetera: et e conuerso ipse etiam Pater sit paternitas et unus unitas et eternus eternitas et conuersim: et eodem modo in aliis omnibus que de ipso quacumque ratione predicantur, scribit idem Boecius Iohanni romano diacono de illis specialiter que nominibus his "Pater Filius Spiritus sanctus" predicantur.

Gilbert of Poitiers, *De Trinitate* II,2,prol.

[15] See note 9 above.

[16] Boethius, *De Trinitate* II:31-40.

[17] Boethius, *De Trinitate* IV:26-28.

[18] Boethius, *De Trinitate* II:29-42, quoted earlier.

> not only wise but also coloured and great and many other things of this sort, from an abundance of wisdom before all others, "Howsoever great you are, you are all wisdom" – as if there is nothing other that confers being on him except wisdom alone – much more properly "the essence" is said of God, on whom different things do not confer His being; and the same for other names like "God is his own essence, his own wisdom, his own strength" and others like this'.[19]

This passage does allow that there is a manner of speaking according to which we may rightly say that God is his own essence; but it describes that as a manner of speaking. For Gilbert, divine simplicity consists in two facts: firstly that everything *by* which God is, is divinity (the divine essence), and secondly that everything *whence* divinity is, is the fact of God's being. Even though God is not the same as Divinity, there is nothing other than Divinity by which God is, and Divinity is only because God is from it.[20] He states:

> The simplicity of God is expressed thus: "If someone says of what is truly simple that it 'is', and again says that it 'is something', no one should understand that the second sentence predicates of it something differing by any property from what the first predicated.[21]

Marenbon calls this the 'perfect unity of *Deus* and *divinitas*'.[22] A formal representation of Gilbert's position on the divine perfections is shown in the following matrix.

Gilbert$_B$	*		^
x	x	x	t
m	x	x	t
b	x	x	t

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[19] Unde etiam usus loquendi est ut de Deo dicatur non modo "Deus est" uerum etiam "Deus est ipsa essencia". Recte utique. Si enim de aliquo qui non modo sapiens sed etiam coloratus et magnus et multa huiusmodi est, ex sapiencie pre ceteris omnibus habundantia dicitur: "Tu quantus quantus es, totus es sapiencia" – tamquam nichil alius sit quod sibi esse conferat nisi sola sapiencia – multo proprius Deus, cui diuersa non conferunt ut sit, dicitur "ipsa essentia" et aliis nominibus idem ut "Deus est ipsa diuinitas sua, ipsa sua sapientia, ipsa sua fortitudo" et huiusmodi alia.

Gilbert of Poitiers, *De Trinitate* I,2,55.

[20] Non enim est a diuinitate aliud quo Deus sit. Nec est unde diuinitas ipsa sit nisi quod ea Deus est.

Gilbert of Poitiers, *De Trinitate* I,2,89.

[21] Si quis de eo quo uere est simplex dicat "est" et idem dicat "est aliquid", nullus intelligere debet quod secunda oratione predicauerit de ipso aliquid proprietate aliqua diuersum ab eo quod predicauerat in prima.

Gilbert of Poitiers, *De Hebdomadibus* 1,62. This is Gilbert's exposition of Boethius's Rule 7 ('Omne simplex …') quoted earlier.

[22] Marenbon XIV:343.

Substantial predication

Gilbert's semantics for the divine persons and perfections implies that even though the Persons are distinct, their distinctness is not due to any distinction in what substantially underlies them. They are distinguished by their three different properties, but what underlies them is one deity. If what underlies is the metaphysical reality, a doubt could arise as to whether metaphysically the Persons are after all distinct from one another. Such a doubt would be reinforced for a modern philosopher who had accepted the analogy of Morning and Evening Star. Metaphysically, there is only one reality in these cases. Plurality arises only in accidental ways: the time at which the reality is visible.

Concerns of this type must have occurred to Gilbert too. For he accepts, as a principle governing the natural world, that things which are really distinct must be distinguishable at the fundamental metaphysical level, i.e. in their *quo est*s.

> Just as the *properties* of numerically different things are different, so also the *subsistences* are numerically different.[23]

He gives several alternative formulations of the principle:

> A subsistence is not singular unless it makes a subsistent one in number, as it's not just Plato's and Cicero's *accidental* properties that are different but also their *substantial* ones by which they are e.g. different bodies or men.[24]

> Any singular property that makes Plato to be a body or a man makes nothing else to be the same.[25]

Matrix Gilbert$_A$, however, is inconsistent with this principle since it represents three really distinct Persons (distinguished by their abstracts) resting on a single *quo est*, namely Divinity. There are two conceivable options for resolving this inconsistency – namely, to revise the matrix, or to reject the principle in theological contexts. Gilbert believes that the first option cannot be adopted without falling into heresy. If we revise the matrix so that the Persons are not distinct, we fall into Sabellianism. If we revise it so that there are three *quo est*s, one per Person, we fall into tri-theism. And so he feels compelled to restrict the principle's application to the natural order. There, different *quod est*s must have different *quo est*s, but in the theological realm distinct *quod est*s

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[23] Sicut numero diuersorum proprietates diuerse sunt ita quoque subsistentie numero sunt diuerse.

Gilbert of Poitiers, *De Trinitate* I,2,6,prol.

[24] "Una singularis subsistencia non nisi unum numero faciat subsistentem" ut Platonis et Ciceronis non solum accidentales proprietates uerum etiam substantiales, quibus ipsi sunt uerbi gratia uel diuersa corpora uel homines, diuerse sunt.

Gilbert of Poitiers, *De Trinitate* I,2,6,prol.

[25] Et quecumque singularis proprietas Platonem corpus esse uel hominem, eadem nullum alium idem esse facit.

Gilbert of Poitiers, *De Trinitate* I,2,7,prol.

can have a single *quo est* and Matrix Gilbert$_A$ is acceptable as it stands.[26] It displays a situation in which (A), (B) and (C) hold simultaneously. And taken together with Matrix Gilbert$_B$ it displays a situation in which (D) also holds. However, the divine simplicity which it represents is one in which the divine perfections are integrated horizontally but not vertically.

Ontology

Gilbert's ontology of the Trinity is shown in Figure 2, where relationships between a concrete and its abstract are shown by an arrow marked '*ab*'.
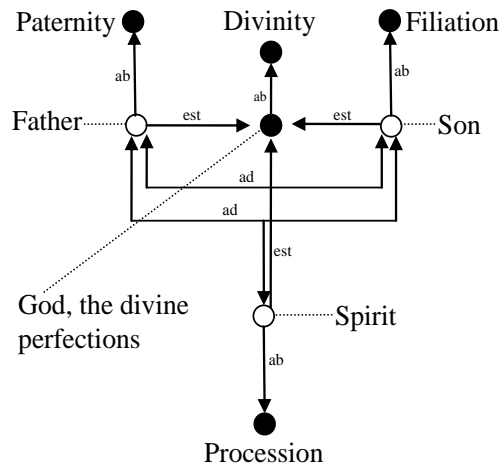

Figure 2. The ontology of the Trinity according to Gilbert of Poitiers

Gilbert doesn't tell us what the relationship is between Paternity and Divinity. However, we can see that it must be the same as the relationship of Justice to Humanity, since the just are substantially humans, and the just are just by Justice, and humans human by Humanity. Now, Justice inheres in humans, and humans are human by Humanity; so we can see that the relationship is the relative product of inherence and abstraction.

Figure 2 should be compared with Figure 1, which shows Boethius's ontology of the Trinity. Gilbert's ontology is less sparse than Boethius's; however, by allowing for extra ontological complexity Gilbert finds himself able to demonstrate the compatibility of (A)-(D). The most serious problem facing that demonstration appears to be the *ad hoc* exemption of the theological realm from the requirements of the natural principle.

Bernard

Gilbert's account of the Trinity should be contrasted with the one implied in the 'confession of faith' which Bernard of Clairvaux compiled at Rheims in 1148 in his

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[26] Gilbert of Poitiers, *De Trinitate* I,2,8,prol.

attempt to have Gilbert's views condemned. In so far as it concerns the Trinity, Bernard's credo is enshrined in the following three propositions which rebut the three allegedly heretical propositions with which Gilbert was charged:

1. We believe that the simple essence of divinity is God, and that it cannot be denied in any orthodox way that divinity is God and God divinity. And if it is said that God is wise by wisdom, great by greatness, eternal by eternity, one by unity, God by divinity and so on, we believe that he is wise only by that wisdom which is God Himself, great only by that greatness which is God Himself, eternal only by that eternity which is God Himself, one only by that unity which is God Himself, divine only by that divinity which is God Himself; that is, that He in His own essence is wise, great, eternal, indivisible God.

2. When we speak of three persons, the Father, Son and Holy Spirit, we understand them to be one God and one divine substance; and conversely, when we speak of one God or one divine substance we profess that one God and one divine substance is three persons.

3. We believe that only God the Father, Son and Holy Spirit is eternal, and that no things whatsoever, whether they are called relations or properties, singularities or unities or anything of the kind exist and have existed eternally in God, unless they are God.[27]

Thus in place of the Gilbertian matrices it seems that Bernard poses the following:

Bernard_A		*	^
d	x	x	x
p	x	$-$	x
f	x	$-$	x
s	x	$-$	x

Bernard_B		*	^
d	x	x	x
m	x	x	x
b	x	x	x

[27] Credimus simplicem naturam divinitatis Deum esse nec aliquo sensu catholico posse negari, quin divinitas sit Deus et Deus divinitas. Sicubi vero dicitur Deum sapientia sapientem, magnitudine magnum, eternitate eternum, unitate unum, divinitate Deum esse et alia huiusmodi, credimus nonnisi ea sapientia, que est ipse Deus, sapientem esse, nonnisi ea magnitudine, que est ipse Deus, magnum esse, nonnisi ea eternitate, que est ipse Deus, eternum esse, nonnisi ea unitate unum, que est ipse, nonnisi ea divinitate Deum, que est ipse, id est se ipso sapientem, magnum, eternum, unum Deum.

Cum de tribus personis loquimur Patre, Filio, Spiritu Sancto, ipsas unum Deum, unam divinam substantiam esse fatemur. Et econverso, cum de uno Deo, una divina substantia loquimur, ipsum unum Deum, unam divinam substantiam esse tres personas profitemur.

Credimus solum Deum Patrem et Filium et Spiritum Sanctum eternum esse nec aliquas omnino res – sive relationes sive proprietates sive singularitates vel unitates dicantur et huiusmodi alia – adesse Deo, que sint ab eterno et non sint deus.

Marjorie Chibnall, *John of Salisbury's Memoirs of the Papal Court* (London: Thomas Nelson and Sons, 1956) p.24. Chibnall translation.

Ontology

The ontology of Bernard's credo is even more economical than that of Boethius. The following diagram shows that not only God, and Divinity, the divine perfections are ontologically one, but also the Personal relations.
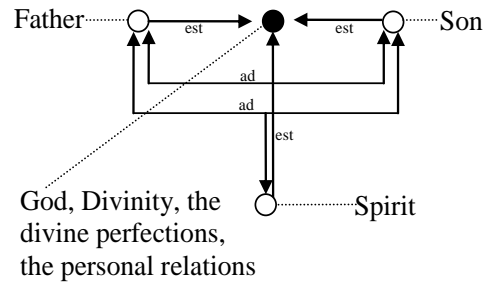

Figure 3. The ontology of the Trinity according to Bernard of Clairvaux

Because these matrices identify God with Divinity, and each of the Personal relations with the Divinity, they cannot distinguish between the Persons. Thus, if Bernard's account is to be capable of distinguishing between the Persons, it must be represented in a semantics that is more sophisticated than anything considered thus far in this paper.

Politics

The outcome of Gilbert's trial at Rheims was that he was required by Pope Eugene III to change his commentary on Boethius in any way that was needed in order to make it consistent with Bernard's declaration of faith. The Pope left it to Gilbert to determine whether and to what extent such changes were needed.

John of Salisbury gives us an account of how Gilbert saw his doctrine as being already consistent with Bernard's credo.[28] According to John, Gilbert saw the first of Bernard's propositions as being directed against those who deny God's simplicity; Gilbert, however, does not deny divine simplicity, since he holds that God has no parts, and is not subject to any substantial or accidental forms.[29] Bernard's second proposition was interpreted by Gilbert as being directed against 'those who, out of consideration of the persons, divide the unity of the divine substance, or, in contemplating one simple and singular nature, no less insanely confuse the persons of the Trinity'.[30] Gilbert, on the other hand, is one of those who steer a path 'between the Scylla of those who divide and the Charybdis of those who confound'.[31] Bernard's third proposition is interpreted by

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[28] Chibnall pp.29-41.

[29] Chibnall pp.29-30.

[30] Chibnall p.30.

[31] Chibnall p.31.

Gilbert as being directed against those who think that there are eternally existing things extrinsic to God. Gilbert, however, does not think this, even though he maintains that 'there are certain everlasting principles, which have had no beginning and will have no end, and are so much an essential part of truth that even if the whole world perished they would remain'.[32] He instances the truth that if a man exists a substance exists; this, he says, is knowable and would still be something even if the things did not exist. Similarly, he says that there are properties which are had by the divine persons eternally – although we should not imagine that the persons have these properties in the way that 'colour is present in a body or greed or justice in a mind, so God is determined by accidents or substantial forms which are the cause of His existence, so that he may justly be held not to be the cause of all things'.[33]

To me it seems that if John's account is reliable, Gilbert failed to address the first and the third of Bernard's propositions. What is affirmed by the first proposition, as I read it, is not just divine simplicity, but the particular version of divine simplicity that involves vertical as well as horizontal integration of the divine attributes. Thus, Gilbert's doctrine (which affirms only horizontal integration) is not consistent with Bernard's demand for both vertical and horizontal integration. Bernard's third proposition is that the properties *are* the persons; but Gilbert interprets the proposition as merely denying that the properties are *extrinsic* to the persons. Thus, if the dispute were to be judged purely on the logic of the rival arguments, Gilbert's response should be judged as inadequate. This, however, is not to say that Bernard's analysis of the Trinity is superior to Gilbert's as a piece of theo-ontology. It is indeed a more elegant analysis; but its elegance is bought at the price of leaving everything about the Trinity mysterious. Gilbert's account, while more cumbrous, explains how (A)-(D) can be held simultaneously – though it too leaves some things unexplained (the relation between the divine relations and divinity, and the reason why distinct *quod est*s in the godhead do not need distinct *quo est*s). But then, was it really either logic or theology that was at stake at Rheims in 1148?

Nielsen, in his monograph on twelfth-century theology and philosophy, argues – plausibly I think – that what was at stake was politics. That is to say, what was at issue was the effect which certain speech-acts would have on the interests of the various parties. He explains:

> When the *Curia* got wind of the step Bernard had taken, a protest was immediately made to Eugene, pointing out that Bernard's tactics in this case, as in the case against Abelard, was [sic] to compel the Pope to a decision without consulting the *Curia*. By calling a meeting Bernard had, in the opinion of the *Curia*, procured for himself the possibility of threatening a schism, in the event of Gilbert's denunciation failing to materialize.[34]

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[32] Chibnall p.31.

[33] Chibnall p.38.

[34] Nielsen p.37.

It was in this context that the Pope at once refused to denounce Gilbert as a heretic, and required him to revise his commentary in line with Bernard's credo. And it is in the same context that we must understand Gilbert's response to that credo.

For the Pope, what was at stake was maintaining the unity of the Church against the threat of schism putatively posed by Bernard's declaration of faith; and this may well have mattered more to the Pope than the correctness of Gilbert's Trinitarian theology. For the Cardinals of the *Curia*, what was at stake was Bernard's increasing power over the Pope: a papal denunciation of Gilbert would further increase Bernard's power and weaken theirs. For Gilbert himself, what was at stake was to protect his theology, which he truly believed and believed not to be heretical, from the stigma of papal denunciation; and to defend those beliefs he was prepared to use arguments that sidestepped Bernard's accusations.

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Alex Hall:

Confused Univocity?

Scotus's belief we possess concepts univocal to God and creatures is problematic within the context of Aristotle's categorial metaphysics. *Prima facie* Scotus's doctrine is fairly straightforward, allowing that our ideas of certain traits initially discovered in creatures can pick out formally distinct features of the divine essence (i.e., elements of the divine essence that are, at least conceptually, distinct from one another), after these traits are conceived as both stripped of any limitation attendant on their creaturely instantiation, and conjoined with God's infinite being. The core concept, however, namely our concept of a trait as prescinding from any imperfection, is univocal to God and creatures, as it may be referred without alteration to either.[1] Scotus thus avoids what he takes to be Henry of Ghent's reliance on a species of analogy that vitiates theological discourse.[2] Scotus's solution requires experience to provide real concepts of a diverse creator. That is, if we have natural knowledge of God, concepts univocal to God and creatures must tell us something of his nature. There are many reasons to deny this is possible, especially within an Aristotelian metaphysics where the claim that we possess a concept of being univocal to God and creatures threatens to make being over into a genus above both. Genera descend to particulars by means of differences that mark one species from another, but any difference capable of differentiating being must itself be a being (otherwise how could it specify being). And if the differences are beings, then each substance is a being twice over, once through the subsistent difference, and again through being itself. Again, if being is univocal to God and creatures, how do we account for the distance between creator and creation absent something added to God's being, which addition would then violate divine simplicity?

As Steven Marrone suggests, in the end, Scotus himself may have held serious reservations concerning univocity;[3] and Stephen Dumont notes, Scotus's disciples were

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[1] See, for example, *Ordinatio* (*Ord.*), I, d. 3, q. 2, nn. 26, 40; d. 3, n. 40; d. 8, q. 3, n. 113; and d. 8, q. 4, n. 17. For clear summaries of Scotus's doctrine of univocity in the secondary literature, consult Richard Cross, "Where Angels Fear to Tread," *Antonianum* 76 (2001): 7-41; James Ross and Todd Bates, "Duns Scotus on Natural Theology," in *The Cambridge Companion to Duns Scotus*, ed. Thomas Williams, 193-237 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003); and Thomas Williams, "The Doctrine of Univocity is True and Salutary," *Modern Theology* 21, no. 4 (2005): 575-85.

[2] For Scotus's criticism, see, e.g., *Ord.*, I, d. 3, pars 1, q. 2, n. 20, 26; and d. 22, q. un.

[3] "The Notion of Univocity in Duns Scotus's Early Works," *Franciscan Studies* 43 (1983): 347-95, at 394.

split over what would constitute a real, experiential concept of a diverse entity.[4] Some believed Scotus intends a weak sense of univocity, preserving divine transcendence by sacrificing concepts that map onto God's essence, while others held to real concepts, and thus had to explain why this did not violate God's real diversity, and these hermeneutics persist. Catherine Pickstock, for instance, holds that Scotus's notion of univocity renders God "an absolute void of mystery,"[5] while David Burrell diagnoses Scotus's claim that we grasp the formal *ratio* of divine perfections as a "failure to appreciate just how problematic our conceptual access to mystery must be."[6] This paper contends Scotus was neither apophatic in his theology nor unaware of the limits that circumscribe the wayfarer intellect. In fact, Scotus may never have felt satisfied with his attempt to show that we have real, experiential concepts of a diverse creator. His discussions of univocity suggest a mind continually at work over a vexing issue, and the phrase 'confused univocal concept' aptly connotes the difficulties he faced.

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Scotus often refers to being as logically, rather than metaphysically or physically univocal to all things. Scholars, including Silvia Donati[7] and Giorgio Pini,[8] have draw attention to the fact that this assertion results from Scotus's having matured in a specifically English tradition that distinguishes between analogy (specifically that of attribution) and equivocity with reference to the sciences of metaphysics, physics, and logic. As will emerge from a brief survey of this school, Scotus's claim that we have confused concepts univocal to God and creatures breaks with his initial, seemingly uncritical acceptance of the dictum that logic considers 'being' as an equivocal term.

Analogy of attribution, arises when several objects bear a real relationship amongst themselves that manifests at the semantic level. Thus both medicine and a person are termed 'healthy' but in different senses. Primarily the term 'health' signifies the health

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[4] "Transcendental Being: Scotus and Scotists," in *Topoi* 11, no. 2 (1992): 135-48.

[5] "Duns Scotus: His Historical and Contemporary Significance," *Modern Theology* 21 (2005): 543-74, at 563. For Pickstock, it is our positive concept of being univocal to God and creatures that itself renders the divine essence a mystery: "God is deemed 'to be' in the same univocal manner as creatures . . . [but] the univocity of Being between God and creature paradoxically gives rise to a kind of equivocity, for the difference of degree or amount of Being disallows any specific resemblance between them" (*After Writing: On the Liturgical Consummation of Philosophy* (Oxford: Blackwell Publishers, 1998), 122-23). Pickstock's appraisal of Duns Scotus on univocity is controversial. Cross, *Where Angels Fear to Tread*, and Williams, *The Doctrine of Univocity* offer sound criticism.

[6] "John Duns Scotus: The Univocity of Analogous Terms," *Monist* 49, no. 4 (1965): 639-58, at 658.

[7] La discussione sull'unità del concetto di ente nella tradizione di commento della "Fisica": commenti parigina degli anni 1270-1315 ca., in M. Picavé (cur.), *Die Logik des Transzendentalen. Festschrift für Jan A. Aertsen zum 65. Geburstag*, de Gruyter, Berlin-New York 2003 (Miscellanea Mediavalia, 30), 60-139.

[8] "Univocity in Scotus' Quaestiones Super Metaphysicam: The Solution to a Riddle," in *Medioevo: Rivista di Storia della filosofia medievale* XXX (2005), 69-110.

of some organism, and thus medicine is termed 'healthy' in a derivative sense, because it is productive of health in the primary sense. By contrast, equivocity exists when a term's diverse significates do not bear any such relationship to one another. Thus the term 'bat' refers equivocally to sticks and animals. The Oxford tradition stipulates that real relationships, such as that holding between medicine and health, are the province of metaphysics and physics, leaving logicians free to consider signification apart from these real relations. Thus for logicians, terms with multiple significates are equivocal, inasmuch as the terms can conceive different things—admitting of differing definitions—on different occasions; and this judgment obtains independent of any real relation that may exist between a term's ultimate significates.

Scotus's early *Questions on the Categories* (In Praed.) and *Questions on the Sophistical Refutations* reflect this distinction between modes of discourse:

> 'Being' is simply equivocal . . . It must be understood, however that a linguistic expression that for the logician is simply equivocal, namely because it signifies many things equally primarily, for the metaphysician or the natural philosopher—who do not consider linguistic expressions according to their signification but consider what they signify with regard to what they are—is analogous (*In Praed.* q. 4, §§ 37-38, 285, trans. Pini).

As noted, despite the fact that his early writings appear wholly to conform with the English tradition on this point, Scotus later insists that for the logician 'being' is a univocal term, such that "many agree in one common concept alone;"[9] this despite his retaining a distinction between metaphysics and physics, on the one hand, and logic, on the other, in terms of modes of signification:

> As said of the ten categories, neither metaphysically nor naturally does the term 'being' signify one concept; and being is not a genus of these, neither naturally nor metaphysically. However, logically speaking, being is univocal (*In De an.*, q. 22, n. 33).[10]

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Scotus's *Questions on the De Anima* provide a detailed exploration of confused concepts in the context of a discussion of the logical univocity of the concept of being. The editors suggest a dating in the early 1290s following a Parisian lectorship, however several considerations suggest dating the work nearer the turn of the century. First, Scotus's logical writings are believed to have been written possibly as early as 1295,[11] yet we have seen Scotus's *Questions on the De Anima* invest 'being' with a logical univocity these works would deny. Again the *De Anima* account of being's descent to particulars suggests dating the work nearer the turn of the century. Pini has noted that in

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[9] "Plura convenient in uno conceptu communi tantum" (*Questions on the De Anima* (In De an.), q. 1, n. 13). Cf., ibid., q. 21, n. 33. Translations of *In De an.* are mine.

[10] "Ens enim, prout praedicatur de decem praedicamentis, metaphysice vel naturaliter non dicit unum conceptum—nec genus est naturale eorum nec metaphysicum; est tamen univocum, logice loquendo."

[11] Williams, introduction to *The Cambridge Companion to Duns Scotus*, 1-14, at 7.

revisions to his *Questions on the Metaphysics*, Scotus accounts for being's descent through non-formal identical predication (discussed below), an approach initially ruled out in the *Ordinatio*, which restricted this type of predication to talk of the divine essence. However, an addition to the *Ordinatio* allows for such predication with respect to creatures.[12] This suggests the additions to *Questions on the Metaphysics* postdate the main text of the *Ordinatio* and are contemporary with the latter's revision.[13] The same line of reasoning thus points to a later date of composition for *Questions on the De Anima*.

Returning to our discussion, *Questions on the De Anima* contrasts confused and distinct concepts:

> Grasping (*cognoscere*) something confused and grasping something confusedly are not the same, and neither are grasping something distinct and grasping something distinctly. For something confused can be distinctly grasped, as animal, which is confused in relation to man. Similarly what is distinct can be grasped confusedly, as man, by someone grasping animal or what animal is. Moreover, that is confused which is indistinct, although distinguishable, as is a genus. But to grasp something confusedly is to grasp what its name says or to grasp it in general only. But to grasp something distinctly is to grasp it through its proper principles placed in its definition (*In De an.*, 16, n. 9).[14]

Scotus's terse prose makes parsing this text difficult. Drawing on other treatments of confused concepts in the *Ordinatio* and *Quodlibetal Questions* (discussed below) suggests the following interpretation:[15]

> A confused concept supplies a partial, general grasp of some entity, for instance, the concept of 'animal', prescinding from any difference, is confused. Distinct concepts, in turn, should comprise genera and differences, or in the case of the blessed who cognize singular entities, a distinct concept of such an entity is proper to that entity, i.e., characteristic of no other being. A potentially distinct concept is grasped confusedly when the specific element is absent, for example, one may know of man only that he is some type of animal. Likewise, a confused concept can be distinctly known when determined by some difference.

In De An. 19 takes up these distinctions to characterize our knowledge of God, which Scotus will later[16] describe in terms of logically univocal concepts. Question 19 argues

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[12] *Ord.*, I, d. 8, pars 1, q. 4, adn.

[13] Pini, 109.

[14] "Non est idem cognoscere confusum et confuse, nec distinctum et distincte. Nam confusum potest distincte cognosci, sicut 'animal' quod est confusum respectu hominis. Similiter distinctum potest confuse cognosci, sicut 'homo', cognoscendo animal vel quod sit animal. Illud autem est confusum quod est indistinctum, distinguibile tamen sicut genus. Cognoscere autem confuse est cognoscere quid est quod dicitur per nomen, vel cognoscere in suo universali tantum; sed cognoscere quid distincte est cognoscere illud per principia propria posita in sua definitione."

[15] *Ord.*, I, d. 22, q. un.; *Quodl.* 14.13. See also the *Reportatio* of *Ord.*, I, d. 22, q. un., provided in Appendix A of the Vatican edition.

[16] *In De an.*, q. 21.

that sensible *quiddity* is not the intellect's only object, as we can likewise attain "enigmatic (*aenigmatica*)" cognition of separate substances, in which our faculties reach their highest potential (ibid., q. 19, n. 18). An objection notes that only the blessed have distinct knowledge of God. Our knowledge of God is by comparison confused, though we can acquire distinct knowledge of sensibles. The point seems to be that confused knowledge is incomplete and thus does not perfect the intellect, hence sensible *quiddity* is the intellect's proper object. Scotus answers that confused knowledge is still knowledge (though admittedly of an inferior grade with respect to distinct knowledge), and the proper object of the intellect is separate substance, inasmuch as the intellect's faculties reach their highest potential in the cognition of such.

Scotus's argument that sensible *quiddity* is not the intellect's sole object distinguishes between grades of knowledge, describing the wayfarer's understanding of God as imperfect:

> Something is able to be grasped through a concept common to itself and others, as when knowing man through animal. And to grasp God in this manner is to grasp him imperfectly, namely through a concept common to himself and others. This is less perfect than distinctly to know a rock, because through this common concept we do not know God more than any other, and therefore [our faculty] does not arise to nobility from such cognition of God (ibid., n. 22).[17]

By comparison, the ultimate grade of knowledge is *quidditative*, such that "an entity is known intuitively in itself as such a nature" (ibid., 23).[18] This type of knowledge of God is denied the wayfarer, for whom all cognition originates in perception (ibid.), yet we are nonetheless able distinctly to refer to the divine essence. For instance, from a plurality of entities, we can abstract notions of absolute being and goodness. And "because beings and good things are ordered, we can arrive at understanding the highest good" (ibid., n. 26).[19] This concept is "*quidditative* though composite, and through such a concept we do not grasp him in himself, as he is [an entity] of such a determinate nature" (ibid.).[20] Nonetheless this confused concept refers uniquely or properly to a separate substance, thus sensible *quiddity* is not the intellect's only object (ibid., n. 18).

Question 21 contends that being, as opposed to God or substance, is our intellect's primary object. Over the course of the proof, Scotus explains how a confused concept of being is logically univocal to God and creatures, as is required if being has the

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[17] "Potest aliquid cognosci per conceptum communem sibi et aliis, ut cognosco hominem per animal. Et sic cognoscere Deum est imperfete cognoscere, scilicet per conceptum communem sibi et aliis; hoc enim imperfectius est quam cognoscere lapidem distincte, quia per illum conceptum communem non magis cognoscitur Deus quam aliud, et ideo non sortitur nobilitatem ex Deo talis cognitio."

[18] "Res cognoscitur intuitive in se ut est talis natura."

[19] "Quia entia et bona sunt ordinate, tandem possumus devenire ad hoc quod intelligamus summum bonum."

[20] "Et ideo de Deo possumus naturaliter habere conceptum quiditativum, compositum tamen, sed per talem conceptum non cognoscimus eum in se, ut est talis naturae determinate."

aforementioned primacy. The claim regarding logical univocity develops out of Scotus's discussion of non-formal, identical predication, which (as we shall see) he uses to account for being's descent without rendering it a genus or making individuals into beings twice over on account of specifying differences. Regarding the main concern of question 21, however, being is our intellect's primary object if it is first by adequation with respect to both power and predication. Something is a faculty's primary object by adequation with respect to power if it is adequate to move the faculty to knowledge of itself and others "as the divine essence is the primary adequate object of the divine intellect" (ibid., q. 21, n. 6).[21] On the other hand, the object adequate with respect to predication "is said *per se* and essentially of all things which are known by the power, as light or color or something common to both is said essentially of all visible things" (ibid.).[22]

In the preceding question, Scotus ruled against truth as the intellect's primary object, in part because we comprehend things such as goodness and being without likewise comprehending truth.[23] Question 21 adopts a similar strategy, ruling out either God or substance as primary by adequation with respect to both power to move the intellect and predication. God is not said of all predicables, nor does he primarily move our intellects, so God is not the intellect's primary object.[24] Similarly, substance is not said of all intelligibles, nor do we have a simple, *quidditative* concept of substance (as substance is known only by means of its accidents), hence substance is not the primary object of our intellect through either sort of adequation. Being remains the only viable candidate and is thus the intellect's primary object. These arguments do not proceed from any insight into the nature of being, thus Scotus terms them 'indirect' and proceeds to offer a series of arguments that establish being's double primacy with respect to power and predication, the logical univocity of the term 'being' being required for the latter.

First, Scotus notes that truth and goodness are proper attributes of being. Thus being is not predicated essentially of either, since "being or any other subject whatsoever is not predicated *in quid* of a proper attribute, because a subject is placed in the definition of a proper attribute as something added, not however, as something of its essence" (ibid., n. 14).[25] Since being is not said essentially of its proper attributes, being is not primary by

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[21] "Illud autem dicitur obiectum adaequatum potentiae adaequatione secundum virtutem, quod per se ipsum solum potest movere intellectum ad notitiam sui et aliorum; sicut essentia divina est primum obiectum adaequatum intellectus divine."

[22] "Obiectum autem adaequatum secundum praedicationem est quod per se et essentialiter praedicatur de omnibus quae possunt a potentia cognosci, sicut lux vel color vel aliquid commune utrique praedicatur essentialiter de omnibus visibilibus."

[23] *In De an.*, q. 20, nn. 14-18.

[24] Ibid., q. 21, n. 10.

[25] "Ens autem vel quodcumque aliud subiectum non praedicatur de propria passione in quid, quia subiectum cadit in definitione passionis sicut aliquid additum, non autem sicut aliquid de eius essentia." I

adequation as concerns predication. This is adduced in support of the claim that "being, in comparison to truth and goodness is first by adequation as concerns power with respect to our intellect" (ibid.).[26] Scotus appears to reason thus: Since being is not primary by adequation as concerns predication, knowledge of its properties is insufficient for knowledge of being (as being is not said essentially of these properties). Since the properties are insufficient for knowledge of being, being itself must give rise to this knowledge, rendering bring the primary object of the intellect by adequation as concerns power.

The next argument proceeds along similar lines. Proper attributes are predicated essentially of their subjects. A number, for instance, is necessarily either odd or even.[27] Yet as mentioned, subjects are not predicated essentially their properties. Hence "being is not said of true and good, although one, true, and good are said *per se* of being" (ibid., n. 15).[28] Again the reader must supply the proposition that what cannot suffice for knowledge of being cannot have primacy with respect to power.

Next, Scotus argues that being is the intellect's primary object with respect to adequation as concerns predication, this following on the heels of his having denied this claim as 'being' is not predicated *in quid* of its proper attributes. The striking inconsistency fades in light of certain distinctions, but the reader is left to puzzle things out. At the conclusion of his discussion of being's primacy with respect to power, Scotus claims there is more that "should be said (*dicendum*)" (ibid., n. 20), namely, terms with diverse significates can sometimes pick out one and the same entity, "just as with 'animal' and 'rational', though they may signify the same thing, nonetheless one is not said of the other" (ibid.).[29] This use of non-formal identical predication—applied in additions to both *Questions on the Metaphysics* and the *Ordinatio*—eliminates any inconsistency. A predication is formal when the concept signified by the predicate is contained within the concept of its subject, e.g., 'Man is an animal'.[30] Identical predications, on the other hand, are true when both subject and predicate pick out one and the same individual. Scotus denies that being is contained within the concepts of its

am uncertain why Scotus believes that a subject is placed in the definition of its proper attribute as something added or extrinsic. He may have in mind the fact that a property can be defined without mentioning its subject, as, for instance, we may define risibility as the ability to laugh, without mentioning 'human being'. Again, properties are qualities, and Aristotle maintains that qualities, such as white, signify nothing save some qualification (*Categories* 5, 3[b]19-20), thus a property's subject would be extrinsic to its definition.

[26] "Ens in comparatione ad verum et bonum est primum adaequatione secundum virtutem respectu intellectus nostri."

[27] See Aristotle's *Posterior Analytics*, 1.4, 74[a]21-22.

[28] "Subiectum non praedicatur per se de passione; igitur nec ens de vero et bono, licet unum, verum et bonum praedicentur de ente per se."

[29] "Sicut 'animal' et 'rationale', licet dicant eandem rem, unum tamen non praedicatur de alio."

[30] See Pini, 104.

properties or the differences through which it descends to particulars, thus ruling out a primacy of predication as concerns being with respect to formal predication. However, inasmuch as every individual picked out by terms signifying being's properties or the differences through which being descends is likewise picked out by the term 'being', being is predicable of these properties and differences by means of their inherence in individuals. Thus while 'being' lacks primacy of predication *simpliciter*, it nonetheless has a primacy with respect to identical, non-formal predication; and as these differences are only beings via identical predication, their being termed 'beings' does not make the individuals in which they exist into beings twice over.[31]

Interestingly, for Scotus, ordinary language reflects the distinction between formal and non-formal predicates through the phenomenon of '*nugatio*', the redundant, useless repetition of the same idea:

> Whenever things are the same formally, if they are joined without a middle, this is nugatory, e.g., 'whiteness color', but it is not nugatory if they are the same by identity alone, e.g., 'white color' (ibid., n. 34).[32]

Scotus's second example seems to maintain that 'white', used to refer to the modification of an extramental entity, does not contain the concept of color. Yet, 'white' may be said of 'color' when both terms pick out the same individual, as in 'The color of the wall is white'. Hence, the middle Scotus has in mind is some individual in whom both qualities inhere. 'Whiteness', however, is an abstract term that contains 'color' in its signification, and thus 'whiteness color' is redundant, producing *nugatio*.

Since being holds a primacy of predication with respect to God and creatures "it is predicated essentially and *per se* of every object of the intellect, and consequently univocally owing to some univocity" (ibid., n. 21).[33] Two arguments for this primacy of predication describe our knowledge of God as confused, and it is precisely because this knowledge is confused, or indeterminate, that it may be termed 'univocal'. First Scotus notes we lack a concept of being that allows us to distinguish God from other entities, "For in the concept of being, we grasp God confusedly, only inasmuch as he has being with others" (ibid., n. 22).[34] For the present, let us simply note that our concept of being

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[31] *In De an.*, q. 21, nn. 34-36.

[32] "Quandocumque enim aliqua sunt idem formaliter, si iungantur sine medio, est ibi nugatio, ut 'color albedo'; non tamen si sint idem identice solum et non formaliter, ut 'color albus'."

[33] "Sed quod sit etiam obiectum respectu suorum inferiorum, scilicet Dei et creaturae, primitate praedicationis, ostendo: quia ad hoc requiritur, ut dictum est (supra n. 6), quod tale obiectum praedicetur essentialiter et per se de omnibus intelligibilibus, et per consequens univoce aliqua univocatione." The tag 'by some univocity' refers to logical univocity: "Being, as it is predicated of the ten categories metaphysically or naturally, does not signify one concept, and is neither a natural or metaphysical genus of the categories. However, speaking logically, being is univocal (ens . . . prout praedicatur de decem praedicamentis metaphysice vel naturaliter, non dicit unum conceptum—nec genus est naturale eorum nec metaphysicum; est tamen univocum, logice loquendo" (ibid., q. 21, n. 33).

[34] "Per conceptum enim entis cognoscimus Deum confuse tantum prout habet esse cum aliis."

is a concept of creaturely being, determinable as concerns God only in the beatific vision, leaving aside for now consideration of how it is that God has being in common with others. Scotus's other argument points out that all knowledge is drawn from sense, while substance "*per se* is not sensible" (ibid., n. 25).[35] We grasp substance only confusedly, as accidents' requisite substratum. Thus, we are able to acquire univocal knowledge of something we never directly experience, by means of a confused though in principle determinable concept (ibid.).

Regarding being's primacy of adequation through predication, Scotus accounts for its univocal descent by means of the aforementioned distinction between formal and non-formal, identical predication. Being "descends into its inferiors through additions, which are beings by identity or really, not however formally" (ibid., n. 36).[36] Thus, while being is not predicated *in quid* of these differences, they can nonetheless be said to exist, inasmuch as they are beings by identity with particulars.

Scotus describes this univocity as logical, such that there is an agreement in concept alone. Following Richard Cross, we may term it a 'vicious abstraction'.[37] Yet if this notion lacks an extramental referent, where is our real concept of a diverse creator? Scotus answers that our abstraction furnishes the requisite concept inasmuch as this abstraction remains determinable with respect to both God and creatures. We shall return to this after looking further into Scotus's notion of the confused concept.

The twenty second distinction of the first book of the *Ordinatio* argues that God may be denominated by us with some name that signifies the divine essence in itself, as it is this particular thing, by means of a uniquely referring, confused though determinable concept of the divine essence.

> God can be named by the wayfarer with a name that properly signifies the divine essence as it is 'this [particular] essence' [and no other], because the wayfarer is able to use that sign and to intend to express the signification of that sign . . . And even if this proposition is true that 'no name is able to be imposed on something more distinctly than it is understood', this nevertheless is false that 'no one is able to use a name signifying a thing more distinctly than he himself is able to understand' (*Ord.*, I, d. 22, q. un., n. 11, trans. mine).[38]

As in the *Questions on the De Anima*, Scotus compares our knowledge of God to knowledge of substance. We do not distinctly understand either substance or God, the

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[35] "Substantia . . . per se non est sensibilis."

[36] "Descendit in inferiora per addita, quae sunt entia identice vel realiter, non tamen formaliter."

[37] Cross, 13.

[38] "Est ergo Deus nominabilis a viatore nomine significante proprie essentiam divinam ut est 'haec essentia', qui viator potest uti illo signo et intendere exprimere significatum illius signi, sive ipse imposuerit illud signum sive alius quicumque qui cognovit significatum; et tali etiam signo vel nomine potest viator uti tamquam nomine, licet non potuerit illud imponere tamquam signum. Et si illa propositio esset vera quod 'nullum nomen potest imponi alicui distinctius quam intelligatur' (cf., supra n. 5), haec tamen est falsa quod 'nullus potest uti nomine, distinctius significare rem, quam ipse possit intelligere'."

former known only through accidents, the latter through creation. Despite this, we can distinctly signify both, in the sense that we have uniquely referring concepts of both, this despite a lack of direct acquaintance with either.[39] By way of an example of a term significative of such a concept of God, Scotus offers the Tetragrammaton.

A *reportatio* of this distinction further clarifies Scotus's understanding of confused concepts, where he stipulates our knowledge of God is confused, while detailing four grades of name-use correspondent with four levels of acquaintance. First, names may be uttered without signification, Scotus believes parrots evidence this level of name use. Again, we can recognize a term as significative though we haven't the faintest grasp of its meaning. Third, one may intend to express what the word signifies while possessing only a partial, general understanding of its proper signification, as if one said 'man', grasping only that he is an animal. Finally, perfect or complete name-use entails a full grasp of a term's proper signification. With reference to theological discourse, Scotus notes:

> … first conclusion: God is able to be named by the wayfarer by means of an absolutely proper name imperfectly, according to the three aforementioned grades. Second: It is not possible that God be perfectly named by the wayfarer, namely in accord with the fourth grade. Third: This is how He is named by us as a matter of fact [i.e., uniquely or properly] (*Ord.*, I, d. 22, q. un., Appendix A, p. 384, trans. mine).[40]

Scotus closes by repeating that we can impose uniquely referring names on account of a *ratio* proper to an entity but whose essence we do not fully grasp,[41] just as we may uniquely refer to substance as requisite substratum, substance itself remaining unknown.

Scotus's quodlibetal disputation concerning the trinity also describes knowledge of God as confused.[42] The fourteenth question argues that no matter its state, the soul cannot know the trinity of persons in God through knowledge immediate and proper. Likewise, we lack mediated knowledge of the divine essence in all its proper meaning as "the object exceeds the medium in knowability" (*Quodl.*, ibid., n. 88). We do, however, have some knowledge of God, which Scotus discusses in terms of the confused, uniquely referring, determinable concepts he discussed in the *Ordinatio* and *Questions on the De Anima*:

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[39] *Ord.*, I, d. 22, q. un., nn. 7-11.

[40] "His praemissis, ad quaestionem [viz., utrum Deus sit nominabilis ab homine viatore, aliquo nomine proprio] sit prima conclusio haec: possible est Deum nomine simpliciter proprio nominari a viatore imperfecte, secundum tres gradus primos praedictos; secunda conclusio est haec: non est possibile Deum perfecte nominari a viatore, scilicet secundum quartum gradum; tertia conclusio: qualiter de facto nominatur a nobis."

[41] *Ord.*, I, d. 22, q. un. Appendix A, p. 393.

[42] Translations of Scotus's quodlibetal questions are taken from *John Duns Scotus: God and Creatures; The Quodlibetal Questions*, trans with intro., notes, and glossary by Felix Alluntis and Allan B. Wolter (Washington, D.C: The Catholic University of America Press, 1975).

Any transcendent notion arrived at by abstraction from what is known of a creature can be thought of in its indifference and in such a case God is conceived confusedly . . . just as in thinking of animal, man is being thought of. But if such a common transcendent concept is thought of as qualified by some more specific perfection such as supreme, first, or infinite, we obtain a concept which is proper to God in the sense that it is characteristic of no other being (ibid., n. 13).

This echoes Scotus's comment in the *Questions on the De Anima*, where he claims that we possess a "*quidditative* though composite" concept of God as the highest good, though "through such a concept we do not grasp him in himself, as he is of such a determinate nature" (*In De an.*, q. 19, n. 26).[43] Or as Scotus notes in his *Ordinatio*, under the aspect of highest good, we are able to signify God more distinctly than he is conceived.

Both the *Ordinatio* and *Questions on the De Anima* compare our knowledge of God to our knowledge of substance, which is uniquely referred to as the requisite substratum of sensible accidents. The *Quodlibetal Questions* clarify why theological discourse is uniquely significative of the divine essence by noting it signifies "transcendent notion[s] arrived at by abstraction from what is known of . . . creature[s]" (*Quodl.*, 14.13). Transcendent notions, or 'transcendentals', are concepts that characterize both God and creatures without properly referring to either.[44] Transcendental concepts arise from experience, however transcendentals do not refer uniquely or properly to creatures, for transcendentals prescind from considerations pertaining to finitude or imperfection. Transcendental goodness is thus human goodness stripped of limitations. Likewise, transcendentals cannot without modification be properly referred to God who is infinite in perfection. However, joined with the notion of either finitude or infinitude, transcendentals properly pick out either creatures or God, respectively.[45] Thus transcendental concepts of God and creatures are confused though determinable. As concerns creatures, this determination is acquired when we reintroduce to the concept the imperfections attending its realization in creation. We then have perfect or complete name-use that entails a full grasp of the *significatum*, as described by Scotus in the *reportatio*, and the concept is no longer confused. But, in this life, we lack complete knowledge of God, as all knowledge is derived from sense. So we must join the transcendental concept with the notion of infinitude and refer it to God as is, knowing it cannot accurately represent the divine essence. Just as we do not directly experience substance as substratum, we do not experience God's infinite perfections. So though our concepts of God and substance refer properly or uniquely, each leaves its object undetermined.

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[43] "De Deo possumus naturaliter habere conceptum quiditativum, compositum tamen; sed per talem conceptum non cognoscimus eum in se, ut est talis naturae determinatae."

[44] *Ord.*, I, d. 3, q. 2, n. 26.

[45] *Ord.*, I, d. 3, q. 2, n. 26.

Not only is the wayfarer unable directly to experience God's infinite being, the very notion of infinite being is bound up with a contradiction. Scotus describes God's infinitude in his *Quodlibetal Questions* by recalling Aristotle's notion of an infinity potential with respect to quantity "such that no matter how much one removes from it, there is always more for the taking" (*Quodl.*, 5, n. 5). Then he says "we might imagine (*imaginaremur*)," "if it is possible (*si posset*)," "that all the parts that could be taken were taken at once or that they remained in existence simultaneously" (ibid., n. 6). This is the contradiction alluded to, that every part of a potentially infinite whole be simultaneously present. It is with this notion of a quantitatively infinite in act that Scotus attempts to distinguish between uncreated and created being, without placing the latter completely out of the reach of the fallen intellect.

As noted, if being is said univocally of God and creatures, this risks elevating it to a highest genus, threatening God's simplicity, as he would have to differ from creatures by some difference. As an aside, it is interesting to note that Scotus's *Questions on the De Anima* suggest he was toying with a means to effect this very elevation of being to the level of a genus, as once he responds to the objection that being cannot be a genus and thus is not univocal not by denying, but instead by arguing for the possibility of being's generic character, by claiming that Aristotle does not decisively rule out being as a genus but rather explores both sides of a complicated issue.[46] Be that as it may, Scotus's final solution relies on a modal distinction between differences of degree of being to avoid rendering being a genus. Unlike a real distinction which implies composition, such that things really distinct from one another are at least theoretically capable of independent existence, the modal distinction implies no composition. It is a lesser distinction that acknowledges degrees of intensity within one and the same nature. This is not a real distinction because a quality and its degree do not exist in isolation from one another, unlike various genera and specific differences, which can, and are thus really distinct. Accordingly, since the difference between finite and infinite being is merely one of degree between various modes of what has no existence apart form these modes, this difference does not imply any real distinction, and being is not a genus over and above God and creatures. Moreover, the conjunction of a reality and its mode does not entail real composition as the two are not really distinct.[47] While this distinction resolves one set of problems with respect to the univocity of being, it raises others. If the difference between God and creatures is one of degree, what of divinity's transcendence?

Scotus seems to respond that as concerns God and creatures this difference in degree entails a difference in kind:

> [God's infinite being] exceeds any finite being whatsoever not in some limited degree but in a measure beyond what is either defined or can be defined . . . In this fashion . . .

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[46] *In De an.*, q. 21, n. 33.

[47] *Ord.*, I, d. 8, q. 3, nn. 138-39.

the infinite exceeds the finite in being beyond any relative measure or proportion that could be assigned (*Quodl.*, 5, n. 9).

Scotus's talk of a relative measure steers us away from conceiving of God's being in terms of discrete units, such that you could pinpoint the exact amount of being needed to transform a lesser entity into a higher. Instead, we are to conceive a relative measure of power "in the way one species is superior to another" (ibid.). All entities save God are finite, and thus limited with respect to the being they can receive. There is, however, no conceivable limit to the degree of being that God possesses, hence no finite being could approximate God's perfection, moreover, perfections dispersed in creation are somehow identical yet distinct in God's simple essence,[48] thus the distance between God and creatures is secure.

Again, resolution leads to difficulty. Being is said univocally of both God and creatures through a modal distinction that avoids introducing complexity into the divine essence, while simultaneously preserving God's transcendence. But Scotus seems to have placed God beyond the fallen wayfarer intellect. Yet if this result follows from Scotus's principles, he certainly does not accept it. In *De primo principio*, likely Scotus's last complete work, he claims to have demonstrated, among other things, that God is the first efficient cause, the ultimate end, supreme in perfection, transcending all things, uncaused in any way, incapable of becoming or perishing, and necessarily existent.[49] Yet there are perhaps indications in his earlier *Quodlibetal Questions* that he is moving away from univocity as a means of supporting these claims. There, speaking of God's being, he notes "whether its commonness be one of univocation or analogy, I do not care at present" (14.39), and the doctrine of univocity is absent from *De primo principio*. This recalls Marrone's suggestion with respect to Scotus's reliance on univocity:

> Devised for its utility in certain matters of theology and not because it imposed itself out of the fundamentals of metaphysics and logic, the theory might always have appeared somewhat dubious to Duns's eyes, ready to be discarded the moment he could be convinced there was a less radical way to resolve his theological concerns.[50]

At any rate, this essay does presume to uncover a theory of univocity that provides real concepts of a diverse God, direct knowledge of whose essence evades us in this life. Rather, my aim, in part, is to show that Scotus was not an apophatic theologian, as seems clear from the accomplishments he ascribes reason in *De primo principio*. On the other hand, Scotus believes that the divine perfections are somehow identical yet distinct,[51] that notions univocal to God and creatures are merely logical, providing

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[48] *Quodl.*, 5, n. 7; *De primo princ.*, 4.76.

[49] *De primo princ.*, 4.84-85.

[50] S. P. Marrone, "The Notion of Univocity in Duns Scotus's Early Works," in *Franciscan Studies* 43 (1983): 347-95, at 391.

[51] *Quodl.*, 5, n. 7; *De primo princ.*, 4.76.

agreement in concept alone,[52] and that joining these concepts to infinitude places their referent beyond any relative measure or proportion,[53] all of which (*pace* Burrell) points to a deep appreciation of how our fallen nature inhibits accurate signification within the context of theological discourse. This, in turn, recommends against reading Scotus as espousing a doctrine of univocity that renders meaningless any serious distinction (apart from degree) between creator and creation.

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[52] *In De an.*, q. 1, n. 13.

[53] *Quodl.*, 5, n. 9.

Joshua P. Hochschild:

Cajetan on Scotus on Univocity

What role does Scotus's understanding of univocity play in Cajetan's development of a theory of analogy? In this paper I examine three relevant texts from Cajetan – question 3 of his commentary on Aquinas's *De Ente et Essentia*, his treatise *De Nominum Analogia*, and his commentary on question 13, article 5 of Aquinas's *Summa Theologiae* – in which Cajetan articulates his understanding of analogy at least in part through dialectical engagement with Scotus's arguments about univocity. It is not my intention to evaluate the fairness of Cajetan's interpretation or deployment of Scotus's position, or to say whether the arguments Cajetan considers are in fact representative of Scotus's views – that I will leave to more competent scholars of Scotus.[1] Rather, I want to illuminate the function that, in Cajetan's mind, certain theses and arguments associated with Scotus play in formulating problems that Cajetan's theory of analogy proposes to solve.

Some influence of Scotus (and Scotists) in the development of Cajetan's analogy theory is widely acknowledged. Also well known is the influence of Cajetan on the subsequent history of Thomistic reflection on analogy. In recent generations of scholarship – thanks in part to arguments from influential Thomistic philosophers (like Étienne Gilson) and thanks also to discussions among theologians about the significance of the *analogia entis* – Cajetan is often criticized for a position that was so preoccupied with Scotus's approach as to be (inadvertently) coopted by it. According to a common version of this criticism, Scotus's arguments provoked Cajetan to become preoocupied with analyzing the analogical "concept," while a more authentically Thomistic approach would have treated analogy instead as a matter of "judgment."[2]

This trend of criticizing Cajetan for a "conceptualist" or even "univocalist" account of analogy provides the background for my reflections on Cajetan's use of arguments from Scotus about univocity. One of the lessons of my analysis is that this common criticism of Cajetan is misplaced. Cajetan is indeed concerned to answer particular problems

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[1] On the side of philosophical theology, one might start with Alexander W. Hall, *Thomas Aquinas and John Duns Scotus: Natural Theology in the High Middle Ages* (Continuum, 2007), esp. chs. 4-7. On the side of logic and semantics, see Giorgi Pini, *Categories and Logic in Duns Scotus: An Interpretation of Aristotle's Categories in the Late Thirteenth Century* (Leiden: Brill, 2002).

[2] For references and discussion, see Joshua P. Hochschild, "Analogy, Semantics, and Hermeneutics: The 'Concept vs. Judgment' Critique of Cajetan's *De Nominum Analogia*," *Medieval Philosophy and Theology* 11 (2003): 241-260.

raised by Scotus, but in doing so he refuses to adopt, and pointedly criticizes, key semantic assumptions behind Scotus's position. Furthermore, Cajetan's response to Scotus confirms that while he intended to answer semantic or "conceptualist" objections with his own alternative semantic analysis of analogy, Cajetan saw that the Thomistic disagreement with Scotus could not be addressed only at the semantic level but depended ultimately on distinctions at the level of metaphysics.

The Commentary on *De Ente et Essentia* (1495)

Proceeding in chronological order, I will discuss first Cajetan's commentary on Aquinas's treatise *De Ente et Essentia*. Composed in 1495, this is a fairly youthful work – Cajetan was 26 years old. Recently appointed to the Chair of Thomistic Metaphysics at the University of Padua, Cajetan's expected duties would have included criticism of Scotistic views. Indeed, while Cajetan comments line by line, his commentary is interspersed with extended questions which often address particular issues where Thomists differed from Scotists (e.g. on the first object of intellection, on individuation, etc.). Cajetan engages Scotus on univocity in question 3: *Whether being is predicated univocally of substance and accident, or primarily of substance* (sect. 17 – 21).

In elaborating on the question (sect. 18) Cajetan makes clear that what is at stake is not primarily a metaphysical issue, but a semantic or epistemological one. As Cajetan puts it, analogy can be considered according to the *being* of the predicates (*secundum esse illius praedicati*), when a predicate has being in different things with an order of priority; this occurs even for a genus term when its species have an order of priority, such as higher or lower orders of animals. (Cajetan cites Aristotle's *Metaphysics*, Book XII, and in *De Nominum Analogia* he will call this "analogy of inequality.") Analogy in the sense that Cajetan wants to consider it is not according to this order in reality, but according to an order in intelligible content: it is when a word is predicated "per prius et posterius secundum rationem propriam." This occurs when a word, predicated of two (or more) things, has a primary *ratio* when predicated of one, and a *ratio* somehow related to that primary *ratio* when predicated of the other (or others). The classic example, which Cajetan here uses, is "healthy": it's *primary* meaning pertains to the health of the animal; its secondary meanings pertain to what is related to this primary meaning, as "healthy" predicated of urine, diet, and medicine signify respectively relations of *sign*, *preservative*, and *cause* of animal health.

Does the word "being" exhibit the same order of *rationes* when predicated of substance and accident? This is the central point of contention that Cajetan sees between himself and Scotus ("in hoc pendet tota quaestio inter nos et Scotum"). We might say that it is not about *the analogy of being* but *the analogy of "being"*. At stake in this question of

analogy is the *concept* or *ratio* of being – which is to say, as Cajetan clarifies earlier in his commentary, the *signification* of the word "being."[3]

Cajetan recapitulates at some length arguments from Scotus for the position that "being" is univocal (section 19). He gives five distinct arguments (from Scotus's Oxford commentary on the *Sentences*, Book I, dist. III, qq. 1 & 3; dist. 8, q. 3[4]), presumably ones that would be familiar to Scotists and to critics of Scotus. To summarize them briefly:

(S1)   We can be certain that something is a being while doubting whether it is God or a creature, finite or infinite, substance or accident; so the concept of being must be other than these, but included in these.[5]

(S2)   We can learn about God from creatures, but whatever concepts we have that apply to God were acquired from objects illuminated in the phantasms acquired from creatures, and any such objects must be essentially or virtually contained in the phantasms.[6]

(S3)   Again regarding theological discovery: reflection about God depends on attending to the *ratio* of something, stripping away the imperfections, and attributing to it the highest perfections; but we must start with the same formal *ratio* (or concept), which is therefore univocal to both perfect and imperfect beings.[7]

(S4)   We have quidditative knowledge of substance, but we only know substance via accidents, not directly[8]; so the concept of substance must be abstracted from the accident.[9]

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[3] "It is the same to speak of the *concept of being* as to speak of the *signification of 'being'"* (*idem est loqui de conceptu entis et de significatione ejus*), §14. Alternatively, "It is the same to speak of '*being*'s *concept* as to speak of its *signification*."

[4] The Laurent edition of Cajetan refers to Scotus's q. 2 of d. 8, but the relevant text is clearly q. 3, and Cajetan gets the reference correct in his commentary on *ST* 13.5.

[5] Cf. Duns Scotus, *Commentaria Oxoniensia*, I, d. 3, qq. 1&2, a. 4 (ed. Garcia, Florence, 1912), arg. #1, p. 309-310; cf. d. 8, q. 3, a. 1 [#624, pp. 593-594].

[6] Cf. Duns Scotus, *Comm. Ox.*, d. 3, q. 1-2, a. 4, arg. #2, p. 311; also d. 8, q. 3, a. 1 (#623. p 591).

[7] Cf. Duns Scotus, *Comm. Ox.*, d. 3, q. 1-2, a. 4, arg. #3, pp. 311-312; cf. d. 8, q. 3, a. 1 (#625, pp. 595-596).

[8] As Scotus argues and Cajetan repeats: otherwise, for instance, we would be able to know by natural reason that the substance of bread is not present in the consecrated host!

[9] Duns Scotus, *Comm. Ox.* d. 3, q. 3, a. 2, pp. 338-339: "quod Deus non est a nobis cognoscibilis naturaliter nisi ens sit univocum creato et Increato, ita potest argui de substantia et accidente; cum enim substantia non immutet immediate intellectum nostrum ad aliquam intellectionem sui, sed tantum accidens sensibile, sequitur quod nullum conceptum quidditativum habere poteribus de ea, nisi sit aliquis talis qui posit abstrahi a conceptu accidentis: sed nullus talis quidditativus abstrahibilis est a conceptu accidentis, nisi conceptus entis; ergo etc." P. 339 discusses the bread and the host on the altar – if we

(S5)   Lastly, Cajetan points out that Scotus appeals to several textual authorities, of which Cajetan names Aristotle, Avicenna, and Algazali. Cajetan's longest discussion here is of a passage from Aristotle's *Metaphysics* (Book II), when Aristotle says (on Scotus's interpretation) that comparison of degree implies a univocal predication. (*Met*. II.1, 993b23-25) (Cajetan ends his summary by saying that the other authorities cited by Scotus, which he will not summarize, only prove the *otherness* (*alietas*) of being, not the *univocation* of being – i.e., that they show that there is a *distinct* concept of being, but not that the concept is *univocal*.)

In these arguments, the attention to concept acquisition, judgments of comparison, certainty and doubt, and inference all reinforce that the essential issue for Cajetan, as well as for Scotus, is not metaphysical but epistemological or semantic.

After stating these five arguments, Cajetan gives three *reductio* arguments against Scotus's conclusion that being is univocal (sect. 20). These do not resolve the issue and do not give Cajetan's full position, but they offer reasons to reject Scotus's conclusion. Effectively, they constitute an extended *sed contra* in the overall dialectical structure of the question. Briefly summarized, Cajetan's arguments are as follows:

(C1)   *Accident* defined insofar as it is *being* includes *substance* in its *ratio*, but *substance* as *being* does not include *accident* in its *ratio* – therefore being does not have the same *ratio* as predicated of substance and accident.

(C2)   If "being" is univocal, it is a genus; but this leads to difficulties – such as that it would be included in both the definition of *the* genus and the definition of the difference (insofar as both are beings), but then a full definition of a species (including both genus and difference) would be nugatory.

(C3)   If being is a genus term, then it falls within the definition of substance, and so of man, which is contrary to Aristotle's teaching.

Following these arguments, Cajetan gives (what he claims is) the teaching of Saint Thomas (sect. 21); one might think of this as the *corpus* or main reply to the question. I will outline that position here, keeping in mind that my object is not to articulate fully Cajetan's teaching on analogy, but only to highlight those features pertinent to Cajetan's dialectical deployment of Scotus.

Cajetan describes analogy as a mean between univocation and equivocation. Following the structure of Aristotle's definitions from the beginning of the *Categories*, he gives definitions of the univocal, then of the equivocal, describing them as having a common name which refers to different things by means of concepts (*rationes*) either wholly the same or wholly different. In the mean of analogy, there is a common name "and the

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could know substance immediately, "sequeretur quod quando susbtantia non esset praesens posset naturaliter cognosci non esse praesens; et ita naturaliter posset cognosci in hostia Altaris consecrate non esse substantiam panis: quod est manifese falsum."

ratio corresponding to that name is in one sense the same and in one sense different, or is the same in a qualified sense, and different in a qualified sense."

Cajetan then proceeds to distinguish two ways that the *ratio* can be somehow the same and somehow different: either (1) because there are two *rationes* with a determinate relation to each other, or (2) because there are two *rationes* which are proportionally similar. In other words, the *secundum quid* similarity between two concepts in one case is that one concept has a determinate relation to another, while the *secundum quid* similarity in the other case is "not that the analogue is predicated simply of the primary analogate and of others relative to the primary, but because they have a concept or *ratio* which is *the same in a qualified sense, owing to the sameness of proportion which is found in them*, and different in a qualified sense, owing to the diversity of the given natures with these proportions" (emphasis added).

These are the two modes of analogy Cajetan will later (in *De Nominum Analogia*) call *analogy of attribution* and *analogy of proper proportionality*. Although he doesn't use those terms here (and he here doesn't make the further claim of *De Nominum Analogia* that one is a more genuine or proper mode of analogy), we can see that analogy of proper proportionality is a more genuine or proper mean between univocation and equivocation. This becomes clear when Cajetan offers two corollaries or conclusions of his analysis: (1) being is analogous in *both* modes when predicated of substance and accident; and (2) being is analogous only in the latter mode when predicated of God and creatures.

For the second conclusion, Cajetan cites the authority of Aquinas's *De Veritate* 2.11, but textual support seems secondary; Cajetan's *semantic* rationale is clear: analogy of proportionality is not a form of univocation (because there is a proportional relationship, not specific or generic identity or some other determinate relationship, between creatures and God), but is sufficiently unified – proportionally unified – to warrant inferences from creatures to God. Cajetan even cites the authority of Aristotle for his conviction that proportional unity is sufficient for scientific inference.

The significance of this as a response to the arguments from Scotus is clear. Scotus argued for univocity in order to preserve the possibility of knowledge (as judgment or assent, and as discursive inference) that would be threatened by error or fallacy if the relevant key term "being" were equivocal. Cajetan's response is that "it is not necessary to say that "being" is univocal in order for it to have attributes that ground a contradiction (i.e. when affirmed and denied of the same thing) [*ens non oprtet poni univocum ad hoc quod passiones habeat et contradictionem fundet…*]." Instead, unity of proportion suffices.

Cajetan finishes the question by making this implicit response to Scotus explicit, giving careful replies to the objections, that is, responding to each of Scotus's five arguments for the univocity of being (section 21a):

Ad (S1) To the argument about the possibility of having certainty with respect to one concept while doubting others, Cajetan replies that being *is* a concept *distinct*

from or *other than* the concept of substance and accident, but it is not *univocal* to them.

Ad (S2)   To the argument about the content of an abstracted concept being already contained in the phantasm, Cajetan replies that we can gain a concept that is not itself already in the phantasm, because the phantasm does not have to contain the cause virtually or essentially; the phantasm of an effect can contain the concept of the cause *participatively* – i.e. insofar as the cause is proportionally similar to the effect (cf. Cajetan's commentary on *ST* I, 13.5, section X).

Ad (S3)   To the argument about purifying a *ratio* of its imperfections, Cajetan says that the process can involve an *analogous* or only *proportionally unified* formal *ratio*. In other words, the result of the "purification" process is not the *identical* concept purified, but a *new* concept proportionally similar to the original concept.

Ad (S4)   To the argument about only accidents modifying the intellect, Cajetan responds that substance does modify the intellect by its proper species, and not only by the species of accidents.[10]

Ad (S5)   Lastly, regarding Scotus's appeal to textual authority, Cajetan offers reinterpretations of the relevant texts; in particular, concerning Aristotle, Cajetan invokes a principle that a medium compared to an extreme takes on the characteristics of the opposite extreme[11]; so in contrasting an analogical term to an equivocal term, Aristotle emphasized unity, and indeed comparison (e.g. of greater or lesser) does imply a *unity* in the standard of comparison, but not *univocation*. Again, *proportional* unity suffices.

At this point let me highlight some general points about Cajetan's use of Scotus in q. 3 of the *De Ente et Essentia* commentary. *First*, Scotus figures quite prominently to frame the objections, setting up a set of problems that Cajetan thinks a Thomistic account of analogy must solve. (It seems that is not especially relevant that Scotus developed his position against Henry of Ghent, since Scotus's arguments serve equally well as objections to Aquinas's position.) *Second*, while it is the univocity of *being* that is at stake, in Scotus's arguments and Cajetan's response the issue is logical, not metaphysical or theological. When Cajetan does treat the metaphysical and theological questions, it is as different applications of logical distinctions. *Third*, the semantic concerns intensified by Scotus all pertain to how an analogical concept could have sufficient unity to ground knowledge without being univocal. A non-univocal concept, for Scotus, called into question the intelligibility of individual *concepts*, the sense of

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[10] But it does so through accidents, which is why the accidents of bread can still give the impression of the substance of bread, much as they nourish us!

[11] Cajetan invoked the same principle earlier in sect. 21.

particular *judgments*, and the validity of inferences in *discursive reasoning*. Cajetan's response boils down to the position that proportional unity is sufficient to do the work that Scotus had assigned only to univocity. There is not *one* analogical concept, but two concepts whose proportional similarity allows them to function *as if* they are one. (And Cajetan's twice-invoked warning about the mean looking like an extreme acknowledges that the analogue may *seem* univocal, but only *because* it has sufficient unity to be differentiated from what is equivocal.)

De Nominum Analogia (1498)

Cajetan's separate, dedicated treatise on analogy was written three years after his commentary on *De Ente et Essentia*. A distinction between modes of analogy, and a preference for analogy of proportionality – these are the main teachings for which his treatise "on the analogy of names" is remembered, but as we have seen these were already present in outline in the *De Ente* commentary's question on univocation. In the treatise, these teachings are more systematically worked out, and the context is even more explicitly a logical or semantic project. Indeed, the treatise on analogy could almost be read as an extended appendix to Cajetan's *Categories* commentary (written earlier the same year), where he mentioned analogy briefly in the traditional context of the definition of equivocation, and promised to treat further questions about analogy in a separate work.[12]

De Nominum Analogia is structured to offer a treatment of analogy through the three parts of logic.[13] Here explicit attention to Scotus is much more muted. Scotus is not named early on, although presumably some of his arguments are in the background. The general question that motivates the treatise – to describe the unity of the analogical concept – shows attention to Scotus's concerns. And certainly some chapters start by posing problems that could be traced to Scotistic objections. Chapter 5 begins by posing a question about how abstraction works for analogy. Chapter 6 begins with a question about how an analogical predicate can be superior – that is, universal without being generic and so univocal.[14] In the discussion of comparison in Chapter 8, Cajetan says – in what surely sounds like a reference to Scotists – that "it is believed by many" that there can't be comparison of greater or lesser without something [univocally] common.

But Scotus is not mentioned by name in *De Nominum Analogia* until the penultimate chapter, when the semantics of analogy is applied to discursive reasoning in order to

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[12] Cajetan, *Commentaria in Praedicamenta Aristotelis*, ed. M.H.Laurent (Rome, 1939), p. 11: "Quot autem modis contingat variari analogiam et quomodo, nunc quum summarie loquimur, silentio pertransibimus, specialem de hoc tractatum, si Deo placuerit, cito confecturi."

[13] Cf. Joshua P. Hochschild, "The Rest of Cajetan's Analogy Theory: *De Nominum Analogia* chapters 4-11," *International Philosophical Quarterly* 45 (2005): 341-356.

[14] Also in ch. 6, in sect. 69, Cajetan discusses an objection which he says commits the fallacy of the consequent; in his commentary on *ST* 13.5 Cajetan attributes this same objection to Scotus.

address "how there is scientific knowledge [*scientia*] of the analogue" (ch. 10). Scotus and his followers are referred to obliquely in sect. 104 ("it appears to some that there cannot be science of the analogue…") and Scotus is finally named in sect. 106 as defending this position.

Cajetan also presents Scotus's definition of a univocal concept in sect. 113: "I call a univocal concept what is one in such a way that its unity suffices for contradiction when it is affirmed and denied of the same thing." [15] Cajetan finds this definition of univocity inadequate. Scotus "either poorly explained the univocal concept, or contradicted himself" – i.e. since proportional unity is sufficient to preserve the reasoning, either this is a bad definition of univocity, or as a definition of "univocity" it can't be used to say that analogical terms can't be used in scientific reasoning. [16] Cajetan's response to these issues, then, rests on an appeal to *proportional unity*. Such unity is sufficient for valid reasoning (again, as in the *De Ente et Essentia* commentary, citing Aristotle's *Posterior Analytics*, Bk. II).

Here I offer an intermediate summary. In comparison with the extensive dialectical use of Scotus to frame the issue in the *De Ente* commentary, Cajetan's use of Scotus in the *De Nominum Analogia* is muted. This might seem coy, but it is reasonable, given that the goal here is to produce a treatise (not a polemic) expounding a theory (not just an interpretation of Aquinas or a reply to his critics). [17] It is quite clear that the work is motivated not just by the Scotistic objection to analogy but by the failure of other Thomists to adequately respond to it. (In the very first paragraph, Cajetan mentions three alternative inadequate accounts of the unity of the analogical concept.) It is also

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[15] Duns Scotus, *Comm. Ox.*, I, d. 3, qq. 1&2, a. 4, ¶346 (309): "...conceptum univocum dico qui ita est unus, quod eius unitas sufficit ad contradictionem affirmando et negando ipsum de eodem: sufficit etiam pro medio syllogistico, ut extrema unita in medio sic uno sine fallacia aequivocationis concludantur inter se uniri." Cf. Duns Scotus, *In Librum Praedicamentorum Quaestiones*, q. 1: "ubi est idem conceptus, ibi est univocatio." Cf. Duns Scotus, *In Libros Elenchorum Quaestiones*, 2 (Vives 1891, 20a-25a). Presumably this identification of univocity with the power to mediate valid inference became typical of the Scotistic position; although I have conducted no systematic survey, the first Scotist *Categories* commentary I pulled off the shelf seems perfectly in line here: it treats analogy as "equivocatio a consilio" where there are diverse significations, "quorum unum dicit similitudinem vel proportionem ad aliud, *nequaquam tamen convenientia in ratione formali una*," from which it is concluded that "*de aequivocis non est scientia quia deficient ab unitate*." Augustinus de Ferraria, *Queastiones Super Librum Praedicamentorum Aristotelis*, ed. Robert Andrews, Acta Universitatis Stockholmiensis (Studia Latina Stockholmiensia) XLV, 2000, pp. 23-24 (emphasis added).

[16] I am unaware of philosophers before Scotus who explicitly *defined* univocity in terms of the ability to found a contradiction. More typical in the Aristotelian commentary tradition is the mention of the ability to found a contradiction as a *feature* of univocal terms, e.g. Simplicius, *Commentary on Aristotle's* Categories, 34. 7-11 (*On Aristotle's* "Categories 1-4," trans. Michael Chase, Cornell University Press, 2003, p. 48). But this is still compatible with treating analogous terms as a mean between univocation and equivocation, exhibiting some features of both.

[17] It is worth noting also that Scotus is not mentioned in Cajetan's letter *De Conceptu Entis* (1509) which offers clarifications of, and is traditionally printed with, the treatise on analogy.

true that it would be difficult to find in Aquinas a direct answer to Scotus's concern. Although Aquinas clearly saw that analogy required semantic attention, his own discussions of the semantic functions of analogical terms remain unsystematic and incomplete.[18] Hence Cajetan sensed the need for an independent treatise, rather than a simple commentary or compilation of texts.

But although Scotus is named only at the end, the influence of Scotus through the whole spectrum of logical or semantic concerns – from the semantics of terms to the structure of discursive reasoning – is clear. And while Cajetan's ultimate goal, like Scotus, is to explain the possibility of scientific reasoning, Scotus's error is traced to an inadequate definition of univocation and a failure to recognize proportional unity as a legitimate and relevant kind of unity.

Commentary on the *Summa Theologiae* (1507?)

Our last text to consider is Cajetan's commentary on article 5 of question 13 of Aquinas's *Summa Theologiae*, on whether names are applied to God and creatures univocally. Cajetan defends at length the structure of Aquinas's argument for the negative. Scotus is named in sect. IX, for his "many arguments" from I *Sent*., d. 3, q. 1 and 3, and d. 8, q. 3 – the same passages as discussed at length in the *De Ente* commentary.

Cajetan refers his readers to that commentary, and here only briefly describes four of Scotus's arguments:

(T1)   We can have certainty of one concept while doubting another concept [=(S1) above]

(T2)   In gaining knowledge of God, one formal *ratio* is stripped of imperfections [*una ratione formali*] [=(S3) above]

(T3)   God is known by a simple concept [*naturaliter cognoscibilis aliqu simplici conceptu*] contained either essentially or virtually in what is in the phantasm [=(S2) above]

(T4)   Comparison implies univocation [=(S5) above; Cf. *DNA* ch. 8]

Cajetan offers responses to each of these arguments (section X):

Ad (T1)   It is a *sophisma consequentis* to say that the community of the concept implies univocation. Univocation implies community, but community does not imply univocation. Both univocals and analogues are superior to inferiors, but univocals are superior as prescinding from inferiors, while

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[18] See Joshua P. Hochschild, "Did Aquinas Answer Cajetan's Question? Aquinas's Semantic Rules for Analogy and the Interpretation of *De Nominum Analogia*," *Proceedings of the American Catholic Philosophical Association* 77 (2003): 273-288.

analogues are superior as containing them both. (Cajetan refers to *De Nominum Analogia*, where he makes these arguments in ch. 4.)

Ad (T2)   The *ratio* is one not simply, but by analogy (*ratione una non simpliciter, sed secundum analogiam*); some concepts can be "polished" to apply to God (analogically), other concepts (like stone) cannot be so polished since they always contain imperfection. (For Scotus on *sapiens* vs. *lapis*, cf. d. 8, q. 3, a. 1, #626, p. 596.)

Ad (T3)   In addition to essential or virtual inclusion in the phantasm, there is a third mode of inclusion, by participation or imitation (*participative vel imitative*) [cf. *De Nominum Analogia* 90, 92, which mentions *participation* while discussing *comparison*]

Ad (T4)   There is comparison of the analogue, which is not an equivocal but a mean between the equivocal and the univocal, thanks to a unity that is proportional, not simple. (This is a topic in Ch. 8 of *De Nominum Analogia*, to which Cajetan refers.)

So here in the *Summa* commentary, the extended, explicit dialectical engagement with Scotus is restored after being dropped in the treatise; but Cajetan's general theoretical position is the same.[19] The arguments are indeed pared down, with reference made both to the treatise on analogy and commentary on *De Ente et Essentia* for further elaboration. And here, even before mentioning Scotus, Cajetan spends more time describing the proportional relationship between concepts, how such concepts are acquired, and how they function in theological reasoning.

Conclusion

In Cajetan's treatment of analogy, Scotus's position presented a *semantic* problem, calling into question the very possibility of analogy as a mean between univocation and equivocation. As Scotus would have it, a concept is *per se* univocal. Univocation thus involves one concept, equivocation involves two, but there is no room for analogy as a mean between these two alternatives.

In responding to this challenge, Cajetan in a sense concedes that a concept is strictly speaking univocal, but he insists that two concepts that are different can be *proportionally* one. In this case, one can speak of "a" concept which is an analogical concept, just to the extent that the unity of this "one" concept is only proportional unity.

Cajetan's response, then, depends on a metaphysical distinction between kinds of unity. The success of Cajetan's response rests entirely on the success of his appeal to the reality of proportionally unified concepts.

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[19] Cajetan does provide an alternative way of describing the relationship of participation, i.e. as "imitation."

As a solution to Scotus' semantic challenge, Cajetan's teaching on proportional unity is fully present in the earliest relevant text, in the commentary on *De Ente et Essentia*. What he says in later writings does not modify or substantially add to what is found there. The *De Nominum Analogia* provides more systematic attention to the relevant semantics and epistemology, especially with its discussion of concept acquisition, judgment, and discursive reasoning. The discussion in the *Summa Theologiae* commentary adds further considerations about the acquisition of theological concepts. One might say that this attention to concept acquisition and reasoning extends, rather than replaces, Aquinas's attention to the role of *judgment* in analogy. Scotus's views on univocity highlighted the semantic pecularity of analogy, and Cajetan saw this as a dialectically useful opportunity to defend a Thomistic understanding of thought and signification, appealing to a metaphysical distinction – between pure and proportional unity – in order to elaborate the semantics of analogy further than Aquinas ever did.

Brendan Palla:

Aquinas on the Object of the Intellect

Aquinas appears to offer two contradictory accounts of the proper object of the human intellect. This is a grave problem, given the role that the objects of faculties play in Aristotelian psychology. Medieval debates over the definition of the proper object of the intellect were conducted in terms of what the object of the intellect tells us about that towards which humans are oriented. Thus, Aquinas accuses Platonists of misunderstanding human nature when they suggested that separate, immaterial forms were the object of the intellect.[1] Similarly, John Duns Scotus accuses Aquinas of being committed to a heresy (that beatitude is not the fulfillment of human nature, because beatitude involves cognition of God) and skepticism about metaphysics when Aquinas claims that it is proper to the human intellect "to know a form existing individually in corporeal matter, but not *as* existing in this individual matter."[2]

In this essay I shall argue that Aquinas distinguishes two analogously related meanings of the proper object of the intellect: (1) what it is that the intellect is adequate to by its own operation of abstraction from sensible phantasms and (2) what is first, albeit perhaps confusedly, understood by any intellect (including human intellects) in any intellectual operation. There are many texts in which Aquinas appears to contradict himself. First there is his assertion that the proper object of the intellect is being embodied in material things, the *quod quid est* of a material substance, and secondly there are those texts where Aquinas asserts that *ens* or *ens et verum universale* are the proper objects of the human intellect.[3]

In the next section I shall present the arguments of John Duns Scotus and Robert Pasnau, which exploit the alleged contradiction. Scotus claims that Aquinas univocally asserts that being embodied in material quiddity is the proper object of the human intellect, while Pasnau claims that cognition under the aspect of *ens et verum universale* is mostly vacuous. By tracing the use Aquinas makes of the series of texts arguing that *ens* is the proper object of the intellect, I shall show that Aquinas is committed to neither implication.

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[1] Aquinas, *Summa Theologiae* (= *ST*) Ia. 84. 1, reply.

[2] Ibid. 85. 1, reply.

[3] At *ST* Ia. IIae. 9.1, he claims "Primum autem principium formale est ens et verum universale, quod est obiectum intellectus." and again at *ST* Ia. 5. 2: "unde ens est proprium obiectum intellectus; et sic est primum intelligibile." However, he repeatedly claims that the proper object of the human intellect is "quod quid est, idest substantia rei, ut dicitur III de anima." *Summa Contra Gentiles* III, 56, n. 5.

I take Aquinas to distinguish between the proper object of the intellect *as adequate* and the proper object of the intellect *as what is first* cognized by the intellect. The proper object$_1$ of the intellect according to the first meaning of the term is in use when Aquinas makes such claims as "the proper object of the intellect is quiddity, that is, the substance of the thing, as is claimed in bk. 3 of *On the Soul*."[4] The proper object$_2$ of the intellect according to the second meaning of the term is *ens*. Aquinas holds that *ens* is what is first (and confusedly) cognized by the intellect because of metaphysical considerations. Objects move their subject-faculty by determining the act after the manner of a formal principle: "Now the first formal principle is universal being and truth, which is the object of the intellect."[5] As a result of this metaphysical doctrine concerning the reason why anything is intelligible to any intellect at all, Aquinas gives us his epistemological reason for regarding *ens* as the proper object of the intellect: "Now, as Avicenna says, that which the intellect first conceives as, in a way, the most evident, and to which it reduces all concepts, is being. Consequently, all the other conceptions of the intellect are had by additions to being."[6]

The Scotist Interpretation of the *Proprium Obiectum*

Scotus recognizes how important it is to understand the proper object of the human intellect, and launches one of his attacks on Aquinas's cognitive psychology at just this point. Duns Scotus, concentrating on St. Thomas's treatment of human cognition in the *Prima Pars* of the *Summa Theologiae*, comes to the conclusion that, for Aquinas, the first object of the intellect is the quiddity of material things: "[C]ertain ones [i.e. Aquinas] say that the object of the embodied intellect is the quiddity of a material thing *because the intellect is proportioned to its object*" (emphasis added)."[7] So Duns Scotus is taking at face value Aquinas's oft-repeated claim that the intellect attains knowledge through the abstraction of intelligible species of material quiddities from phantasms.

A very serious objection seems to follow from the claim that material quiddities are the proper object of the intellect:

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[4] *Summa Contra Gentiles* III, 56, n. 5.

[5] Aquinas, *ST* Ia. IIae. 9.1, reply.

[6] Aquinas, *De Veritate*, trans. Robert Mulligan, S.J. (Chicago IL: Henry Regnery Co., 1952), Q. 1.1, reply.

[7] Duns Scotus, *The Examined Report of the Paris Lecture* (Reportatio I-A), trans. A. Wolter (St. Bonaventure NY: The Franciscan Institute, 2004), d. III, q. 1, a. 2, n. 15. An objector raised the question as to whether this argument was directed against the teaching of Aquinas or Henry of Ghent (as, e.g., many of Scotus's arguments concerning the analogy of being were so-directed). The editors of the text supply the subheading that this argument of the subtle doctor is directed against Aquinas. Aside from the fact that Scotus begins his disproof from a very Thomistic claim, there is the evidence that Scotus begins his *next* section (nn. 23–40) with an exposition and disproof of the opinion of 'others,' and this section begins with Henry's doctrines.

> Since God according to some proper concept does not fall under the scope of this intermediate power, therefore God could not be conceived according to some simple and proper concept by the intellect of the pilgrim, inasmuch as the cognitive power, according to him, extends only to that which falls under the object *per se*; God is not this sort of thing, therefore we conceive nothing proper about God.[8]

Here, the crucial premise in Scotus's argument is the claim imputed to Aquinas that, "the cognitive power, according to him, extends only to that which falls under the object *per se*." This claim is key because it serves as the crucial middle premise in a Scotist demonstration that Aquinas cannot allow metaphysics as a science, nor the vision of God as the final end of human nature:

1. The vision of God requires the conception of God by the intellect under a simple and proper concept. [premise]

2. Intellects form simple and proper concepts only of that which falls under the object of that intellect. [premise; derived from Thomistic claim that "a cognitive capacity is proportioned to what it cognizes" *ST* Ia. 87. 4, reply]

3. God does not fall under the simple and proper concepts of intellects proportioned to material quiddity [premise; Scotus thinks Aquinas is committed to this claim]

4. Therefore, any intellect which is proportioned to material quiddity cannot come to the vision of God. [by 1,2,3]

5. But the human intellect is proportioned to material quiddity. [premise]

6. Therefore the human intellect cannot conceive of God under a simple and proper concept. [by 4,5]

7. Therefore the human intellect cannot attain the vision of God. [by 1,6]

But this is obviously a heretical position, and one which Aquinas would be loath to accept. Since the scope of metaphysics as a science extends beyond material quiddities, Scotus thinks that similar considerations show that, on Aquinas's principles, metaphysical knowledge is not open to humans either.[9]

Robert Pasnau offers an account similar to Scotus's, in which the proper object of the intellect is understood as restricting our cognitive access to a subset of reality. This account is based on Aquinas's discussion of the three grades of intellectual being. According to Aquinas, intellectual beings are distinguished by the objects of their

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[8] Ibid., d. III, q. 1, a. 2, n. 16. Duns Scotus thinks a further intolerable consequence follows: "our intellect, however, naturally knows something under a more universal aspect than the notion of what is imaginable, because it knows something under the aspect of being; otherwise metaphysics would not be a science our intellect could know naturally."

[9] Ibid. d. III, q. 1, a. 2, n. 20.

respective intellectual faculties.[10] God, supremely intelligent and intelligible, understands himself perfectly. Thus, we might say that God is the object of his own intellect, and that through his knowledge of Himself, he knows all other created things. Angels, a degree below God in intellectual power and a degree above humans, "have as their proper objects intelligible, immaterial things."[11] The human intellect, as we have seen, has as its proper object natures existing in particulars. From this, Pasnau infers that,

> We apprehend these [material] natures as universal, after all. Still our grasp of universal natures must be faithful, ultimately to particulars. On Aquinas's view such natures do not exist outside of material individuals (*ST*, 12.4c, *InDA* II.12.96–116), and so any claims we make to understand such natures must capture the universal as it exists in individuals. The physical world is the ultimate object of intellect.[12]

So intellectual understanding, before it is distinguished into its various grades, targets everything within the domain of *ens*. Different grades of intellectual beings understand different ranges of beings within the domain of *ens*. The humble domain of human understanding is everything within the domain of 'being within material quiddity.'

Pasnau appears to concede a broader range of understanding to the intellect later in his analysis, when he takes up Aquinas's line of analysis which moves from the claim that intelligibility has its basis in the actuality of a being to the claim that "whatever can be, can be grasped by intellect."[13] Thus, he concedes that, "the difference between our cognitive capacity and God's is not precisely a difference in scope. God's cognitive object is all intelligible being, at least in principle. But the concept we are able to acquire is thoroughly confused."[14] This confusion is the taking of something without precision, such as cognizing a human as an animal without distinguishing what makes a human to be human (i.e. his rationality). But Pasnau thinks this confused cognition of universal intelligible being is trivial: "In a fairly trivial sense, we can and do grasp all intelligible being. I refer to my concept of *intelligible being* simply by writing down those two words. But our *proper* object, in this life, is a subset of all being: it is the nature of beings in the material world."[15]

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[10] Pasnau indicates his general agreement with the Scotist reading of Aquinas on the object of the intellect in an indented section of his treatise *Thomas Aquinas on Human Nature* (New York NY: Cambridge Univ. Press, 2006), 297.

[11] Ibid., 286.

[12] Ibid.

[13] Aquinas, *Summa Contra Gentiles* II, 98. Quoted in Pasnau, *Thomas Aquinas on Human Nature*, 319.

[14] Pasnau, *Thomas Aquinas on Human Nature,* 321.

[15] Ibid., 452 n. 18.

The Thomistic Reply

Pasnau's restriction of the *proper* object of our intellect to the quiddity of material things alone contradicts the set of Thomistic texts which explicitly affirm that *ens* can be the proper object of the human intellect. Since Aquinas understands the notions of (a) confused intellectual operation and (b) proportionality between a faculty and its proper object differently than Pasnau would have him, Pasnau's and Scotus's interpretation of Aquinas is incomplete.

Aquinas would affirm with Scotus that the intellect is proportioned to the understanding of material quiddities, but he understands the relation of proportionality between the intellect and its object very differently. Scotus thinks Aquinas is committed to understanding the relation of proportionality between the object of the intellect and our human intellectual faculties to be a relation restricting the *kinds* of being considerable by the intellect itself. Aquinas understands the proportionality relation between the intellect and its object[s] to be one restricting how the intellect, which in itself is capable of understanding any kind of being, has *access* to being in order to understand it. This very problem of the extent of the scope of the *obiectum intellectus* comes up for Aquinas when he considers the question of whether the intellect knows its own act. Explaining the manner in which the intellect knows its own act, that is, how the intellect has *access* to this sort of (immaterial) being, Aquinas explains:

> […] the object of the intellect is something common, namely being and what is true [in general], under which even the act of understanding itself is comprehended. Therefore, the intellect is able to understand its own act. But not primarily, because the first object of our intellect in this life is not just anything that is a being and is true; but what is being and true *considered in material things*, as has been said; and it is from this [cognition], that the intellect arrives at the cognition of all other things.[16]

The Latin text is crucial here, because it illustrates just how Aquinas understands this proportionality relation to obtain. Speaking most properly, the *primum obiectum intellectus* is "*quodlibet ens et verum.*" But if we ask the question, "do we have access to *quodlibet ens et verum*?" Aquinas will answer that we have access to it in this life through the consideration of *ens et verum* in material things. So, in this article, discussing the operations of the human intellect, Aquinas affirms that our intellect in this life has access to *ens* by means of abstraction from material things alone, but that this does not mean that material quiddities are the only kinds of *ens* with which the intellect is properly able to be in an object/faculty relation.

If humans do have access to cognition of *ens et verum universale*, even if solely by means of a prior cognitive act, Aquinas has a lot of explaining to do. First, how do we

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[16] "Ad primum ergo dicendum quod obiectum intellectus est commune quoddam, scilicet ens et verum, sub quo comprehenditur etiam ipse actus intelligendi. Unde intellectus potest suum actum intelligere. Sed non primo, quia nec primum obiectum intellectus nostri, secundum praesentem statum, est quodlibet ens et verum; sed ens et verum consideratum in rebus materialibus, ut dictum est; ex quibus in cognitionem omnium aliorum devenit." Aquinas, *ST* Ia. 87.3, ad 1.

attain cognition of *ens* in a non-trivial fashion? Aquinas has specified how we cognize material quiddities, but how well does this account extend to the imperfect cognition of immaterial quiddities? And if we do attain such cognition, does this not make us incipient Platonists? How are we to reconcile the claim that *ens* can be an object of the intellect in this life with Aquinas's repeated denials that the humans in this life can understand separated substances in themselves?[17]

I laid the groundwork for answering this question by distinguishing two senses of proportionality between object and faculty, a proportionality which restricts the kinds of being to which the human intellect has access and a proportionality which restricts how the intellect has access to being. Now I shall turn to Cajetan's question commentary on the *De Ente et Essentia* for two purposes: to explicate and defend a more robust conception of the confused understanding of *ens*, and to further support my interpretation of Aquinas's two-fold relation of the proportionality between the object of an intellectual faculty and the intellectual faculty itself.

On my account, Aquinas would mostly agree with this claim, which Pasnau advances on Dun Scotus's behalf: "The proper object of the intellect—that is, the object that is primary in virtue of being most suited to the intellect (*primum obiectum adaequatum*)—is being (*ens*) taken in its most general sense. In this sense, Scotus argues that being is common to everything that the intellect could possibly conceive."[18] Aquinas would only disagree with the claim that (*ens*) is "most suited" to the intellect. As Pasnau notes, it is this specification of *ens* as the *primum obiectum adaequatum* of the relation between intellect and its object which commits Scotus to the claim that being is univocally predicated of both God and creatures.[19] And Aquinas famously disputes such a thesis. So Aquinas and Scotus are really disputing over what it means to claim that being (*ens*) is the proper object of the intellect, not whether being is the proper object of the intellect.

By means of several crucial distinctions, Cajetan clarifies how a Thomist might hold together both sides of this alleged contradiction: (a) *ens et verum universale* is the proper object of the intellect and (b) *quod quid est, idest substantia rei* is the proper object of the intellect. First, I should note that these are only contradictory claims if one entails the contradictory opposite of the other, which is not immediately apparent. Secondly, I note that, for Aquinas, there are two senses of priority at play in his discussion of the proper object of the human intellect. 'Priority' is a crucial concept for understanding the object of the intellect because it specifies the fundamental basis for human understanding—that on which our other intellectual operations are based. Thus, Scotus argues that if material quiddities enjoy the univocal relation of priority discussed

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[17] Aquinas, *ST* Ia. 88.1, reply.

[18] Pasnau, 'Cognition,' in *The Cambridge Companion to Duns Scotus* (Cambridge UK: Cambridge Univ. Press, 2003), 294.

[19] Ibid.

in the previous section he imputes to Aquinas, metaphysics and the beatific vision would be impossible, because they exceed the basis of human cognition. Of the two senses of priority Aquinas in fact discusses, the first priority concerns what the intellect is naturally proportioned to cognizing. This is where Scotus correctly understands Aquinas's claims about the proportionality between the human intellect and the *quod quid est* of material things. The second priority concerns what the intellect first becomes of aware of, at least implicitly, as it goes about its operations of understanding. This, as Aquinas says at several places, is *ens*, under whose conception any other proper concept falls.[20] Cajetan picks up on this second sense of priority in the very way he frames the question of the proper object of the intellect. Cajetan asks, "Whether Being is what the Human Intellect First Knows?"[21] So we shall have to attend to what is first known by the human intellect as well as what is proper to its operation of knowing if we are to capture Aquinas's thought on this point.

Cajetan begins by presenting a series of distinctions concerning (a) the 'twofold totality'of the universal known by the intellect and (b) the degree to which we achieve resolution in knowing universals. Then he presents Scotus's position on the proper object of the intellect in a manner that yields a contradictory opposite to one wing of St. Thomas's dilemma. According to Cajetan, "Scotus lays down this conclusion: the first thing known in actual confused knowledge is the ultimate in species, the singular of which first and most efficaciously moves the senses."[22] This contradictory is formed by reference to what is first known, the second sense of priority to which I referred in the previous paragraph. This is a contradictory of what Cajetan claims Aquinas thinks is the first thing known in actual confused knowledge, which is "being embodied in an essence able to be sensed."[23] This disagreement concerning what is first known by the intellect is founded on a disagreement concerning how Thomists and Scotists interpret

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[20] This is similar to Scotus's argument for affirming that *ens* is the proper object of the intellect: "I say that 'being' is the first object of the intellect, because in it a twofold primacy concurs, namely a primacy of commonness and of virtuality. For whatever is of itself intelligible either includes essentially the notion of 'being' or is contained virtually or essentially in something else which does contain 'being' essentially." *Ordinatio* I, d. III, q. 3. (in *Duns Scotus: Philosophical Writings*, trans. A. Wolter [Indianapolis IN: Hackett, 1987], 4). But Aquinas would strenuously deny what Scotus takes to follow from this position: "Hence, all to which 'being' is not univocal *in quid* are included in those to which 'being' is univocal in this way. And so it is clear that 'being' has a primacy of commonness in regard to the primary intelligibles, that is, to the quidditative concepts of the genera, species, individuals, and all their essential parts, *and to the Uncreated Being* [emphasis added]." Ibid.

[21] Cajetan, *Commentary on Being and Essence*, trans. Lottie H. Kendzierski and Francis C. Wade (Milwaukee WI: Marquette Univ. Press, 1964), 40.

[22] Cajetan, *Commentary on Being and Essence*, 42–43. One indication that Cajetan has correctly interpreted Scotus is Pasnau's similar, though more tentative assessment of Scotus on this point: "Scotus holds that although the senses are limited to grasping the singular, the intellect is capable of grasping both the singular and the universal. Since 'intelligibility follows being,' and since singular entities have being above all else, the singular must at least in principle be intelligible." 'Cognition,' 295–6.

[23] Cajetan, *Commentary on Being and Essence*, 44.

the first relation of priority—what the intellect is suited to knowing. Thomists and Scotists both affirm that *ens* is the proper object of the intellect, but they interpret it differently. Thus, Cajetan points out that his conclusion presupposes that,

> [B]eing can be known in actual confused knowledge. This is a point which the Scotists deny, holding that being cannot be known in actual confused knowledge, but only in distinct knowledge. Their proof for this is: what is known by an unqualifiedly simple concept cannot be known by actual confused knowledge; being is known by a simple concept; therefore, etc.[24]

Cajetan distinguishes actual confused knowledge from actual distinct knowledge in order to undermine the Scotist counter-argument. Cajetan calls actual confused knowledge "first knowledge," since he thinks that "in the first knowledge what is actually found in the object is known confusedly."[25] Cajetan employs this understanding to argue that *ens* can be confusedly grasped by the human intellect, a position the Scotists deny. It is on the basis of this denial that Scotists and Thomists will frame their differing views of the object of the human intellect. Cajetan claims that actual distinct knowledge is that by which "substance, and body, and animal and man are known quidditatively."[26]

'Penetration' distinguishes these types of actual knowledge for Cajetan. Both types of actual knowledge, confused and distinct, are founded on the definable whole; that is they are founded on the object of the intellect. This is the nature of something (like a bird or a caterpillar) considered absolutely, not as the nature inheres in the object known.[27] But these modes of understanding penetrate the being of their object with different degrees of resolution. As it stands, Cajetan's use of 'penetrate' is metaphorical, but that does not mean a more rigorous, technical definition is unavailable to him. Penetration may be defined as the degree of resolution attained in an intellectual act. When we resolve an object simply under the concept of being, we are saying no more than that it is, without being able to distinguish whether it is a substance or an accident, what degree of reality it possesses, what essential properties may be predicated of it, etc. As we advance in actual *distinct* knowledge of an object, we resolve it into substance or accident, offer essential definitions of it as a definable whole.

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[24] Ibid., 47.

[25] Ibid., 41.

[26] Ibid., 42.

[27] Thus, when speaking about the intellectual operation of abstraction, Aquinas writes, "Likewise, I say that what pertains to the nature of the species of any material thing (of a stone, a human being, or a horse, for example) can be considered without the individuating principles, which do not belong to the nature of the species. And this is to abstract the universal from the particular, or an intelligible species from phantasms: to consider the nature of the species without considering the individual principles that are represented by the phantasms" (*ST* Ia. 85.1, ad 1, trans. Pasnau, in *The Treatise on Human Nature* [Indianapolis IN: Hackett, 2002], 159).

Employing these distinctions does not guarantee their validity. In the third and fourth parts of the question, Cajetan employs his carefully wrought distinctions and supports them with arguments. Indeed, Scotists level their attack on Cajetan's distinction by denying the possibility of the formation of actual, confused concepts. Part of the move to univocity in concept-formation is the claim that concepts are simple. Discussing the predication of being univocally to both created and uncreated being, Scotus argues,

> Of each of the aforementioned concepts [quidditative concepts of the genera, species, individuals, and all their essential parts, and the Uncreated Being], the intellect can be certain that it is a being and still be in doubt about the differences which delimit "being" to the concept in question. And so the concept of being, in so far as it agrees with the concept in question, is other than the dubious concepts which come under it.[28]

I hasten to note that it does not *prima facie* follow that, among other things, God is contained under Being in the manner so abhorrent to opponents of Scotus's alleged onto-theology. Scotus is strictly claiming that the *concept* of being is other than the *concept* of God, and God is often defined or made the subject of predications in terms of such things as the Perfect Being, *Ipsum Esse*, Uncreated Being, and all three of the these predications concerning God are in terms of being. Scotus denies that created being and uncreated being share any properties in common in themselves, though uncreated and created beings can both be subjects of the univocally identical predication of being. Whether this is a coherent theory is another question. But here, the issue between Cajetan's Aquinas and Scotus is how the human intellect forms concepts and comes to understand being, not precisely how various beings exist in themselves.

Cajetan offers this rejoinder to Scotus's argument: "Whenever the intellect bears on being, actually conceiving it, without distinguishing being from substance and accident, it has an actual confused knowledge of being; but the intellects of many men operate in this way; therefore, etc."[29] This is an empirical argument; it points out that men do in fact acquire concepts confusedly. From any actual occurrence, its possibility follows. But Scotus has a response, one built into the argument presented above. He could point out that, while men *think* that they have a confused concept, this is (a) either a mistaken concept or (b) when put to question, the man with the allegedly confused concept will be shown to have an *implicitly* certain and simple concept of being while being unsure about its various distinctions. That is why Scotus claims that, whatever men think about God, if they think He exists, they agree that He is a being.[30] About every really existing thing, we may be sure that it is a being, and Scotus takes this to prove that the concept of being is a simple concept, separable from all of our other predications concerning substances and their accidents.

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[28] Scotus, *Ordinatio* I, d. III, q. 3. (ed. Wolter [Hackett, 1987], 5)

[29] Cajetan, *Commentary on Being and Essence,* p.48.

[30] Scotus, *Ordinatio*, I., d. III, q.1. (Wolter, 20.)

Explanation by appeal to how concept-acquisition occurs in the human intellect takes the fore in Cajetan's next argument. Here, he argues that, "The most imperfect concept of all is first by way of origin; but the actual confused concept of being is the most imperfect of all concepts; therefore it is first by way of origin."[31] This argument implicitly appeals to a two-fold proportionality between the object known and the human faculty of knowledge. What is proper$_1$ is what the human intellect can actually resolve into its component parts; i.e, material quiddites. In either case, this process of resolution is the process of resolving a maximally indistinct concept into the component parts of a definition which fully match what is potentially knowable about it. Humans are adequate to resolving material quiddities into their component parts, and they lack the intellectual apparatus to perform similar resolutions for separated immaterial substances. But this claim, if Cajetan's concept acquisition story is correct, says nothing about limits on what sorts of beings the intellect can know or consider *confusedly*. It just says that, given our current abstractive account of how humans attain knowledge of substances (both first and second substances), we can't attain proper resolution of separate substances, nor can we know them by direct acquaintance with our current cognitive apparatus, since they aren't embodied and thus they aren't candidates for our direct cognitive appraisal.[32]

Duns Scotus makes a very similar claim about the primacy of abstraction for human cognition *in statu isto*: "Our intellect understands in this present state only things whose species are displayed in the phantasm. This is so either because of the punishment of original sin, or because of a natural correspondence in operation between the soul's powers, in virtue of which we see that a higher power operates on the same thing that a lower power operates on."[33] Scotus is urging two claims. First, we can't be sure that how our intellect currently operates tells us anything about its most proper or natural operations. Secondly, it is possible for the means by which a soul understands to change without the nature of this power of the soul undergoing a substantial change. Aquinas would deny the first claim; he thinks it is natural for the soul to understand by means of the shared operations of the body.[34] However, he explicitly affirms the second claim:

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[31] Cajetan, *Commentary on Being and Essence*, 48.

[32] According to Aquinas, "In the present state of life in which the soul is united to a passable body, it is impossible for our intellect to understand anything actually, except by turning to the phantasms." *ST* Ia. 84.7, reply. Aquinas admits of the possibility that, in the next life, the soul would understand by turning to separated intelligences. But, via its own operation it would only be able to attain imperfect, confused and general knowledge (*ST* Ia. 89.1, reply). An objection can be raised against Aquinas's account at this point. Since the soul understands by turning towards phantasms, how could the soul 'abstract' from immaterial separate substances? When discussing the operations of the soul after bodily death, we are stepping into territory governed by hypothetical or theological reasoning. Either God supplies us directly with intelligible species (as is the case with the beatific vision) or Aquinas hasn't specified the means of cognition other than saying that we will cognize like angels do. Since we don't have any experience of how angels cognize, we can't form solid, Aristotelian, deductive arguments about it.

[33] Scotus, *Ordinatio*, I. D. III, p. I, Q. 3, n. 187. cited in Pasnau, 'Cognition,' 295.

[34] Aquinas, *ST* Ia. 89.1, reply.

"[A]s nothing acts except insofar as it is actual, the mode of action of every agent follows from its mode of existence. Now the soul has one mode of being when in the body, and another when apart from it, its nature remaining always the same…."[35] If Aquinas and Scotus fundamentally agree on the conclusion that the scope of what the intellect is capable of understanding is *ens*, this reinforces my claim that, according to Aquinas, the proper object$_2$ of the intellect is being. And Scotus agrees with Aquinas that, in this life, human understanding is most suited to the resolution of material quiddities into their component parts; this is the most proper$_1$ object of the human intellect.

Conclusion

Where then, do they disagree? As we have seen, Scotus thinks that Aquinas is committed to a univocal understanding of the relation of proportionality between the object of the intellect and the faculty of understanding. He would deny that Aquinas is allowed his flexible concept-acquisition story in which the formation of a confused concept of being is the foundation for the resolution of a restricted kind of being (material quiddities) into its component parts. Scotus runs an account of a univocal, simple and distinct concept of being which allows him to claim that *ens* is the object of the intellect and that, *in statu isto*, humans are best able to resolve material quiddities into their component parts. But Aquinas would deny that it is possible to form a univocal, distinct concept of *ens* which encompasses both Uncreated and created being. The plausibility of Cajetan's account of the a simple, confused conception of *ens* hangs on his defense of the claim that being is the first known in the order of actual confused knowledge and that this in turn is the basis for all actual distinct knowledge.

So the dispute between Aquinas and Duns Scotus turns not on the question of the object of the intellect—they agree that *ens* is the proper$_2$ object of the intellect and that material quiddities are that which the human intellect is currently best able to resolve into its distinct and component parts—but rather the question of how these two propositions are related to each other. Do we advance from univocal, simple and indubitable concepts to complex conjunctions of the concept of being with further determinant concepts when we acquire quidditative knowledge of something? Or is there an analogy of being with respect to how the world is, how we form concepts and how we use our terms to make quidditative predications? It is on the basis of the answer to this question that we can adjudicate the truth or falsity of Cajetan's account of the simple, confused conception of being, which is the foundational defense of the Thomistic conception of the proper object of the intellect. And the answer to this question is, undoubtedly, the proper object of a further paper.

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[35] Ibid.

Adam Wood:

Aquinas, Scotus, and Cajetan on "Horseness is Just Horseness"

Avicenna famously wrote in his *Metaphysics* that "horseness is just horseness."[1] He was talking about the nature of horses "in itself" or "taken absolutely." Later, Aquinas, Scotus, and Cajetan took up the same topic, the history of their discussion proceeding roughly as follows. Like Avicenna, Aquinas claimed that natures in themselves are neither individual nor universal, that they possess neither unity nor plurality. This position left at least one important question unanswered: given that for scholastics unity and being are convertible, and that something is intelligible only to the degree that it *is*, for natures in themselves to be objects of our understanding, it seems that they must possess unity in some way.[2] Perhaps to address concerns like this one, Scotus argued that while a nature in itself is neither individual nor universal, it nevertheless possesses in itself a measure of unity and being. As Ockham would soon point out, however, there are some serious metaphysical difficulties with Scotus's position. Whether or not he was aware of these difficulties, when Cajetan revisited "horseness is just horseness," he agreed with Scotus that Aquinas had left certain questions unanswered, but also considered Scotus's way of answering these questions unacceptable. His task, therefore, was to answer the questions left behind by Aquinas's account while avoiding the problematic features of Scotus's position. In this essay, I narrate the history of this discussion concerning common natures in greater detail and explain how Cajetan succeeds in both of his tasks.

1. Aquinas's Account of Common Natures in *De Ente et Essentia* 3

What does it mean to say that "horseness is just horseness"? It doesn't help to say that we are talking about horseness "in itself" or "taken absolutely" without providing some semantic analysis of these phrases. To begin with, then, there are individual horses, like Bucephalus and Citation, and each of them is a member of its kind because it possesses a certain quiddity, nature, or essence, namely horseness. What is the ontological status

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[1] Avicenna, *On First Philosophy* 5.1, *Basic Issues in Medieval Philosophy*, ed. Richard N. Bosley and Martin Tweedale (Peterborough, Ontario, 1999), 401–2.

[2] The *locus classicus* for the doctrine of transcendentals in Aquinas is *De Veritate* q. 1 a. 1. I mention this issue because it is easy to see why it posed a problem, and because it is the issue that Cajetan leads with. No doubt Aquinas's account left many other questions unanswered. I have no reason to think that Scotus was in fact motivated by concerns centering on the convertibility of being, unity and truth.

of a quiddity like horseness? Aristotelians hold that there *really* exist no horsenesses other than the individuated quiddities that actually inform Bucephalus, Citation and all the other individual horses. In addition, however, many Aristotelians claim that quiddities like horseness exist *rationally* in various ways as objects of thought. I can think about Bucephalus's and Citation's horsenesses. I can also think about what it is to be a horse in general; not what it is to be Bucephalus or Citation, but simply what it is to be a horse. Maybe this thought includes being hooved, running swiftly, and neighing. Whatever it includes, the *contents* of that thought (as opposed to the intelligible species, firings of neurons, or whatever, that make the actual thinking possible) are what Avicenna means by "horseness in itself." Let this description serve as a starting point.

Avicenna's statement about horseness is part of his argument that natures, in themselves, are neither singular, predicable of one thing alone, nor universal, predicable of many things.[3] The argument is based on facts about predication. Avicenna's starting point is the claim that when I say that some individual possesses such and such a nature, I am saying that every attribute constitutive of that nature, in itself, is inherent in the individual. For example, if the nature horseness is universal in itself, then when I predicate horseness of Bucephalus by saying "Bucephalus is a horse" I would ascribe universality to Bucephalus. But Bucephalus is an individual horse, not a universal one (there couldn't be multiple Bucephaluses), so horseness is clearly not universal in itself. On the other hand, if horseness were singular in itself, then there would be only one horse, namely, the one to which horseness belongs. But there is Citation as well as Bucephalus, so horseness is not singular in itself either. No, horseness is just horseness.

In chapter 3 of *De Ente et Essentia*,[4] Aquinas agrees with Avicenna that natures in themselves are neither universal nor singular. Aquinas's stated intention in the chapter is to explain how being and essence are related to "logical intentions," like genus, species, and difference. He does so by marking out a set of distinctions between different ways natures *can be considered*, one of which is between a nature "according to its own proper character" and a nature "according to the act of existence which it has in this or that individual." Natures considered in the first of these ways are those that Avicenna is talking about when he says "horseness is just horseness," and it is here that Aquinas voices his agreement with Avicenna. He writes that "this is an absolute

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[3] Here is Avicenna's argument: "Animal is in itself something. And it is the same whether it is sensible or is apprehended in the soul by thought. But in itself it is neither universal nor singular. For if it were universal in itself in such a way that animality from the fact that it is animality is universal, no animal could possible be singular; rather every animal would be universal. But if animal from the fact that it is animal were singular, it would be impossible for there to be more than one singular, viz. the very singular to which animality is bound, and it would be impossible for another singular to be an animal" (from Avicenna's *Logic* in *Basic Issues in Medieval Philosophy*, ed. Bosley and Tweedale, 402–3. For commentary see Timothy B. Noone's excellent summary in "Universals and Individuation," *The Cambridge Companion to Duns Scotus*, ed. Thomas Williams [Cambridge, 2003], 102–5).

[4] St. Thomas Aquinas, *On Being and Essence*, trans. Robert P. Goodwin in *Philosophic Classics*, vol. 2, ed. Forrest E. Baird and Walter Kaufmann (Upper Saddle River, NJ, 2000), 418–34.

consideration of nature. In this way nothing is true of it except what is proper to it as such," and therefore "if the question arises whether the nature so considered can be said to be one or many, neither should be conceded, because each is extrinsic to the notion of [any nature considered in this way], and either can happen to it." His argument for this position is much like Avicenna's; for Aquinas too horseness is just horseness.[5]

For both Avicenna and Aquinas the contention seems to be that asking "is horseness in itself universal or singular?" involves a conceptual error similar (but not identical to) the question "is redness in itself crimson or scarlet?" We can only answer this question about an instance of redness existing in some way or another (crimsonly or scarletly). The question "is it universal or singular?" similarly, can only be answered about natures existing in some condition or other; in the mind, a nature can be universal, in things, singular, but in itself it is neither.

A point Avicenna does *not* make, however, and that Aquinas very explicitly does, is that while natures considered in the second way *exist*, either *really* in singular things or *rationally* in the soul, to a nature considered in the first way "no act of existence is due."[6] Rather a nature taken in itself "abstracts from every act of existing." It does so in such a way, however, "that no act of existing is excluded by way of precision." In short, natures taken absolutely have no existence of their own, but are not *opposed to* gaining existence in either of the ways natures considered in the second way have it.[7]

Despite the fact that natures in themselves *do not* exist in a common way, Aquinas still frequently calls them common natures.[8] For Aquinas, the expression "common nature" indicates that a certain set of formal characteristics, the ones constitutive of the nature in

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[5] Here is Aquinas's version of the argument: "If the question arises whether the nature so considered [i.e., in itself] can be said to be one or many, neither should be conceded, because each is extrinsic to the notion of humanity, and either could happen to it. For if plurality were included within [the common nature's] notion, the nature man could never be one, although it is one insofar as it is in Socrates. Similarly, if unity were included in its notion, then Socrates and Plato would be one and the same, and the nature could not be multiplied in many" (ibid., 424).

[6] In fact, according to Joseph Owens, Avicenna ascribes a measure of *esse* to natures in themselves. This *esse* is "prior to being in reality and to being in the mind," and is called "the proper being of essence." See Joseph Owens, "Common Nature: A Point of Comparison Between Thomistic and Scotistic Metaphysics," *Inquiries into Medieval Philosophy*: *A Collection in Honor of Francis P. Clarke*, ed. James F. Ross (Westport, CT, 1971), 190.

[7] It is because they are indifferently disposed to any particular act of existing that natures considered according to their own proper character are predicated of individuals. As Aquinas puts it: "whatever belongs to man as man is predicated of Socrates." Because natures taken absolutely are predicated of individuals, such natures cannot themselves be universals. To have any particular sort of existence, whether common or individual, does not pertain to natures taken in this way, but to be common to many is part of what it means to be a universal. Aquinas maintains, therefore, that universality accrues to a nature only as it exists in the intellect, when we consider it *in relation* to the many of which it can be predicated.

[8] For a list of occurrences see Owens, pp. 204–5 nn. 23–24.

itself, are held in common between natures really existing and natures existing in various ways in the mind. Below I will occasionally follow Aquinas in substituting "common nature" for "nature taken in itself." For now, so much for Aquinas on common natures – I turn next to Scotus's account of common natures in *Ordinatio* 2.3.1.1.

2. Scotus's Account of Common Natures in *Ordinatio* 2.3.1.1

Aquinas's Avicennian interpretation of "horseness is just horseness" came under attack shortly after his death. One way of attacking it, employed apparently by William Ware and Roger Marston, was to maintain that natures in themselves possess numerical unity.[9] According to this view, horseness, in itself, is *not* just horseness, but is rather this horse or that horse, Bucephalus or Citation. In the section I am considering here, Scotus's question is whether a material substance is individual or singular *per se*. It seems that Marston and Ware said yes. Scotus characterizes their position as follows: "just as a nature of itself is formally a nature so also it is of itself singular," so "there is no need to seek a cause of [the nature's] singularity other than [its] cause."[10] Someone adopting this position claims that "singularity belongs to a thing in virtue of its true being and thus belongs to it of itself and unqualifiedly" and that "we need not seek some cause for why a nature is singular, i.e. a cause, other than the nature of the thing . . . rather the same causes which cause the unity of the thing also cause its singularity." These claims closely resemble some that Ockham would later endorse.

Scotus's concern in this section is to repudiate as emphatically as possible the notion that a nature, in itself, is individual. To do so, he calls in some heavier artillery than Aquinas and Avicenna had mustered: he seeks to undermine the claim that natures possess numerical unity by arguing that they have a different sort of unity: real less-than-numerical unity, or minor unity.

Before considering his argument, however, we might ask why he needed to do this. Did not Avicenna and Aquinas already offer us a response to Marston's and Ware's position? Scotus presents a version their argument, as a matter of fact, as his first line of defense.[11] Scotus starts with the same premise as Avicenna did: every attribute

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[9] Richard Cross mentions that "William holds natures are individuated through themselves (*per se*): any extra-mental nature is *eo ipso* both existent and individual," in his article in *A Companion to Philosophy in the Middle Ages*, ed. Jorge Gracia and Timothy Noone (Malden, MA, 2003), 719. Peter King identifies Roger Marston as the author of the affirmative argument in *Ord.* 2.3.1.1 in his translation of the question available online at: http://individual.utoronto.ca/pking/translations/SCOTUS.Ord2d3p2q1.trns.pdf.

[10] John Duns Scotus. *Ordinatio* 2.3.1.1, *Basic Issues in Medieval Philosophy*, Bosley and Tweedale, 404-410. All quotations from Scotus are from this edition unless otherwise noted.

[11] Here is Scotus's version of Avicenna's argument: "Whatever belongs to something in virtue of its own essential character belongs to it in any instance; therefore, if the nature of stone were of itself *this*, no matter what item the nature of stone is in, that nature would be this *this* stone . . . Moreover, what of itself possesses one of a pair of opposites will of itself reject the other opposite. Therefore, if a nature were of itself one in number, it would reject numerical multiplicity" (*Ordinatio* 2.3.1.1.3–4).

constitutive of a nature, in itself, necessarily inheres in any individual that possesses that nature. So if it is part of the nature of horseness to be singular – to be Bucephalus, say – then any individual that possesses horseness will be Bucephalus. But of course there *couldn't* be more than one individual that possesses horseness, for if horseness in itself is singular, then it rejects multiplicity.

It is not entirely clear to me why Scotus does not consider this argument sufficient. Perhaps he thought it easy to circumvent. One way to do this is as Ockham did, by rejecting the notion that there are natures that can be multiply instantiated at all. If there is no common nature instantiated both in Bucephalus and Citation, but rather there is only Bucephalus with his individualized nature, and Citation with his individualized nature, then Aquinas's and Avicenna's argument cannot get off the ground. Perhaps Scotus knew some proto-nominalists willing to make exactly this move. A second possible reason why Scotus considered Aquinas's and Avicenna's argument insufficient for fending off Marston's and Ware's challenge is that it does not provide a positive metaphysical account of what makes the common nature common. Scotus sought a principle of individuation beyond what he considered merely accidental features like quantity of designated matter, and it seems that a "principle of commonality" is what Scotus's third argument[12] against Marston (or Ware, or whoever!) seeks to provide. Let us briefly see how it does so.

The argument is very succinct:

> What has a real unity, peculiar to it and sufficient for it, but less than a numerical unity, is not of itself one by a numerical unity (i.e. is not of itself *this*). But the nature existing in this stone has a real and sufficient unity peculiar to it, and one less than numerical unity. Therefore [the nature existing in this stone is not of itself one by a numerical unity].

Scotus considers the major premise self-evident. If something has one kind of unity sufficient to explain why it is one thing, it cannot have a second kind of unity, also sufficient to explain why it is one thing, but with different properties than the first kind. The properties of the first kind would be at odds with the properties of the second. The real metaphysical spadework is in explaining why the natures of composite substances, taken in themselves, must have minor unity. Scotus has seven arguments in support of this claim. I will not rehearse them here, since I am mostly interested in the conclusions

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[12] *Ord.* 2.3.1.1.8–28. Scotus's *second* argument (*Ord.* 2.3.1.1.7) hinges on an epistemological concern: "the object as the object is naturally prior to the act itself, and, according to you, as prior the object is of itself singular, because this is always the case when it is not considered as qualified or in respect of the being which it has in the soul. Therefore an intellect that ideates that object under the character of a universal ideates it under a character opposed to its own character, because as it precedes that act it is determined of itself to the opposite of that character, i.e. of that character of a universal." This argument can be employed, I think, to target epistemological problems inherent in Ockham's account of universals, but I will not address them in this essay.

he draws from them.[13] Scotus thinks they succeed in establishing that there is minor unity, and if there is minor unity, then he has undermined the position that natures are individual *per se*. Scotus interprets Avicenna's "horseness is just horseness" to mean that horseness, in itself, is neither one nor many *numerically*, but *is* one *less-than-numerically*.

Now, it is important to note that some of Scotus's conclusions concerning common natures are suspect from a Thomist standpoint. For one thing, if a nature in itself has minor unity, then would not anything possessing that nature also have merely minor unity, rather the numerical unity that we know all individuals have? This conclusion would seem to be suggested by Aquinas's and Avicenna's argument. Scotus is aware of this implication, and writes "given there is commonness in the nature itself in virtue of its own entity and unity, we necessarily need to seek a cause of the singularity, which adds something further to the nature to which it belongs."[14] The "cause of the singularity," according to Scotus, will turn out to be the individual difference. It is a good question, however, how the numerical unity provided by the individual difference is related to the minor unity provided by the common nature. Scotus maintains that they are *formally distinct*, a position Ockham found particularly objectionable, and which we will see Cajetan address below. Another problem with Scotus's position from a Thomist standpoint is Scotus's attribution of a measure of real being to the common nature, proportional to its real less-than-numerical unity. Scotus assigns epistemic and ontological priority to the common nature over individualized natures, and it follows, he thinks, that a common nature possesses a measure of existence prior to its being "contracted" to an individual act of existence. As he puts it:

> [The common nature] is naturally prior to the character that contracts it to that singularity, and insofar as it is naturally prior to that contracting factor it is not repellent to it to be without that contracting factor. And just as the object in the intellect in virtue of

[13] Here are summaries of the three most important of Scotus's arguments for minor unity, (from *Ord.* 2.3.1.1.11–15, 20–22, and 23–27 respectively).

His first: for us to be able to compare items within a genus or species, there must be a real unity shared between its members that acts as the standard and measure for everything in that genus. This unity must be real, because real beings are not measured by beings of thought. It must also be less than numerical, because it is common to all members of the species, not proper to this or that member alone.

His fifth: The senses discriminate a really unified object, but not a numerically unified object, therefore a less-than-numerically unified object. This is shown by experience. I see two human figures from afar. I am able to recognize the figures as members of a really unified kind without recognizing which numerically unified figures they are. In principle, I might *never* be able to tell them apart (even if I moved closer) but I would still recognize them as members of the same unified kind.

His sixth: If every real unity is numerical, then all real diversity is numerical as well. This makes intuitive sense, since what is unity but a lack of diversity? The trouble is that if all diversity is numerical, then there is no more difference between Socrates and a rock than there is between Socrates and Plato – and this seems intuitively false.

[14] *Ord.* 2.3.1.1.42.

> *that* entity and universality has true intelligible being, so also in reality the nature has in virtue of *that* entity true real being outside the soul.[15]

So while Thomas held that a common nature "abstracts from every act of existing," for Scotus it abstracts only from particular or universal existence, and *not* from the sort of existence proportional to minor unity. The immediate question, of course, is *what sort of being is it* that common natures have? Clearly it's not the case that I could stumble upon one as I walk along.[16] In general, I think it is correct to say that Scotist common natures exist mid-way between universality and individuality, and mid-way between real and rationate being. But to specify what sort of existence they enjoy is a real problem for the Scotist account, and another point that Ockham would exploit.

3. Cajetan on "Whether a Nature Taken Absolutely Has Unity or Plurality?"

Cajetan, so far as I know, makes no reference to Ockham's objections to Scotus's position, and in general is either unaware of or unconcerned by the criticisms lobbied by nominalists against Scotist and Thomist metaphysics alike.[17] He was well acquainted with Scotus's position, however, and has his own reasons for rejecting it. The task Cajetan sets for himself at the outset of the section with which I will deal, Chapter 4, Question 6 of his commentary on *De Ente et Essentia*, is to find *some way* of ascribing unity to natures in themselves. He acknowledges that there is "a doubt concerning the words of St Thomas in his text . . . in which it is said that a nature, taken absolutely, has neither plurality nor unity."[18] He explains, that since not only *esse et unum*, but *unum et verum* are convertible, so "that which is not one is not definable," but is unintelligible. His point, it seems, is that if we are going to talk about natures in themselves at all, they must possess some unity. His position must clear at least the following two hurdles. First, Cajetan must find some way of explaining the ontological status of the common nature *without* following Scotus in attributing it a diminished sort of real existence. Second, he must find some way of avoiding Avicenna's and Aquinas's conclusion that common nature *cannot* possess unity. So what kind of unity do natures in themselves

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[15] *Ord.* 2.3.1.1.34.

[16] A fact of which Scotus is, of course, well aware. He says about the common nature that "it is never really apart from some of these," meaning apart from the conditions of being contracted to an individual difference, or being considered in abstraction by the intellect (*Ord.* 2.3.1.1.32).

[17] It would strike me as odd if Cajetan were *completely* unfamiliar with Ockham's works, or *completely* ignored Ockham's positions in his own writings. After all, Cajetan was well-traveled for his time. He spent nearly five years traveling in the "nominalist territories" of Germany, Hungary, Bohemia and Poland. At the very least, it strikes me, some account is owed of *why* Cajetan remained unfamiliar with Ockham's works, or of *why* he ignored Ockham's positions in his own writings. It would be my aim in an expanded research project to provide such an account to the degree that it is possible.

[18] Thomas de Vio Cajetan. *On Being and Essence*, ch. 4, q. 6, trans. Lottie H. Kendzierski and Francis C. Wade S.J. (Milwaukee, 1964), 143–54 at 143. All quotations from Cajetan are from this edition.

possess? Do the natures really exist? Do the unities? These are the questions Cajetan sets out to answer.

Cajetan asserts immediately that common natures cannot have numerical unity, thus rejecting the option proposed by Marston, Ware, and Ockham. As his reason, he refers back to his presentation of Aquinas's and Avicenna's argument, which does not differ greatly from the version in *De ente et essentia*.[19] Cajetan also stipulates that it cannot be specific or generic unity "since these kinds of unity come from the intellect." He is looking for the *foundation* of specific or generic unity – a kind of unity that is *prior* (as Scotus also held) to existence in the intellect or in individuals.

His next move is to distinguish between several different kinds of unity. To do this, he tells us, he will first have to distinguish between different kinds of division, since privations are always defined in terms of their corresponding positive state, and unity is just a lack of division.[20] Cajetan first distinguishes between *material* division, caused through the principle of individuation, and *formal* division, caused by essential principles. Next, any particular instance of formal division, is either through *proper* essential principles, or through *common* essential principles. Finally, formal divisions through *common* essential principles are further differentiated depending on whether the essential principles are *more or less common*.

Cajetan gives examples to illustrate these distinctions: Between Socrates and Plato there is material division. Between Socrates and this lion there is formal division through proper essential principles, rationality in Socrates, and leoninity in the lion. Between Socrates and this plant there is one degree of formal division through common essential principles, and finally between Socrates and this stone there is a greater degree of the same sort of division.[21]

The kinds of unity correspond with these. Numerical unity is attended by a lack of material division, and formal unity is attended by a lack of formal division. Any

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[19] Here is Cajetan's version of Avicenna's argument: "Nature, taken absolutely, is neither one nor many in number. If it were one, it could not be found in many, which is evidently false, because human nature is found in Socrates and Plato. The consequence is proved thus. A nature taken according to itself is one in number; therefore it cannot be distinct in number; therefore it cannot be found in many, which was the contention. The first of these consequences is clear from the fact that it is impossible for something to belong to a thing that is opposite to what belongs to it according to itself; just as it is impossible for the irrational to belong to man. Numerical distinction, however, is opposed to numerical unity and, therefore, if a nature according to itself has numerical unity, it can never have numerical distinction. Similarly it is proved that a nature taken according to itself is not many in number; for it would follow that human nature is not in Socrates because it could not have numerical unity, from which it could claim for itself numerical distinction according to itself" (ibid., 135).

[20] Scotus employs the same idea in his sixth argument for minor unities in *Ordinatio* 2.3.1.1: "if every real unity is numerical, then every real diversity is numerical."

[21] Between Socrates and this whiteness there is the greatest degree of formal division through common essential principles.

instance of formal unity is either simple, with formal divisions completely absent, or with qualification, with some degree of formal division through common principles absent (the degree depending on whether the principles are more or less common). So Socrates has numerical unity; he is one man. Man is formally one simply, having no formal division at all. Animal is formally one with qualification, since it is divided by common principles (sensible, non-sensible), and body is formally one in a more qualified sense. Being itself is least unified, including "wide formal diversity with its unity."

Cajetan next discusses how anything whatsoever has reality. He tells us that there are two kinds of real being: there is real being as opposed to being fabricated by the intellect, and real being as opposed to those what does not exist in act. Everything in a category is a real being in the first way, but in the second way only "that which really exists outside its causes is a real being." And this, Cajetan tells us, "is properly real being." Presumably the idea is that not everything in a category "really exists outside its causes," since we may wish to identify some accidents with their causes. Cajetan says that "unity just as the others has reality properly speaking [i.e. in a robust, substantial sense] in so far as it actually exists outside its causes and the soul." But here, at least, he does not say that unity *in fact* has real being, existing outside its causes and the soul. Thus far we have a list of different kinds of unity, numerical and formal, and we have some kinds of reality, which we will eventually need to assign to the unities.

Cajetan's third move is to examine each kind of unity *as it exists* outside the soul. He lays down three propositions. The first is that each kind of unity mentioned above exists outside the soul independent of any operation of the intellect. Cajetan considers this "so manifest that no one of sane mind could deny it" because it is evident that "both kinds of unity [numerical and formal] exist in Socrates." Furthermore, *multiple* formal unities exist in Socrates, according to the multitude of his quidditative predicates. So there is one formal unity of humanity in Socrates, since he lacks division through proper principles, another formal unity of animality since he lacks one grade of division through common principles, and so on.

The second and third propositions go hand in hand. Cajetan claims that no unity listed above "exists outside the soul in many distinct supposits," from which it follows that "every formal unity existing outside the soul is . . . multiplied according to the multiplication of things." Let us take a look at the first of these claims. Cajetan recognizes two ways in which someone might claim that a unity exists outside the soul in distinct supposits.[22] One might claim this *positively*, which is to assert that the unity (horseness, say) exists undivided outside the soul, but is found in distinct supposits, Bucephalus and Citation. Cajetan thinks everyone would deny that this is possible save in the case of the divine nature, which is one but exists in three persons. One might also claim that unities exist outside the soul in distinct supposits *negatively*, however, which

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[22] I take the word "supposit" to mean "object of reference."

is simply to assert that the nature exists outside the soul and is proper to no supposit. As far as I can tell, Cajetan thinks this is Scotus's claim. The unity of horseness that exists *in point of fact* in Bucephalus, is at the same time also *indifferently disposed toward* whether it is exists in Bucephalus or in Citation, and according to Scotus, unities of this sort are found Bucephalus, Citation and every other horse.[23] Cajetan offers two similar arguments against this notion – here is the first. No quiddity exists all alone outside the soul. This is impossible: a quiddity must be in some supposit. But a negatively existing common nature *is* all alone outside the soul. If it is *not* all alone, it is in some supposit, and thus is proper to that supposit, but common unity outside the soul in many distinct supposits *cannot be* proper to any one of them. Therefore there can be no negatively existing common nature.[24] Basically, his point is that anything that exists in outside the soul is either a particular thing itself, or it is *in* some particular thing, and proper to it. Either way, it is no longer *common*. Cajetan's strategy is simply to eliminate Scotus's half-way house of "proper being" proportional to the common nature's minor unity, and to insist on Aquinas's dichotomy between real and rationate being. If common natures exist outside of the soul, then they must share the features of things existing outside the soul, one of which is to be particular. From this Cajetan's third proposition follows unobjectionably: every unity existing outside the soul "is really multiplied according to the multiplication of things."

With these preliminaries in place, kinds of unity, kinds of reality, unities as they exist outside the soul, Cajetan is now in a position to answer the questions with which he began: what sort of unity common natures have, and what sort of reality the unity of a common nature has. Natures in themselves have *formal* unity that is the "foundation" of any specific or generic unity. Like Scotus, Cajetan interprets the statement that a nature, taken absolutely, is neither one nor many, to concern *numerical* unity and plurality. As for whether the unity is real or not, it is certainly real in the first way mentioned above, that is, it is not fabricated by the intellect. In addition, just the as nature itself is real *according to the being it has in individuals*, so the unity accompanying a nature is truly and properly real in the second way, existing independently of its causes. These brief answers stand in need of some unpacking. In particular, Cajetan needs to address the issues I mentioned above: explaining what ontological status corresponds with the common nature's unity *without* attributing to it any sort of real existence, and finding some way of avoiding Avicenna's and Aquinas's conclusion that common nature

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[23] See *Ord* 2.3.1.1.38: "Therefore there is in reality a common item which is not of itself this, and consequently it of itself does not reject being *not-this*."

[24] Here is the second proof that there can be no negatively existing common unity outside the soul (or to put it the opposite way, that every unity outside the soul is *proper* to some supposit): it is a Peripatetic commonplace, according to Cajetan, that everything existing in reality is a particular thing, but no common unity outside the soul in many distinct supposits is a particular thing, therefore there exists no such unity in reality. Cajetan argues for the truth of his minor premise as follows: every particular thing, to be particular, is proper to some supposit, but a common unity negatively existing outside the soul in many distinct supposits is *not* proper to any supposit, so no such unity is a particular thing.

cannot possess unity. Cajetan addresses these issues in responding to two sets of objections.

The first of these targets Cajetan's claim that none of the common unities listed above "exist outside the soul in many distinct supposits." The objector states that all distinct supposits formally one outside the soul, like Socrates and Plato, must have some unity common to them outside the soul (such as the negatively-existing-unity that Cajetan rejected). Cajetan replies that two distinct supposits may be formally one either *by being united* in something common to, and undivided in both of them, or *by mutually lacking* a formal division. Only the Trinity manifests formal unity in the first way, but all individuals of the same species manifest it in the second. Socrates is *not* formally divided from Plato, and Plato is *not* from Socrates. So it is true that Socrates and Plato are formally one outside the soul, but only because each is not formally divided from the other. They are one by mutual lack of division, but *not* because they "come together" in some negatively existing common nature. The same is true, in a qualified sense, between Socrates and the lion; they are formally one because there is *not* such formal division as would be caused by the one possessing a sensible nature and the other an insensible nature. This response finally makes it clear what sort of being Cajetan ascribes to the unity of the common nature; it is a privative notion. Two things are one, in this sense, if the individualized forms possessed by each thing *lack* some formal division, but unlike Scotus's minor unity, this lack does not imply the *positive existence* of anything whatsoever besides individualized forms.

The second set of objections inquires "by what otherness formal unity is other than numerical unity in Socrates?" Some hold that there is a *real otherness* between the formal unity and the numerical unity existing in Socrates, since in things separated from matter, formal unity is found without numerical unity. Others, like Ockham, hold that there is an *otherness of reason only* between numerical and formal unity, and that Socrates's individual nature, if he can be said to have one, is only rationally distinct from his humanity. As I have said, Scotus maintains that there is a *formal distinction* between between Socrates's numerical and formal unity.

Cajetan's position is that it depends on how you look at it. He writes that "one, when it means undivided being, implies something positive and something privative." If we focus on the *positive* implication, then Socrates's formal unity and numerical unity are really the same, and distinct only according to reason. This is because it is the same thing (Socrates) that is one, both formally and numerically. If we focus on the *privation of division* implied by these unities, however, then they are really distinct: "a privation of formal division is one kind of privation, and the privation of numerical division is another; just as formal division is one thing and numerical division is another." There couldn't be many unities in one being according to the positive implication of unity, but there is no problem with multiple unities coinciding in one being insofar as unity implies only privation of division. Therefore, Cajetan states, "the conclusion of both reasons is to be granted in a different manner of speaking, nor is there need to answer in any other way."

Scotus's error was supposing that one could infer the negative community of a really existing nature from the negative community of a nature considered in itself. Scotus held both that "a nature formally one is found outside the soul," and that "a common nature is found in many [distinct supposits]." He was right about the first, as Cajetan explained above; Socrates's humanity *is* formally one. But he was wrong about the second; community accrues to a nature only in virtue of its solitary condition when it is considered in itself, and there are no common natures before an intellect considers horseness, humanity, or whatever, in this way. Scotus's mistake was a fallacy of equivocation. "In itself" can be taken *positively*, expressing certain causal powers, or *negatively*, expressing the condition of being by itself. Scotus took it positively, reasoning that a nature in virtue of its own causal powers is the sufficient cause of its community. He was wrong about this. In truth it is only in virtue of its condition, when it is considered all alone in the intellect, that the common nature is common and possesses unity.[25]

By way of summary, Aquinas's claim that natures, in themselves, possess neither unity nor plurality left at least the following difficulty: if natures in themselves are an object of metaphysical discourse it seemed that they must possess some sort of unity. Cajetan manages to ascribe formal unity to common natures, while unswervingly affirming Aquinas's position in *De Ente et Essentia* concerning the ontological status of natures in themselves. The only way that horseness *really* exists is as the individualized form of Bucephalus or Citation. In addition, horsenesses exist in various ways in the intellect. Nevertheless horseness in itself, what is common to the individualized forms of Bucephalus, Citation and our conceptions of horseness alike, possesses unity by something *privative*. This is because it *lacks* the formal division that *is* present between any instance of horseness, whether a real being or a being of reason, and any instance of humanity or leoninity. So Aquinas was right to deny that natures, in themselves, possess unity if "unity" is taken to imply something *positive*, but if all "unity" means is that Bucephalus, Citation and my horse concepts all have hooves, run swiftly and neigh, then horseness in itself *is* most certainly one.

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[25] Cajetan writes "if the proposition, the nature in itself is common, ought to be true, it is necessary that the *in itself* and *common* be taken negatively according to our way and the true way. Then it is the same as saying, a nature not taken with another is non-fitting something, which is evidently true. According to Scotus, however, the *of itself* is taken positively, and incorrectly, and the meaning is, the nature by reason of itself or as such is non-fitting something, which is manifestly false." It is manifestly false because in every individual horse, the nature horseness manifestly *does* fit Bucephalus or Citation, and it could never do this if it were part of the nature to be non-fitting.

Gyula Klima:

Aquinas vs. Buridan on Essence and Existence

In this paper I will argue that although Anthony Kenny's recent objections to Aquinas's "intellectus essentiae" argument for the real distinction of essence and existence in creatures are quite easily answerable in terms of a proper reconstruction of the argument, the argument thus reconstructed is still open to a fundamental objection offered by the 14th-century nominalist philosopher, John Buridan, in his *Questions on Aristotle's Metaphysics*. The discussion of how Aquinas could handle this objection will show that the conflict between their judgments concerning the validity of the argument rests on a fundamental difference between Aquinas's and Buridan's conceptions of how our concepts latch onto things in the world.

Kenny on the *intellectus essentiae* argument

Aquinas's famous *intellectus essentiae* argument in his *De Ente et Essentia* is taken by many commentators to be one of his most serious attempts to prove his fundamental metaphysical thesis of the real distinction of essence and existence in creatures. Others would claim that this argument is only a part of a larger argumentation, which as a whole intends to prove the real distinction of essence and existence in creatures and the identity thereof in God. In any case, that interpretational issue aside, the *intellectus essentiae* argument in itself can quite justifiably be taken to be an intriguing attempt to prove the real distinction between essence and existence at least in some obvious cases, which then can be regarded as the starting point of the larger argumentation for the entire thesis. In this paper, therefore, I will confine my discussion to this piece of reasoning, which is embodied in the following couple of lines in Aquinas's text:

> Whatever is not included in the understanding of an essence or quiddity is coming to it from outside, entering into composition with the essence; for no essence can be understood without its parts. But every essence can be understood without even thinking about its existence, for I can understand what a man or a phoenix is, and not know whether it actually exists in the nature of things. Therefore, it is clear that existence is distinct from essence, unless, perhaps, there is a thing whose quiddity is its own existence.

In his controversial book, *Aquinas on Being*,[1] Anthony Kenny launched a two-pronged attack against Aquinas's argument. On the first prong, he tried to establish that if Aquinas in this argument was talking about existence in the sense of "specific

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[1] Anthony Kenny, *Aquinas on Being,* Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002.

existence", expressed by the Fregean existential quantifier, then he was either talking nonsense or essence and existence are distinct both in God and in creatures. On the other prong, Kenny argues that if Aquinas was talking about existence in the sense of "individual being", meaning actuality, corresponding to the Fregean notion of *Wirklichkeit*, then essence and existence are identical both in God and in creatures. Thus, either way, the *intellectus essentiae* argument fails to establish Aquinas's desired conclusion. This argument fails on many counts.

In the first place, as I have argued elsewhere,[2] Aquinas simply does not have a notion equivalent to the Fregean notion of an existential quantifier. In fact, a notion that would come closest to this notion in Aquinas's conceptual arsenal would be regarded by him not a concept of existence, but a *signum quantitatis*, namely, a *signum particulare*. In any case, Kenny's reason for holding that Aquinas would have to use in his argument the notion of specific existence, and, correspondingly, the notion of nominal as opposed to real essence, is his unjustified assumption that Aquinas would take a phoenix by definition to be a fictitious bird, just as we do. However, from his argument, as well as from the parallel text of his *Commentary on the Sentences*,[3] it is quite clear that Aquinas uses this example as the illustration of a real, but ephemeral natural phenomenon, like a lunar eclipse or a rainbow, the essence of which we could know perfectly well in terms of a scientific definition, yet, we may not know whether this kind of thing actually exists at the present time. So, Kenny's objection definitely fails on the first prong, on account of simply missing Aquinas's point in the argument.

But Kenny's objection fails on its second prong as well, even if the interpretation it involves is somewhat closer to Aquinas's original intention (although that interpretation entirely disregards Aquinas's conception of the analogy of being). For Kenny bases his objection on the false assumption that the distinctness of essence and existence would have to mean that it is possible to have one without the other. (And so, he argues, since it is impossible to have a dog's existence without its essence, for a dog cannot be without being a dog, essence and existence would have to be the same also in the case of this creature). However, this assumption is obviously false: for it is clearly possible to have distinct, yet necessarily co-occurring items in reality. For example, it is clear that the triangularity of any particular triangle (its having three angles) is not the same as its trilaterality (its having three sides), unless sides and angles are the same items. But it is also clear that one cannot have a particular triangularity without a particular trilaterality. So, we have two really distinct items here, clearly distinguishable in Aquinas's fine-grained semantics (even if not distinguishable in more coarse-grained modern conceptions), which are nevertheless inseparable in reality. Again, it is clear that for Aquinas a dog is really distinct from its soul. Still, one certainly cannot exist without the other: the dog cannot exist without its soul, and its soul, not being immortal,

[2] Klima, G. "On Kenny on Aquinas on Being: A critical review of *Aquinas on Being* by Anthony Kenny", feature review in *International Philosophical Quarterly*, 44(2004), pp. 567-580.

[3] Cf. 2SN, d. 3, q. 1, a. 1, co.

cannot exist without the dog. Indeed, the same type of reasoning applies to *all* substantial forms of *all* material substances: these forms are distinct from the substances whose matter they inform, still, neither those substances nor those forms can exist without each other. Therefore, *pace* Kenny, real distinction does not have to mean real separability, which finishes off the other prong of his attack.

Reconstructing the argument

Accordingly, to avoid the misunderstandings involved in Kenny's criticism, we have to understand the argument as dealing with real, individualized essences, and arguing for their real, mind-independent distinction from real, individual acts of existence at least in those cases in which we have knowledge of the essence, yet, we may not know whether it is actually present in any actually existing individual. Therefore, taking c to be any arbitrarily chosen thing whose nature is known but whose existence is not known, the gist of the argument may be reconstructed as follows:

1. The nature of c is known

2. The existence of c is not known

3. Therefore, the nature of c is not the existence of c.

In fact, if we name the individualized nature of c by the proper name 'n', and its individualized act of existence by the proper name 'e', then this argument may be regarded as an instance of the following valid argument form of predicate logic:

1. Kn

2. ~Ke

3. e ≠ n

Accordingly, in this reconstruction, the argument is certainly immune to Kenny's criticism; indeed, it may appear to be absolutely uncontroversial. However, the 14th-century nominalist philosopher, John Buridan attacked the argument precisely in this reconstruction, on account of the logical peculiarities of the intentional verb it involves.

Buridan's criticism

Buridan took on Aquinas's argument in his *Questions on Aristotle's Metaphysics*. In the first place, in the following passage he reconstructs the argument precisely in the way I presented it above, as an objection to his own thesis, which he is going to answer after his own determination of the issue:

> … I can have scientific knowledge of roses or thunder, and yet I may not know whether there is a rose or whether there is thunder. Therefore, if one of these is known and the other is unknown to me, then it follows that the one is not the same as the other.[4]

It is noteworthy in this reconstruction that Buridan is absolutely clear on the point of the argument Kenny missed, namely, that it is to prove the real distinction of real essences of scientifically known, but ephemeral natural phenomena, whose actual existence may not be known at any given time despite our scientific knowledge of their nature.

Buridan's criticism is based on the well-known phenomenon of the breakdown of the principle of the substitutivity of identicals in intentional contexts. It is easy to see this point, if we consider that the validity of Aquinas's argument as reconstructed above requires that its premises together with the negation of the conclusion should form an inconsistent set of propositions. Indeed, if the principle of the substitutivity of identicals is valid, then from the negation of the conclusion, which would claim the identity of existence and essence, we could promptly derive a contradiction, proving the requisite inconsistency. However, if this principle is not valid, then the contradiction is not derivable, which invalidates the original argument. Accordingly, Buridan starts his response to Aquinas's argument as he reconstructed it by making two important claims: first, that essence and existence differ in their concepts; second, that for this reason the argument as stated is a *non sequitur*:

> … for the sake of answering the objections it seems that we should say in this question that essence and existence differ in their concepts. For the name "rose" and this name or expression "that a rose exists" are imposed from different concepts. Therefore, when it is said that I think of a rose, while I do not think that it exists, this I concede. But from this it does not follow that, therefore, the existence of a rose[5] differs from the rose; what follows is only that it is according to different concepts or on different accounts that the rose is thought of in terms of the name "rose" and the expression "that a rose exists."

However, besides simply claiming the invalidity of the argument, Buridan also provides an explanation why it has to be invalid with an intentional verb:

> Here you need to know that we recognize, know, or understand things according to determinate and distinct concepts, and we can understand a thing according to one concept and ignore it according to another; therefore, the terms following such verbs as "understand" or "know" appellate [i.e., obliquely refer to] the concepts according to which they were imposed [to signify], but they do not so appellate their concepts when they precede these verbs. It is for this reason that you have it from Aristotle that this

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[4] Johannis Buridani *Quaestiones in Aristotelis Metaphysicam: Kommentar zur Aristotelischen Metaphysik*, Paris, 1518; reprint, Frankfurt am Main: Minerva, 1964, selections from lb. 8, q. 4, emended *ad sensum* and translated by G. Klima. Subsequent quote are from the same passage.

[5] Buridan uses these sentential nominalizations equivalently with the complex abstract terms formed from the terms of the corresponding proposition. Thus, he takes the sentential nominalization 'that a rose exists' to refer to the same as the complex abstract term 'the existence of a rose'. This issue need not detain us here. For a more detailed account of the issue, however, see Klima, G. "The Nominalist Semantics of Ockham and Buridan: A Rational Reconstruction", Gabbay, D. – Woods, J. (eds.) *Handbook of the History of Logic*, North Holland: Amsterdam, 2008, pp. 389-431.

consequence is not valid: "I know Coriscus, and Coriscus is the one approaching; therefore, I know the one approaching." And this is because to know the one approaching is to know the thing according to the concept according to which it is called the one approaching. Now, although I know Coriscus, it does not follow, even if he is the one approaching, that I recognize him under the concept according to which I know him to be approaching. But this would be a valid expository syllogism: "Coriscus I know; and Coriscus is the one approaching; therefore, the one approaching I know." Therefore, the situation is similar in the case under consideration: I understand a rose, but I do not understand a rose to exist, although a rose to exist I understand. The same applies to the other case: I concede that I have scientific knowledge about roses and thunder in terms of several conclusions, yet, I do not have scientific knowledge about roses or thunder in terms of the conclusion that a rose or thunder exists.

Buridan's criticism, as can be seen, is based on his celebrated theory of *appellatio rationis*, the theory according to which intentional verbs and their participles make their grammatical direct objects following them *appellate*, that is, obliquely refer to, their concepts. Indeed, if we make this oblique reference explicit, then the proposed argument will obviously be invalid. For then, using Buridan's example, the premises and the conclusion would have to be reformulated in the following way:

1'. I know the essence of a rose *qua* the essence of that rose

2'. I do not know the existence of that rose *qua* the existence of that rose

3'. Therefore, the existence of that rose is not the same as the essence of that rose

That this argument is not valid is clear from the fact that from the negation of its conclusion and its premises we cannot derive a contradiction. For if we assume that the existence of that rose *is* the same as the essence of that rose, then from the two premises we can only conclude either that the existence of that rose I know *qua* the essence of that rose, or that the essence of that rose I do not know *qua* the existence of that rose, but either of these is clearly compatible with the other premise, namely, that I do not know the existence of that rose *qua* the existence of that rose or that I know the essence of that rose *qua* the essence of that rose.

To see that it is quite possible that the existence of that rose (which is the same as the essence of that rose) I know *qua* the essence of that rose while I do not know the existence of that rose *qua* the existence of that rose, we should just consider the perfectly analogous example from Aristotle, according to which it is quite possible that the one approaching (who is Coriscus) I know *qua* Coriscus, but I do not know the one approaching *qua* the one approaching (for I see him from afar and I do not recognize that he is Coriscus).

Thus, it seems that as long as we can know the same item *qua* some essence, but not *qua* some act of existence, it is quite possible for us to know the essence of a certain thing without knowing whether it exists or not, despite the fact that its essence and existence are the same. Therefore, Aquinas's argument fails to establish its desired conclusion, the real distinction of the essence and existence of a thing on the basis of the fact that we may know its essence without knowing its existence.

A Thomistic response to Buridan's criticism, and its implications

But this does not have to be the end of the story for a Thomist. In fact, if we take a closer look at Aquinas's actual formulation of the argument, we have to notice something that is entirely neglected in the version of it criticized by Buridan, namely, Aquinas's talking about "parts of the essence" without which it cannot be understood. What can he possibly mean by this? And what is the relevance of this to the validity of his argument?

Since according to Aquinas, the essence or quiddity of a thing is what is signified in it by its quidditative definition, by "the parts of its essence", which in and of itself is not a conglomerate of several items, he means whatever is signified by the parts of the quidditative definition of the thing. In fact, since in his interpretation the definition is not primarily a linguistic expression, but an *intention*, that is, a concept of the mind expressed by the corresponding linguistic expression rendering this expression meaningful, we can say that on Aquinas's conception having scientific, quidditative knowledge about a thing is having its quidditative concept, expressible by a scientific, quidditative definition. In this context, therefore, we need to distinguish between merely having some no matter how vague and confused concept of a thing, resulting from the mind's first, spontaneous abstractive act, and having its quidditative concept, which is a clear and distinct, articulate concept, resulting from scientific inquiry into the nature of the thing.[6] Having this sort of quidditative concept, therefore, means clearly knowing its implications: for instance, if I have the clear and distinct quidditative knowledge of diamonds as being tetrahedrally crystallized pieces of carbon, then on account of having that concept, as well as the concept of electric conductivity, I know just as well that diamonds are poor conductors and good resistors (as opposed, say, to graphite).

Now what does this mean concerning the validity of Aquinas's argument and its Buridanian criticism? Concerning Buridan's criticism we should note that the breakdown of the substitutivity of identicals on account of the appellation of concepts in intentional contexts is conditioned on the *logical independence* of the appellated concepts in terms of which one and the same thing is conceived, known or understood. This is why it is possible for me to know, say, my father, and not to know the man approaching, even if the man approaching is actually my father. For I may certainly have the cognition of him in terms of the concept of my father, while lacking the cognition of him insofar as he is the man approaching. But this is so because the two acts of cognition in question *are logically independent*, whence I may perfectly well have the one without the other. However, if the appellated concepts or acts of cognition *are not logically independent*, whence I cannot have the one without the other, then the situation is radically different. For instance, suppose I have perfect quidditative

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[6] For more on this distinction, see the concluding section of Klima, G. "Contemporary 'Essentialism' vs. Aristotelian Essentialism", in: J. Haldane, (ed.), *Mind, Metaphysics, and Value in the Thomistic and Analytic Traditions*, University of Notre Dame Press: South Bend, IN, 2002, pp. 175-194.

knowledge of all things moving toward me as such. Therefore, anything that moves toward me I know insofar as it moves toward me. But I also know that anything that moves toward me approaches and anything that approaches moves toward me. Thus, it cannot be the case that I know the thing moving toward me insofar as it is moving toward me and I don't know the same thing insofar as it is approaching. And this is because the concepts appellated by the phrases 'the thing moving toward me' and 'the thing approaching' are logically equivalent, indeed, the same. Or consider another, perhaps more intuitive example. If I have the scientific concept of a rainbow, say, as being the refraction of light on water suspended in air, then I cannot know a rainbow *qua* rainbow, without knowing it at the same time *qua* the refraction of light on water suspended in air. To be sure, before forming the scientific concept, I can certainly have some vague and confused knowledge of it as some colorful arch in the sky, without knowing it *qua* the refraction of light on water suspended in air. However, once I have formed its quidditative concept, I cannot have knowledge of the same thing without knowing the implications of its quidditative concept.

But then the situation would have to be similar with the notions of essence and existence, provided we are talking about the clear and distinct scientific understanding of a thing's essence, which involves having the articulate, quidditative concept of the thing, knowing its logical implications. For in this situation, if the existence of the thing were the same as the essence of the thing, or, using Aquinas's phrase, it were "a part of" the essence of the thing (i.e., it would be logically entailed by its quidditative definition), then this would mean that having the quidditative cognition of the thing would entail also having its cognition in terms of its existence: that is to say, we could not have its quidditative knowledge without knowing that it exists. And indeed this is precisely what Aquinas hypothetically concedes in the conclusion of his argument:

> Therefore, it is clear that existence is distinct from essence, unless, perhaps, there is a thing whose quiddity is its own existence.

But then, how come Buridan didn't realize this point when he formulated his objection? Didn't he notice the possibility of the logical dependency of the appellated concepts that would again render Aquinas's argument valid?

Without going into much detail, I would suggest in conclusion that the answer to these questions is that on Buridan's conception of how our essential concepts latch onto things in the world, our concept of the quiddity of a contingently existing thing *always* has to be distinct and logically independent from our concept of the existence of that thing even if the thing in reality is both its own essence and its own existence. This, however, would be impossible on Aquinas's conception.

The reason for this, very briefly, is that for Aquinas our quidditative concept of a thing grasps precisely that *formal content* in the thing that essentially "shapes" the thing into the kind of thing it is. (A good illustration of what this *formal content* is would be the genetic code of a biological species determining the essential features of the kind of organism pertaining to that species.) Therefore, if this formal content (or simply the *form* or *nature*) of the thing essentially involves the existence of the thing, then it is impossible to form this quidditative concept of the thing without at the same time

forming the concept of its existence, but if it does not involve the existence of the thing, then the concept of this formal content *abstracts from the existence of the thing*. For Buridan, on the other hand, concept formation does not consist in this sort of mental grasping of a formal content. It is merely the formation of an indifferent mental representation of a certain kind of things, the content of which is nothing but those things themselves, regardless of whether they actually exist or not. But it is quite obvious that one could form a concept of this sort without forming the concept of the existence of any thing of this kind. Thus, it appears that the issue of whether it is Aquinas or Buridan who is right concerning the validity of Aquinas's argument turns on which of them is right in his conception of mental representation.