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THE SIGNIFICATION OF BEING

A Dissertation

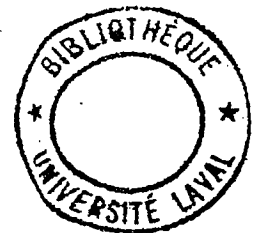
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AD VIRGINEM DNIFARAM

## THE SIGNIFICATION OF BEING

### PROPOSITIONS

1. Philosophus ex principiis rerum propriis procedit; Dialecticus autem ex principiis communibus seu intentionibus rationis procedit.  
(In IV Metaph., lect. 4, n. 574)

2. Natura agit propter finem.  
(In II Physic., lect. 13 and 14)

3. Actiones proprie humanae dicuntur quae ex voluntate deliberata procedunt.  
(Iallae, 2. 1, a. 1c)

4. Singulare materiale pro hoc statu non est directe cognoscibile ab intellectu.  
(Ia, q. 86, a. 1c)

5. Esse per se convenit formae.  
(Ia, q. 50, a. 5c)

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## INTRODUCTION

It is not without reason that some have spoken of being as a problem and a mystery. (1) For being presents both of these aspects. It is a mystery, in a sense, and at the same time a problem; a mystery in regard to the thing itself, the object of it exists outside the mind, a problem in regard to our understanding of it. Long ago Aristotle had observed this same fact. All knowledge, he wrote, begins in wonder; for all men begin by wondering why things are as they are. (2) Thus it is that they all led to search for the principles and causes of things, for we think we know why things are as they are when we know their causes. What all men search for, in reality, therefore, are the principles and causes of being. (3) But the element of wonder and mystery that surrounds being also brings with it the added difficulty and problem of our understanding of it. This may either be because it envelops an intelligibility that surpasses, in a way, our natural mode of knowing, as in the case of immaterial being; or because its nature presents a more or less impenetrable barrier to our understanding, a barrier due to the element of non-being in it, as in the case of becoming, potency and matter itself.

It was this latter aspect of the problem that confronted most of the earlier philosophers. And it was not an easy one to solve, for it was complica-

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(1) Maritain, A Preface to Metaphysics, (London, 1945) pp. 3-12; Marcel, Position et Approches du mystere ontologique (Paris, 1933); Blondel, L'etre et les etres (Paris, 1935), pp.1-32.

(2) Aristotle, Metaphysics, I, c. 2, 982 b 12.

(3) Ibid., IV, c. 1, 1003 a 28.

ted at the very outset. The early Physicists who sought to explain all things in terms of matter had erected an almost unsurmountable barrier that was to prove an obstacle to all subsequent philosophers. Matter, for them, was the sole principle of all things. Although their views may seem to be crude and primitive, they were not without some foundation. (1) Had they been merely vulgar and common notions, they could have easily been overlooked, but as it was, there appeared to be some reasoning in what they said. But it was, of course, a reasoning that was content to stop short of reality, instead of pushing itself further and deeper towards its goal. (2) The fateful consequences of their philosophical simplicity was not only the identification of matter with reality, but it entailed likewise a denial of one of the most fundamental processes towards an understanding of that reality, substantial generation. Since matter for them was the sole substance and principle of all things, all transformations were relative and affected only the various forms that matter received. Thus all forms were accidental and come to matter which was already a being in act. Herein lay the root and basis for all subsequent errors regarding the nature of matter and form and consequently being.

The early Physicists undoubtedly were not aware of the grave consequences their position entailed. But as men advanced, they were forced by the truth itself, as Aristotle says, to seek other causes and principles to explain the processes of nature and the being and reality of things. But even so, for some the solution was easy. Not being able to sufficiently explain the mul-

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(1) St. Thomas, In I Metaph., lect. 4 (ed. Marietti), n. 74.

(2) Ibid., lect. 5, n. 94.

tiplicity of beings, they simply denied it and said that everything was one. Others who could not so easily close their eyes to such evident facts as the becoming and multiplicity of things felt compelled to search further the cause and reason why these things are so. This led to the introduction of new principles and causes, but all these subsequent views were conditioned more or less by the fundamental errors of the early Physicists. The root of these later divergent and conflicting theories, as Aristotle pointed out, was their failure to distinguish between being in act and being in potency.

It is the former aspect of the problem of being, however, that confronts the metaphysician, as both Aristotle and St. Thomas well observe. (1) Here the problem is not so much with the things themselves, although this element is by no means lacking, but the difficulty is rather in ourselves and our defective way of knowing.

The desire for knowledge is natural with man; it is a desire that springs from the very depths of his being. (2) And because it originates from man's being, this desire for knowledge tends towards unity. In other words, man not only naturally searches for knowledge, but the human mind endeavors, as far as possible, to surmount the manifold imperfections in its way of knowing in an effort to grasp things in some sort of unity or oneness. For Aristotle and St. Thomas such a unity was found, as it quite naturally should be, in being, the formal object of the intellect itself.

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(1) Aristotle, ibid., II, c. 1, 993 b 8. St. Thomas, ibid., lect. 1, n. 281.

(2) In I Metaph., lect. 1, nn. 2,3,4.



While it is true that the unity of such a concept is only an imperfect and confused one, it can be for the metaphysician a means of coming to some knowledge of all things in their principles and causes. Beint out of proportion to our human intellect, they are intelligible to us only by analogy. Our eyes, like those of nocturnal birds, can only discern the pure intelligibility of such beings by means of the obscure and less intelligible things of our own experience. (1) To penetrate into this world of being is the deepest desire of the intelligence and, according to St. Thomas, even the most important knowledge that we can thus attain is more prized than the most certain knowledge of things less noble. (2)

What the richness was that being held for St. Thomas is undoubtedly mirrored in all his writings. It is regrettable, however, that being, which for him was the formal object of the intellect and the pivotal or focal point of his entire metaphysics, should still be a debatable issue. In a sense, it was St. Thomas who grasped the mystery and wonder that surrounds being, while we, on the other hand, are still striving to solve the problem.

The recent resurgence of existentialism, for instance, in the field of contemporary thought has occasioned, in some degree, the return of this very old problem. Many modern scholastic philosophers, some of whose views we shall have occasion to consider later on, have come forth with the opinion

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(1) In II Metaph., lect. 1, n. 282.

(2) In I De Anima, lect. 1, n. 5.

that the metaphysics of St. Thomas is fundamentally an existentialist metaphysics. To the ordinary confirmed metaphysician such a doctrine is looked upon as being nothing short of heretical; for it has always been understood that metaphysics has for its object the essences of things regardless of whether they exist or not.

Actually, however, the idea is not new; it was discussed long ago by two of the principal commentators on St. Thomas, Cajetan and Ferrara. It was Ferrara's contention that St. Thomas understood being in the sense of a noun, or ens nominaliter as he calls it; whereas Cajetan, on the other hand, upheld the opinion that St. Thomas understood being in the sense of a participle or ens participialiter.

In many ways, this is what the problem resolves itself to among modern or contemporary scholastics: is being to be taken as a noun or as a participle? For this reason, the best possible way to find out what is behind the present day discussions on the nature of being, we thought, would be to examine the whole problem in its very origin among the commentators themselves. In doing so, however, our purpose was not merely to give an historical sketch of the origin of the problem, nor to discuss simply what these men think, although such a factor could be considered incidentally; our aim was rather to find out what the doctrine of St. Thomas himself was. For, in a certain sense, and this is another reason why we have chosen this particular approach to the problem, the fact that Ferrara and Cajetan viewed the matter differently is, in itself, already an indication of the richness and fecundity of St. Thomas' mind.

What we have attempted here is by no means a complete study of either Cajetan's or Ferrara's views on the nature of being. However, we have discussed the principal features underlying their positions in such a way that what we may have omitted will not effect in any way their views as a whole. As regards the doctrine of St. Thomas, we could outline only briefly the major points. These factors we hope to discuss more fully at some future date, especially in the light of St. Thomas' commentary on the Metaphysics. In a sense, this is the only way the problem will ever be settled definitely. There one could show, for instance, from the very plan and method of the Metaphysics itself what it is that it is intent upon proving; what the rigorous order is that is followed, which some have interpreted as a disorder; the peculiar way that being is considered in accordance with the exigencies of the science; how metaphysics proves the proper passions of being, the other transcendentals convertible with being. As far as we know, this has never been attempted before. That it is necessary will become quite evident as we take up the problem as it was envisioned by Ferrara and Cajetan.

The procedure we shall follow will be the same for both positions. First of all, we shall state the views of Ferrara and Cajetan and the arguments they give in support of their opinions. Then we shall consider the principal texts of St. Thomas that might be interpreted as favoring one or the other position. Thirdly, answers to objections that such a position might entail will be given. And finally, we shall consider the views of modern scholastics who seem to show a preference for either the position of ens nominaliter or ens participialiter.

In order to properly orientate the discussion we shall begin with a brief explanation of the fundamental features underlying our notion and conception of being.

## SECTION ONE

### PRELIMINARY NOTIONS AND BASIC CONCEPTS

The first part of the course is devoted to the study of the basic concepts of the theory of functions of a real variable. This part of the course is divided into two main sections: the first section deals with the general properties of functions, and the second section deals with the properties of continuous functions.

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## Being as First Known by the Intellect

Being according to St. Thomas is the first concept to be apprehended by the human intellect.

Illud autem quod primo intellectus concipit quasi notissimum, et in quo omnes conceptiones resolvit, est ens; ut Avicenna dicit in principio Metaphysicae suae, lib.1, cap. IX. Unde oportet quod omnes alias conceptiones intellectus accipiantur ex additione ad ens. (1)

The reason for this, as St. Thomas points out, is because everything is knowable only inasmuch as it is in actuality; (2) or, as he mentions in another place, "whatever is known must in some way be, at least in the knower himself". (3) A thing must have, therefore, some form of existence in order to be conceived by the mind; a thing must be conceived as being before it can be conceived at all. This in no way

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(1) De Ver., q.1, a.1.c; IaIIae, q.55, a.4, adl.

(2) "Cum enim unumquodque sit cognoscibile inquantum est ens actu, ut infra in nono hujus dicitur, illa quae habent esse deficientis et imperfectum, sunt secundum seipsa parum cognoscibilia, ut materia, motus et tempus propter esse eorum imperfectionem, ut Boetius dicit in libro de Duabus naturis". — In II Metaph., lect.1, n.280. Cf. In IX Metaph., lect.10, n. 1894; Ia, q.5, a.2, c.

(3) "Quidquid cognoscitur, aliquo modo oportet esse, ad minus in ipso cognoscente; ut Avicenna, tract. VII Metaph., cap.1, dicit, quod de eo quod omnino est non ens, nihil potest enuntiari. Unde secundum quod aliqua se habent ad esse, ita se habent ad divinam cognitionem. Esse autem rei potest tripliciter considerari: vel prout est in propria sua natura ex suis principiis educta, vel prout est in potentia alicujus causae, vel prout est in apprehensione alicujus cognoscentis". — In I Sent., d.38, q.1, a.4, sol: — De Natura Generis, I, Opusc. XXXIX, Vives, p.52: "Ens namque est objectum intellectus primi; cum nihil sciri possit nisi secundum quod est ens actu, ut dicitur in IX Metaph.; Unde nec oppositum ejus intelligere potest intellectus, non ens scilicet, nisi fingendo ipsum ens aliquo modo: quod cum intellectus apprehendere nititur, efficitur ens rationis. De quo modo entis dicitur in V Metaph., quod ens uno modo dicitur, de quo possunt propositiones formari, etiam si essentiam non habeat".

suggests, however, that the mind thus has an intuitive knowledge of being, or that the intellect sees its object in all its intelligible reality. On the contrary, St. Thomas would argue that this knowledge, in fact, is very limited and quite indicative of the imperfection of the human intellect and of our mode of knowing. For the intellect in its first apprehension of things does not attain a perfect knowledge of them. Our first apprehensions are rather vague and imperfect notions, and it is only by successive and comparative acts which are much more complex, such as judgment and reasoning, that our intellect comes to a more complete and detailed understanding of its object. (1) This is true not only of intellectual knowledge but also of sense knowledge as well. In both processes there is a movement from what is more general and common to what is less general and less common. (2)

Being, then, as here grasped by the intellect is a rather vague and confused notion. This does not mean, however, that we should consider it as an abstract idea, in the sense that the intellect universalises and separates it from the objects in which it inheres. This is not the case with being as it is first known by the human mind. It is

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(1) "...Intellectus humanus necesse habet intelligere componendo et dividendo. Cum enim intellectus humanus exeat de potentia in actus, similitudinem quandam habet cum rebus generabilibus, quae non statim perfectionem suam habent, sed eam successive acquirunt. Et similiter intellectus humanus non statim in prima apprehensione capit perfectam rei cognitionem....Et secundum hoc necesse habet unam apprehensionem alii componere et dividere, et ex una compositione et divisione ad aliam procedere; quod est rationari". -- Ia, q.85, a.50.

(2) "Et quia sensus exit de potentia in actus, sicut et intellectus; ideo etiam ordo cognitionis apparet in sensu. Nam prius secundum sensum iudicandum magis commune quam minus commune, et secundum locum et secundum tempus". -- Ia, q.85, a.30.

a confused notion merely in the sense that, in the concrete objects as they thus present themselves, the intellect seizes only that most general factor which is common to them all, namely, their esse. But it is important to keep in mind, that when the intellect knows a thing as regards its esse, it does not prescind from the fact that it knows objects under the aspect of the quiddity. For this would be impossible, since the quiddity is its formal object and what is in itself primarily intelligible. What happens, then, is that the mind at this point is not able at once to penetrate the proper constitution of the thing and discern any determinate aspects in it, but rather that in the quiddity itself it attains only that which is most common and fundamental, which is the esse itself; and this is what it then knows as the quiddity. (1) That is why we can say, then, that the intellect at this stage knows objects only in a more or less confused and indeterminate manner, so that whatever pertains to the objects as such is scarcely distinguishable from the fact of their esse. (2) This knowledge of being is certainly not abstract in the usual sense of the word, but it is rather seized, we might say, as it actually enters the very constitution of things, even though it is only a primitive, confused and indeterminate notion.

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(1) John of St. Thomas, Cursus Philosophicus Thomisticus, vol. 2, Phil. Nat. I.P. Q.I., Art. III, p. 2411-27: "Quare (quod valde advertendum est) quando intellectus cognoscit aliquid quoad an est, non praescindit a quod quid seu a quidditate, hoc enim est impossibile, cum sit formale eius objectum et primo et per se intelligibile, sed solum non cognoscit quidditative, id est penetrando constitutionem propriam quidditatis et causas essendi, sed in ipsa quidditate solum attingit praedicatum quoddam valde commune et confusum, quod est ipsum esse; et hoc est, quod tunc cognoscit ut quod quid".

(2) "...In ipso objecto sic occurrente non discernuntur determinatae rationes, sed solum accipitur seu concipitur secundum quandam indeterminationem, in qua quidquid ad tale objectum pertinet, confunditur et fere est idem quod cognoscere rem quoad an est". — Ibid., p. 24b25.



It is important to keep this in mind. If being is the primum cognitum, the first thing known by our intellect, if it has an objective reality, it is because being is known as it actually enters the very constitution or composition of things. Thus, it is known neither by a formal nor a total abstraction, but only by a kind of negative abstraction from singulars. (1) It is not a total abstraction, for this presupposes a knowledge already acquired of an object, and this object is the subject and foundation of the universality attained in the abstractive process. Nor is it considered formally as an element common to all things, disengaged from them, but it is rather something as seen in this or that particular object: ens concretum quidditati sensibili. It is being as enveloped and embodied in the manifold of natures and essences. It is at the same time the particular quiddity and being in general. But it is as yet, as we have seen, something confused and indistinct.

Cajetan, in his commentary on the De Ente et Essentia, develops this idea with remarkable precision. (2) The intellect knows directly the universal which may be considered as a definable whole (totum definibile) or as a universal whole (totum universale). The totality

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(1) "...Non sumitur ens, ut subest abstractioni positivae, sive formali sive totali, sicut de illo tractat Metaphysica, sed ut concipitur secundum se et sub abstractione negativa, qualis etiam potest contingere in sensu, qui accipit unum omisso alio ..... quia in ipsa quidditate sensibili solum accipit rationem confusiorum vel communiorum secundum se, quae est magis imperfecta et potentialis". — John of St. Thomas, Ibid., p. 31a7-28.

(2) Cajetan, In De Ente et Essentia, Prooem., q.1, n.3, pp.2-4.

of a definable whole is based on what is actually included in the object; whereas the totality of a universal whole is based on what is virtually, i.e. potentially, included in the object. Both the definable whole and the universal whole can be known in two ways: (a) confusedly, or (b) distinctly. The confused knowledge of a definable whole consists in knowing a thing but without knowing distinctly the parts which compose it; a distinct knowledge is had of the definable whole when the parts which compose it are known distinctly as parts of the whole. There is confused knowledge of a universal whole when it is known but not to the extent of being able to join it with its subjective parts. Animal, for example, can be considered as both a definable whole and as a universal whole. There is confused knowledge of animal as a definable whole when it is known indeed but not to the extent of knowing the essential parts which compose its definition; there is distinct knowledge when these essential parts are distinctly known. Confused knowledge is had of animal as a universal whole when the notion of animal is grasped, but the specific kinds of animal are not known; distinct knowledge of animal as a universal whole is had when all the species of animal are distinctly known. According to Cajetan, then, there is (1) confused actual knowledge and (2) distinct actual knowledge of a definable whole while there is (3) confused virtual knowledge and (4) distinct virtual knowledge of a universal whole.

Confused actual and confused virtual knowledge, moreover, differ from one another: (a) in that confused actual is not compatible with a

distinct knowledge of the same object; for example, animal cannot be known confusedly and distinctly as regards what is actually included in it; on the other hand, confused virtual knowledge is compatible with a distinct knowledge of the same object as a definable whole. One can thus have a distinct knowledge of animal as regards its definition, without knowing the various species of animal: (b) confused actual knowledge, moreover, is anterior to confused virtual knowledge.

There is a distinction, too, between distinct actual knowledge and distinct virtual knowledge in that the former is compatible with a confused virtual knowledge of the same object. Thus, one can know animal as regards its definition, while having only a confused knowledge of it in its universal totality. Distinct virtual knowledge, on the contrary, is altogether incompatible with any confused knowledge. It is impossible to know the various species of animal, for instance, without knowing what the essence of animal is in itself. Thus it is that distinct virtual knowledge presupposes distinct actual knowledge, but the inverse is not true.

Having made these distinctions, Cajetan contends that being as the primum cognitum is known by confused actual knowledge.

Cum autem, ut ex dictis patet, ordo cognitionum confusarum actualium sit via originis prior caeteris, primum cognitum in ordine cognitionis confusae actualis erit primum cognitum simpliciter: et sic cum hic quaeramus quid sit primum cognitum simpliciter ab intellectu nostro via originis, nihil aliud dubitemus nisi quid sit primum cognitum in ordine cognitionis confusae actualis. (1)

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(1) Op. cit., Praeamb., q. 1, n. 3, pp. 3, 4.

As further evidence of this fact, which manifests the marvelous insight of this entire analysis, Cajetan outlines the threefold condition under which being may terminate the act of the intellect; First, it may have that condition which is total abstraction, not from singulars, but from species and genera. Secondly, it may have that condition which is formal abstraction, likewise from species and genera. Thirdly, as having neither of these conditions, but abstracted nevertheless from singulars. (1) In the first case, being considered as such is a universal whole and, as we shall see subsequently, contains actually and not potentially its inferiors. Under the second condition, being is a metaphysical term, and, continues Cajetan, perhaps not even known to the most learned men. In the third way, being is the first thing known and is called being as concentered in a sensible quiddity, because it is not separated by one of the aforesaid abstractions from a specific or generic quiddity. (2)

In this short passage Cajetan has touched upon a point of extreme and fundamental importance. Here we have the basis for a proper under-

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(1) "Scito quod ens sub triplici conditione potest terminare actum intellectus. Primo ut habet conditionem istam, quae est abstractio totalis, non dico a singularibus sed a speciebus et a generibus. Secundo modo ut habet conditionem istam quae est abstractio formalis similiter a speciebus et generibus. Tertio modo ut neutram istarum conditionum habens, abstractum tamen a singularibus". — Op. cit., n. 5, p. 6.

(2) "Primo modo ens non est pertinens ad hanc quaestionem, quia ipsum ut sic est totum universale, nos autem loquimur de cognitione confusa actuali non virtuali. Secundo modo ens est terminus metaphysicalis: et forte adhuc viris doctissimis non innotuit. Tertio modo ens est primum cognitum, et nuncupatum est ens concretum quidditati sensibili: quia non est separatim aliqua dictarum abstractionum a quidditate specifica vel generica". — Ibid., p. 6.

standing of the differences between being as first known by the intellect, being as a transcendental or analogous notion, and finally being as envisioned from the metaphysical point of view. Let us examine this a little more closely. According to St. Thomas, things are intelligible in proportion as they are separable from matter; (1) for the root of all knowledge is immateriality. (2) This immateriality is required, first of all, on the part of the knower himself and secondly on the part of the object which is known. This latter requisite is achieved when the intellect, lifting its object from the obscurity of its material conditions, proportions it to itself by elevating it within itself to diverse degrees of immateriality and intelligibility. (3) The process by which the intellect lifts its

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(1) "Res materialis intelligibilis efficitur per hoc quod a materia et materialibus conditionibus separatur. Quod ergo est per sui naturam ab omni materia et materialibus conditionibus separatum, hoc est intelligibile secundum suam naturam". — Contra Gentiles, I, c.47.

(2) "Patet igitur quod immaterialitas alicuius rei est ratio quod sit cognoscitiva; et secundum modum immaterialitatis est modus cognitionis". — Ia, q.14, art.1c. In this passage St. Thomas shows that only those beings whose forms transcend the conditions of matter can have the operation of intelligence. This same idea is expressed in I Sent., d.8, 2.5, a.2c: "Nulla forma efficitur intelligibilis, nisi per hoc quod separatur a materia et ab appendentiis materiae..... Unde Avicenna dicit quod aliquid dicitur esse intellectivum, quia est immune a materia". — De Ver., q.23, a.1c: "Cognitio non rebus omnibus attribuitur, sed solum immaterialibus; et secundum gradum immaterialitatis est gradus cognitionis".

The immateriality of the object of knowledge likewise is the condition of its capacity for being known. The more immaterial an object is, the more knowable will it be. Hence, God, Who is absolutely immaterial, is also supremely knowable in Himself; whereas prime matter, as such, is absolutely unknowable in itself.

(3) "Et similiter intellectus species corporum, quae sunt materiales et mobiles, recipit immaterialiter et immobiliter secundum modum suum: nam receptum est in recipiente per modum recipientis". — Ia, q.84, a.1c.

object from its material conditions is called abstraction. This may be of two sorts: positive and negative. The former has for its term at least one concept which is complete by itself. This abstraction, in turn, issues into two distinct kinds, according as the term which is abstracted and the term from which the abstraction is made constitute two complete concepts, or, one complete concept and the other incomplete. Since all positive abstraction involves some sort of separation, the basis of this dual separation is a twofold composition: the composition of matter and form, and the composition of a universal whole and its subjective parts. (1)

Abstraction is said to be formal when it consists in disengaging a form from the matter in which it is concretized; it is said to be total when it consists in disengaging a universal whole from the subjective parts in which it is found. In the first case the separation is such that it results in a double concept each of which is complete by itself, i.e. the two terms are separated in such a way that neither is of the ratio of the other. For instance, the ratio or definition of line as line does not include sensible matter, nor does the definition of sensible line include anything from the definition of line in so far as it is a line. (2) Hence, each can be perfectly conceived in

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(1) In Boet. de Trin., q.5, a.3c: "Since abstraction cannot take place, properly speaking, unless there is conjunction of things objectively, according to two modes of conjunction referred to above, namely, according as part is joined to whole, or form to matter, abstraction is twofold: one sort by which form is abstracted from matter; the other, by which the whole is abstracted from its parts".

(2) "In abstractione formali seorsum uterque conceptus completus habetur: ejus scilicet quod abstrahitur, et ejus a quo abstrahitur, id est, formalis et materialis, ita quod conceptus alter alterum non in-

separation from the other. In separating the notion of line from sensible line, line is considered as a form in relation to sensible, which has the character of matter in regard to line. Because formal abstraction reveals thus a form that is separated from its material conditions, it gives rise to greater intelligibility. In fact, this greater intelligibility is the very reason for the separability of the form. The notion of line, for example, is much more intelligible in its state of abstraction than in its state of concretion in sensible matter. Thus, formal abstraction gives rise to actuality, distinction, and greater intelligibility.

Abstraction is said to be total, on the other hand, when we consider in itself a whole separated from its subjective parts, e.g. animal separated from man and brute. In this abstraction only one complete concept results: the idea of animal is conceivable without the notion of man or brute; but neither man nor brute is intelligible without animal. (1) Animal thus retains what is common to its inferiors,

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claudit. Linea enim, in eo quod linea, habet complete suam diffinitionem non includentem materiam sensibilem, et e converso, materia sensibilis lineae habet complete suam diffinitionem non includentem aliquid lineae, in eo quod linea". — Cajetan, op. cit., n.5, p.6.

(1) "In abstractione vero totali non remanet seorsum uterque conceptus completus, ita quod alter alterum non includit; sed unus tantum ejus scilicet quod abstrahitur. Quando enim abstraho animal ab homine non praescindunt se invicem conceptus hominis et animalis, sed tantum conceptus animalis non includit conceptum hominis: homo enim non est intelligibilis sine animali. Fundamentum hujus differentiae est quod illa abstractio fit per considerationem alicujus, quod est de ratione inferioris, et per remotionem, id est, non considerationem alicujus, quod est de ratione illiusmet inferioris: abstrahitur enim animal ab homine per hoc quod intellectus considerat in homine animal et non rationale, quorum utrumque est de ratione hominis". Ibid., p.6.

man and brute, while leaving aside that which divides them, namely, their differences. As a consequence, there is a movement from what is in itself more determined, more actual, and hence more intelligible objectively, to what is more confused, more potential, and less intelligible objectively. (1)

The second type of abstraction mentioned above, which is generally referred to as negative abstraction, differs from both classes of positive abstraction which we have been considering in that it does not achieve even one complete and independent concept. The term at which this abstraction arrives remains bound to the context from which it has been abstracted. The mind does not achieve in this instance in lifting the formality it seizes out of its context, set it forth by itself, and consider it formally as separated. Negative abstraction resembles total abstraction in the sense that it arrives at a common notion, but it differs from it in that this common notion is not considered in relation to its inferiors. It is like formal abstraction in that it achieves a certain formality, but it differs from it in that the separation is not complete, and consequently it does not consider the formality formally as separable or separated.

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(1) "In abstractione vero totali oritur in eo quod abstrahitur potentialitatis confusio, et minor intelligibilitas..... Fundamentum est quia ..... abstractio totalis fit per separationem a specificis actualibus, a quibus quanto aliquid est abstractius, tanto est minus intelligibile, cum actus secundum se sit notior potentia". --- Cajetan, op. cit., pp. 6,7.



In the light of these reflections on the abstractive character of our way of knowing it should be possible for us now to see more precisely the nature of being as it is first known by the intellect. It is in this sort of negative abstraction, which, because of its simplicity and ease, is more proportionate to the potential character of the intellect, that being is thus grasped by our minds. Thus, it is not seized as separated from all matter in a formal abstraction, as in the case of being as being, the subject of metaphysics, but rather as something concretized in sensible quiddity; and as thus known it is an actual whole, although known confusedly, i.e. without as yet penetrating its actuality, and not as a potential whole which denotes the relation of superior to inferior as in total abstraction and which, in the case of being, must be analogical.

Our next step will be to examine being as a universal whole (totum universale) exhibiting its analogical character and the special kind of total abstraction in which it actually includes its inferiors and not merely potentially or virtually, as in the case of ordinary universal concepts. This will be the subject of our inquiry in the following section.

## CHAPTER II

### Being as an Analogous Whole

Since being is the first object grasped by the intellect it is clear that it is not known through the intermediary of any other object. In this sense, it is what is known naturally, spontaneously, as that which is immediately evident to the intellect. Every faculty, says St. Thomas, must have its formal object, that to which it is naturally ordained, that which it attains first of all, and by means of which it comes to know everything else. Thus, the formal object of the sense of sight is that sensible quality known as color, for nothing is visible except by means of color; sound is the formal object of the sense of hearing. The intellect, too, then must have one formal object under which are comprised all things that are known. This is none other than being. (1)

There is a remarkable confirmation of this in all our subsequent knowledge of reality. Each object that presents itself to us and is known as such, the mind perceives as some determined aspect or mode

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(1) "Cum natura semper ordinatur ad unum, unius virtutis oportet esse naturaliter unum objectum: sicut visus colorem, et auditus sonum. Intellectus igitur, cum sit una vis, est eius unum naturale objectum, cuius per se et anturaliter cognitionem habet. Hoc autem oportet esse id sub quo comprehenduntur omnia ab intellectu cognita: sicut sub colore comprehenduntur omnes colores, qui sunt per se visibiles. Quod non est aliud quam ens. Naturaliter igitur intellectus noster cognoscit ens, et ea quae sunt per se entis inquantum huiusmodi; in qua cognitione fundatur primorum principiorum notitia, ut non esse simul affirmare et negare, et alia huiusmodi". — C. G., II, c. 83.

of being. Thus, the intellect in the acquisition of its knowledge proceeds from the idea of being to the somewhat confused ideas of the mode or manner of being implied in things. It seeks to render these new ideas intelligible in the light of being, and little by little comes to recognize that some things are beings in the full sense of the word, as things which exist in themselves, as substances; while others, although having being, do not exist in themselves but only in another. Here we are no longer merely aware of the being of things, of a "something which is"; what we are able to ascertain now are different kinds of beings, determinations and characteristics of things that set them off and distinguish them one from the other.

Moreover, and what is equally important, we can attest in the absolute immanence of being in all things. It suffices to reflect but an instant to perceive that everything we know or are able to know is and can only be of being; only nothing is absolutely inconceivable and consequently impossible to be. Our concept of being, therefore, represents adequately and perfectly all reality, embracing in its comprehension all actual or possible beings that we are able to conceive. It is this immanence of being in everything that is or can be that forms the basis and foundation of what the intellect perceives to be the transcendental or analogous character of being.

It is quite obvious that the concept of being is not the same as the ordinary universal or generic concept. For the universality of being is such that it surpasses or transcends all actual and determinate modes of being. Wider than all, even the highest or supreme genera, it itself

is not a genus. (1) In other words, it is not a generic, but a transcendental notion. Whereas a genus is contracted to various species by the addition of differences, which differences, because they are outside the essence of the genus, constitute a veritable addition to it; in the case of being, as we have seen, there are no differences possible that are not already included in the notion or concept of being. (2) Being is of the ratio of everything, actual or possible. Nothing extrinsic, therefore, can be added to contract it. This is what we mean by the immanence or transcendental character of being. (3)

Furthermore, inasmuch as a universal or generic concept achieves

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(1) "Quod autem ens et unum non possint esse genera, probat tali ratione..... Nulla autem differentia potest accipi de qua non praedicetur ens et unum, quia quaelibet differentia cujuslibet generis est ens et est una, alioquin non posset constituere unam aliquam speciem entis. Ergo impossibile est quod unum et ens sint genera". — In III Metaph., lect. 8, n. 433; cf. In V Metaph., lect. 9, n. 809; De Ver., q. 1, a. 1c.

(2) "Nulla enim differentia participat actu genus; quia differentia sumitur a forma, genus autem a materia.... Forma autem non includitur in essentia materiae actu, sed materia est in potentia ad ipsam. Et similiter differentia non pertinet ad naturam generis, sed genus habet differentiam potestate. Et propter hoc differentia non participat genus; quia cum dico rationale, significo aliquid habens rationem. Nec est de intellectu rationalis quod sit animal. Illud autem participatur, quod est de intellectu participantis. Et propter hoc dicitur, quod differentia non participat genus. Nulla autem posset differentia sumi, de cujus intellectu non esset unum et ens. Unde unum et ens .... non possunt esse genera". — In XI Metaph., lect. 1, n. 2169.

(3) John of St. Thomas, op cit., Logica, II P. q. 13, a. 5, p. 494 b 38: "Et similiter transcenduntia, ut ens, quia dicunt rationem, quae in ipsis differentia et modis inibitur, quia omnia entia sunt, ideo non potest separari conceptus entis in comuni ab aliquo, quod enti sit extraneum, sicut segregatur animal a rationali ut ab extraneo sibi, in quantum animal est, sed separatur conceptus entis a suis contrahentibus per hoc, quod in confuso et non explicite cognoscuntur ea, quae divisa sunt in inferioribus".

perfect unity in its precision from its subordinate species, it can be predicated of them univocally. While differing from one another by characteristics which lie outside the concept of the genus, such species, nevertheless, agree in realizing the generic concept itself, and as such it is really and truly predicated of each of them in the same way. But since the transcendental concept of being does not perfectly abstract from the differences of things, because the characteristics which differentiate all genera and species from one another, and from the common notion of being, in which they agree, are likewise being, it does not achieve a perfect unity or precision. For that reason, we do not predicate being univocally of its various modes; for as applied to each mode it signifies the whole content of that mode, not merely that in which it agrees with, but also that in which it differs from, others. Yet, we cannot predicate being in a totally different sense of each determinate mode, for in each case being implies either actual existence or some relation to existence. The transcendentality of the concept of being requires, then, that it be predicated of things, partly the same and partly different; and this is what we mean when we say that the concept of being is analogical, that being is predicated of its inferiors analogically. (1)

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(1) "... Ens sive quod est dicitur multipliciter. Sed sciendum quod aliquid praedicatur de diversis multipliciter: quandoque quidem secundum rationem omnino eadem, et tunc dicitur de eis univoce praedicari, sicut animal de equo et bove. --- Quandoque vero secundum rationes omnino diversas; et tunc dicitur de eis aequivoce praedicari, sicut canis de sidere et animali. --- Quandoque vero secundum rationes quae partim sunt diversae et partim non diversae: diversae quidem secundum quod diversas habitudines important, unae autem secundum quod ad unum aliquid et idem intae diversae habitudines referuntur; et illud dicitur "analogice praedicari", idest proportionaliter, prout unusquisque secundum suam habitudinem ad illud unum refertur". -- In IV Metaph., lect. 1, n. 535.

It will be well to keep in mind that when we speak of the analogy of being we are referring to a logical or second intention, a relation that is formed by the intellect upon seeing the similitude or proportion that all things have in being, and consequently as predicable of them in a proportional or analogous way. Since this relation is the product of the intellect's comparative act, the only existence it has is in the intentional order. Analogy as such, then, does not exist in things. It has a foundation in reality, of course, but to say that analogy is found in beings is to confuse the logical order with the real. John of St. Thomas stresses this point in the following way.

Transcendentia non est species analogiae, sed est subjectum analogiae, et denominative est analogum id, quod est transcendens, sicut animal denominative est genus. Et ratio est manifesta, quia transcendens est aliquid reale, quod in omnibus invenitur. Analogia autem, sicut univocatio et aequivocatio, formaliter est intentio secunda, sicut genus formaliter est secunda intentio; pertinet enim ad modum praedicabilitatis et universalitatis et convenit media abstractione intellectus. (1)

The term analogy, according to the commonly accepted opinion, is a mean between pure equivocation and univocation, so that the thing expressed by the name while not identical with other things signified by the same name is not altogether different from them either. There is a difference according to nature in the things signified; but proportionally and according to a relation, these things are the same. (2)

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(1) John of St. Thomas, op. cit., pp. 512 b 34 - 513.

(2) Ibid., p. 481 b 36.



A thing may be predicated analogously in several ways. St. Thomas distinguishes three kinds of analogy. (1) Either according to the concept only and not according to the esse, which occurs when one concept is referred to several things by a prior and posterior order, but which concept has an esse in one thing. The example St. Thomas gives is health which, although attributed to several things, has being only in one thing properly speaking. Other things are denominated healthy solely by the reference they have to that which has health in the proper sense. The second kind of analogy is that according to the esse and not according to the concept. This happens when several things are made equal in the intention of something common, but that common thing has not an esse of the same character in all the things, as when all bodies are made equal

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(1) "Aliquid dicitur secundum analogiam tripliciter: vel secundum intentionem tantum, et non secundum esse; et hoc est quando una intentio refertur ad plura per prius et posterius, quae tamen non habet esse nisi in uno; sicut intentio sanitatis refertur ad animal, urinam et distant diversimode, secundum prius et posterius; non tamen secundum diversum esse, quia esse sanitatis non est nisi in animali. Vel secundum esse et non secundum intentionem; et hoc contingit quando plura parificantur in intentione alicujus communis, sed illud commune non habet esse unius rationis in omnibus, sicut omnia corpora parificantur in intentione corporeitatis. Unde Logicus, qui considerat intentiones tantum, dicit, hoc nomen, corpus, de omnibus corporibus univoce praedicari; sed esse hujus naturae non est ejusdem rationis in corporibus corruptibilibus et incorruptibilibus. Unde quantum ad metaphysicum et naturalem, qui considerant res secundum suum esse, nec hoc nomen, corpus, nec aliquid aliud dicitur univoce de corruptibilibus et incorruptibilibus .... Vel secundum intentionem et secundum esse; et hoc est quando neque parificantur in intentione communi, neque in esse; sicut ens dicitur de substantia et accidente; et de talibus oportet quod natura communis habeat aliquod esse in unoquoque eorum de quibus dicitur, sed differens secundum rationem majoris vel minoris perfectionis". — In I Sent., d. 19, q. 5, a. 2, ad 1.

in the common concept of corporeity. For the logician, who considers only concepts, this is an univocal concept; but for the metaphysician, who considers things according to their esse, this is an analogous term. The third type of analogy is that which is according to the concept and according to esse. This occurs when the thing is not made equal in a common concept or in esse. The example given here is being which is said of substance and accident. Concerning these things, continues St. Thomas, it is necessary that the common nature should have a certain esse in each of those things about which it is said but differing according to the degree of greater or less perfection.

The three classes of analogy described here by St. Thomas are treated quite at length by Cajetan in his De Nominum Analogia. (1) The analogy secundum esse et non secundum intentionem, which Cajetan refers to as an analogy of inequality, strictly speaking is not an analogy at all. The things in their physical esse differ, yet they are made equal under an univocal concept. According to definition, all bodies are composed of matter and form; yet for the ancients celestial bodies and earthly bodies could not be brought under a common genus, since the matter in the former was incorruptible while the matter of earthly bodies was corruptible. If considered logically, they could be made equal and be compared under the common concept of corporeity; but for the metaphysician who considers things

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(1) Ed. P. N. Zambit (Rome, 1934)



in their being, this term would be an analogous term. When Cajetan refers to this analogy as an abuse of names, it is quite evident that he is speaking as a logician and it does not mean that he totally rejected this type of analogy. (1)

The analogy secundum intentionem tantum et non secundum esse, which is the first class of analogy cited by St. Thomas, is usually referred to as the analogy of attribution or proportion. Here a term is attributed to different things because of the relations they have to some single term which is designated as the primary analogue, while the nature connoted by this term is found intrinsically only in the primary or principal analogue. Analogy of attribution ordinarily does not imply intrinsic denomination in the various analogates, but it does not necessarily exclude it either. On this point Sylvester Ferrara and Cajetan disagree somewhat. (2) But since

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(1) Op. cit., p. 9, note: "Quo sub respectu huiusmodi analogia tanquam univoca computanda sunt, et sub quo ipsa sint revera analogia, ex textibus S. Thomae iam allatis, satis constat. Cum igitur Auctor sic de his analogis scribebat, primum aspectum prae oculis videtur habuisse, et non intentionem ea absolute reiiciendi, uti nonnulli auctores existimant".

(2) Ferrariensis, Comm. in Summam contra Gentiles, I. c. 34, edit. Leon. tom. 13, p. 104: "Quantum ad formale et per se significatum nominis, fit denominatio intrinseca tantum in uno, in illo videlicet per comparisonem ad quod alia dicuntur analogice talia: quia nominis significatum in illo uno designat formaliter est, in aliis vero non est formaliter, sed dicuntur talia extrinsece, per habitudinem scilicet ad illud. Aliquando autem et aliis convenit formale significatum, et consequenter omnia dicuntur intrinsece talia... Ens autem invenitur formaliter in substantia, in qualitate et in quantitate. In utroque ergo modo verum est quod aliquid est prius secundum rem utroque eorum quae analogice dicuntur in ordine ad tertium.....ens prius dicitur de substantia secundum rem quam de quantitate et qualitate, quae dicuntur entia in ordine ad ipsam: natura enim entitatis est naturaliter prior et perfectior in substantia quam in qualitate et quantitate, quia ipsa entitas substantiae, primo et formaliter nomine entis significatur, nihil aliud est quam ipsa substantia, quae est accidente naturaliter prior". --- Cf. Cajetan, De Nominum Analogia, p. 13, nn. 10, 11.

these differences of opinion are merely technical ones, we need not be concerned with them in any detail.

In the example which St. Thomas gives of health as predicated of animal, food, and medicine, there is analogy according to the concept of health but not according to the esse of health. Health as a formal perfection exists only in the animal, the primary analogue. There is something, however, in each of the analogues that warrants their being called healthy, and thus the mind sees the relation (secundum intentionem) of the primary analogue to the other analogues, but the perfection itself is not actually in the other analogues (sed non secundum esse). In other words, the perfection of health exists only in the animal, and the only reason for attributing health to medicine or food is that it causes or sustains health in the animal. For this reason, health is predicated of these latter because of their relation perceived by the mind to the primary analogue. In its absolute and formal sense health is predicated of animal simply and it signifies that health is actually and intrinsically in the animal. It is predicated of the other analogues merely because of the relation they bear to the primary analogue, and not because such a perfection exists in them.

It is this type of analogy that both Aristotle and St. Thomas employ when grouping together the various senses of being around the notion of first substance in the Metaphysics. (1) Considering the perfection of

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(1) For an understanding of the Aristotelian doctrine on the analogy of proportion one must read the V Book of the Metaphysics, in which Aristotle classifies the different significations of each metaphysical term. After having enumerated, according to the order of invention, the various meanings of each of these notions, which are analogical, he reduces the various meanings to a certain unity, which is the unity of proportion. No better commentary on the general principles and no better application of these principles can be found than in this fifth book.

being simply, substance in being in the true sense, for it alone is, having a firm and solid esse in nature. (1) All other things are said to be or have being, not as though they existed in themselves, but only because of some relation they have to substance, which alone exists in the primary sense. (2)

The analogy secundum intentionem et secundum esse is usually designated as the analogy of proportionality. Both Ferrara and Cajetan agree that this is analogy in the more proper sense. (3) Things are predicated

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(1) "Quantum autem genus est quod est perfectissimum, quod scilicet habet esse in natura absque admixtione privationis, et habet esse firmum et solidum, quasi per se existens, sicut sunt substantiae. Et ad hoc sicut ad primum et principale omnia alia referuntur". --- In IV Metaph., lect. 1, n. 543.

(2) "Nam qualitates et quantitates dicuntur esse, inquantum insunt substantiae; motus et generationes, inquantum tendunt ad substantiam vel ad aliquid praedictorum; privationes autem et negationes, inquantum renovent aliquid trium praedictorum". --- Ibid.

(3) "Sciendum est quod analogiae nomen graecum est vocalulum, et aliter accipitur a Graecis, aliter a nonnullis Latinis. Graeci enim aequivoca a consilio dividunt in ea quae dicuntur ab uno, ut ab arte medicinae dicitur liber aliquis medicinalis; et ea quae dicuntur ad unum, ut de medicina et cibo dicitur sanum in ordine ad sanitatem animalis; et ea quae sunt analogae, dicuntque illae analogae esse quae sunt unum proportionem, inter quae scilicet est proportionalitas quaedam. Unde inquit Ammonius quod analogia in quatuor ad minus terminis consideratur.

"Secundum ergo proprium significatum, analogae dicuntur proportionalia, id est, habentia inter se similitudinem proportionis. Et nomen analogum dicitur quod significat plura ut proportionalia sunt. In hoc significatione utitur Aristoteles nomine analogi: ut patet V Metaphys., cap. de Uno.

"A Latinis autem nonnullis accipitur analogum pro omni nomine importante plura secundum quendam habitudinem vel ad unum vel inter se, tam ea quae sunt ab uno et ad unum, quam proportionalia omnia, scilicet aequivoca a consilio absolute analogae vocantes. Unde multa confusio in analogorum cognitione provenit". --- Ferrariensis, op. cit., tom. 13, p. 105.

analogously in this manner when the name or term is common to all, and the reality signified by that name is proportionally the same, i.e. the things predicated proportionally in this way are not made equal in either a common concept or in esse. The example given by St. Thomas is being as predicated of substance and accident. Here the common character of the analogy has a certain esse in each of the things of which it is predicated, but differs in the degree of its perfection. Thus, being as predicated of substance means an essence or nature to which esse in se belongs; as predicated of accident, it signifies an essence or nature to which esse in alio belongs. But the perfection of substance is greater than the perfection of accident; therefore, the esse is proportional to both. Unlike the analogy of proportion or attribution where there is a proportion of several things to one thing or of one thing to another, here in the analogy of proportionality we have a similitude of proportions based fundamentally on principles intrinsic to each thing. If

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— "Praeponitur autem analogia haec caeteris antedictis dignitate et nomine. Dignitate quidem, quia haec fit secundum genus causae formalis inherens; quoniam praedicat ea, quae singulis inherant. Altera vero secundum extrinsecam denominationem fit.

"Nomine autem, quia analogia nomina apud Graecos (a quibus vocabulum habuimus) haec tantum dicuntur; ut ex Aristotele etiam colligitur, qui in Metaphysica nomina quae dicimus analogia per attributionem, ex uno, vel ad unum, vel in uno vocat: ut patet in principio IV et in VII, text. 15. In V autem Metaphysicae, cap. de uno, text. 12, definiens unum secundum analogiam, ut synonymis utitur unum analogia et unum proportionis; et definit ea esse, 'quaecumque se habent ut aliud ad aliud'; aperte insinuans illam esse proprie analogatorum definitionem, quam diximus". — Cajetan, De Nominum Analogia, c. 3, nn. 27, 28.

there is a proportion, as for instance, between created substance and accident, that is not what is considered here, but merely the similarity of the two relations. Substance is to its existence, as accident is to its existence. Each exists in quite a different manner, since substance is that which exists in itself, and accident that which exists in substance. It is this kind of analogy which, as St. Thomas remarks, characterizes what applies intrinsically and formally to God and creatures. (1)

The difference between the analogy of proportion and the analogy of proportionality is perhaps seen better upon consideration of their abstraction from and their relation to their inferiors. In the analogy of proportion several concepts are required, e.g. the concepts of animal, food, and medicine. (2) Each of these concepts represent different perfections existing in reality. But health represents a perfection intrinsically found only in animal; and, because food preserves health and medicine causes

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(1) De Ver., q. 2, a. 11. — On this point Ferrara writes the following: "Sanctus Thomas ergo in Questionibus de Veritate, considerans veram analogiae rationem, et nomina de Deo et creaturis dicta analogice vere dici, dixit inter Deum et creaturam esse analogiam proportionalitatis, non autem proportionis, quae magis dicitur aequivocatio a consilio ab uno aut ad unum, quam analogica significatio". — op. cit., p. 105, n.VII. — Cajetan is of the same mind when he says: "Nota secundo quod duplicia sunt analogate: quaedam secundum determinatas habitudines unius ad alterum; quaedam secundum proportionalitatem. Ens analogice utroque modo analogiae dicitur de substantia et accidente.... Ens dicitur de Deo et creatura secundo modo tantum..... Non aliter probetur pro nunc quam auctoritate S. Thomae in questionibus de Veritate (quaest. 11, art.2), ubi examinans quomodo scientia sit analogica scientiae divinae et scientiae creatae, expresse fatetur quod secundo modo sit analogica et non primo modo. — In De Ente et Essentia, c. 2, n. 21, pp. 37, 38.

(2) John of St. Thomas, op. cit., p. 491 b 21.

health, the mind attributes health to them. Each of these analogues, although they agree in this that they are proportionate to health, nevertheless they differ because the proportions are different. According to John of St. Thomas, the unity of this analogy is one of order or relation of various things requiring several concepts to represent, one of which is primary and the term of these relationships, and because of the relation of others to that term, they are designated by that term.

Unitas horum analogatorum non consistit in aliquo, quod intrinsece reperiatur in omnibus, sive absolute et simpliciter sive respective et proportionabiliter seu suo modo, sed consistit in ordine unius vel plurium ad unum terminum, a quo recipiunt denominationem, quia ad illum habent connotationem vel habitudinem. Talis autem, unitas cum sit unitas ordinis et habitudinis unius vel plurium ad aliud, necessario exigit plures conceptus illi ordini adiunctos et ad talem connotationem et habitudinem exercendam necessarios. (1)

The analogy of proportionality, on the other hand, can be represented by a single concept, whether this be a question of the formal or of the objective concept. Thus, the concept of being is one both in its formal and objective concept. This is commonly accepted among the Thomists, as writes John of St. Thomas. (2) All beings are intrinsically alike by the

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(1) John of St. Thomas, op. cit., vol.1, p.491 b 33.

(2) "Analogia proportionalitatis propriae possunt habere conceptum unum respectu omnium analogatorum inadaequatum et imperfectum, nec praescindentes ab inferioribus per aliquid, quod in potentia illa includat et actu excludat, sed per aliquid quod actu non explicat, actu autem includat seu implicet. Ita sumitur ex Caetano in brevi quodam opusculo de Conceptu entis et in opusculo de Analogia nominum cap. 4., et Ferraricensis l. Contra Gent., cap. 34. et communiter Thomistae. Et loquimur tam de conceptu obiectivo quam formali; utrumque enim sibi ad invicem correspondet tanquam representans et representatum".  
Ibid., pp. 492-493.

similitudo of the proportion between their essence and esse. This similitudo is the formal concept of being; the objective concept of being is the foundation of this similitudo, namely, that by which all the analogues are alike, the proportion of their essence to esse. This is the ratio or common character of being in which all beings are assimilated.

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cum ens quidditative et essentialiter praedicetur de rebus, dupliciter de conceptu eius loqui possumus: uno modo, de conceptu quid rei, secundum quem adaequate et quidditative praedicatur de omnibus analogatis; alio modo, de conceptu quid nominis, et imperfecto et inadaequato. Dico autem conceptum perfectum et adaequatum: non adaequatione tantum praedicationis, sed adaequatione etiam representationis, quia scilicet non solum de omnibus entibus praedicatur, sed etiam perfecte naturam rei repraesentat nomine entis primo et per se significatum. Si ergo de primo conceptu loquar, sic dico quod ens non habet unum conceptum mentalem, sicut nec obiectivalem, ab aliis praecisum. Si autem loquar de conceptu imperfecto et inadaequato ad quid nominis pertinente, sic non est inconveniens ens dicere unum conceptum mentalem ab aliis praecisum.

"Conceptus autem ille unus analogi non repraesentat perfecte fundamenta similitudinis nomine analogo significata primo et per se, sed aliquid convenit ipsis quod tali conceptu praeciso non repraesentatur, sicut patet de ente: considerans enim aliquis substantiam fundare esse per se, accidens autem fundare esse in alio, istaque similia esse in fundando esse, licet unumquodque suo modo fundet esse, format conceptum communem ipsorum ut similia in hoc sunt quod est fundare esse, dicens quoniam ens est quod habet esse; sed iste conceptus non repraesentat accidens secundum quod est ens perfecte et adaequate". --- Ibid., n. XV, p. 108.

Gajetan, In De Ente et Essentia, c.1, p.25: "Ens significat unum conceptum formalem commune in repraesentando substantiae et accidenti Deo et creaturae. Ens significat ut conceptum obiectalem aliquid reale inventum in omnibus generibus distinctum secundum rationem a propriis conceptibus obiectalibus omnium generum, nullum gradum supra naturas genericas, specificas et indivisuales exprimens"..... "In analogis vero, quoniam fundamenta analogae similitudinis diversarum rationum sunt simpliciter, et eiusdem secundum quid, id est secundum proportionem: oportet duplicem analogi mentalem conceptum distinguere, perfectum et imperfectum; et dicere quod analogo et suis analogatis respondet unus conceptus mentalis imperfectus, et tot perfecti, quot sunt analogati". --- De Nomine Analogia, c.1, n.36. --- "Est autem inter hos duos conceptus non solum dicta ex radicibus differentia, sed etiam quia primus ad quid rei spectat analogi; secundus autem ad quid nominis: neuter tamen perfecte repraesentat analogum. De quo scilicet perfecto seu adaequato explicite conceptu analogi interpretandum est, cum a me vel ab alio scriptum invenitur quod non potest analogum unum numero mentalem conceptum habere, sed unum analogia tantum". --- De Conceptu Entis, n. 6.

It should be noted, however, as both Cajetan and John of St. Thomas remark, that the concept of being is not the concept of a relation. It is the concept of that which is the basis of this relation to esse. We do not say that being denotes relation to esse, but that being is that whose act is esse: ens est id cuius actus est esse. And this id expresses in a confused way all the analogues, inasmuch as they are like one another because of the various ways in which they relate to esse. This relation is not accidental; it is an essential or transcendental relation. In other words, it is the essence itself in so far as it refers to esse. (1)

The concept of being, then, has truly a certain unity, and thus we can think of being without thinking explicitly of its analogates. But the unity of this concept is not absolute. For it is only an inadequate concept of being. To have an adequate concept of being we must think explicitly of

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(1) Cajetan, *In De Ente et Essentia*, c.1, p. 27: "Sicut conceptus formalis animalis repraesentat fundamentum similitudinis genericae, et conceptus formalis hominis repraesentat fundamentum similitudinis specificaem et universaliter quaelibet imago communis pluribus in repraesentando repraesentat fundamentum similitudinis inter illa plura, ut patet in exemplo supra posito de specie in oculo causata a specie Sortis in speculo; quoniam illa repraesentat non similitudinem inter species in speculo et Sortem, cum sit relatio, sed fundamentum illius similitudinis puta qualitates et lineamenta quae sunt in utroque: sic conceptus entis formalis repraesentat fundamentum analogicae similitudinis in esse inter omnia entia realia existentia, quod in cunctis esse absque opere intellectus ex eo patet quod similia sunt extra animam".

John of St. Thomas, *op. cit.*, p. 495 b 14: "Nec ille conceptus communis est conceptus ipsius proportionis, quatenus proportio habitudo et relatio est, sic enim esset conceptus cuiusdam relationis; sed est conceptus illius; quod proportionem fundat, quatenus confuse accipitur et non explicite in diversis. e.g. os et spina confuse accipiuntur, si cognoscantur secundum rationem sustinendi carnes; substantia et accidens confuse accipiuntur, si cognoscantur ut habens esse; fundamentum et cor, si cognoscantur ut habens principium et dans originem".



the manifoldness which is essential to it. (1) We define it as that the act of which is esse. But even then, this relation to esse, since it is essentially varied, cannot be conceived without at least confusedly thinking of the members of the proportionality in which it is realized. For that reason, the concept of being, whether formal or objective, has not an absolute but only a secundum quid unity, i.e. a unity according to proportionality. (2)

That is why the abstraction of this common analogous character or ratio

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(1) "Et quoniam conceptus mentales sunt imagines rerum representatarum, (nisi sint fictitii), quemadmodum in mente conceptus adaequatus analogi non est unus, sed exigit representationem omnium fundantium analogiam: ita significatum analogi adaequatum et perfectum non potest sic abstrahi, ut obiciatur, representetur, aut concepiatur, absque fundantibus rebus. Et sic in mente duplex conceptus imperfectus reperitur, ita res significata, extra potest obici dupliciter: imperfecte scilicet vel in uno explicite, in quo caetera obiciuntur indeterminate; vel in nullo explicite, sed omnia implicite, in solo formalissimo significato explicite". — Cajetan, De Conceptu Entis, n. 7.

(2) "Dicendum ergo est quod ens non habet unum praecisum conceptum mentalem perfectum et adaequatum, sed immediate dicit conceptum substantiae, quantitatis, etc., ut sunt unum similitudine et proportionem: sicut ex parte rei omnes illas naturas immediate significat ut proportionales sunt et similes respectu ipsius esse. .... Hoc autem quod dicimus, quod habet esse, est conceptus entis imperfectus et inadaequatus entium, ipsa representans ut sunt similia. Et de hoc loquitur S. Thomas cum inquit omnes alias conceptiones in conceptum entis resolvi et ad illum aliquid addere, et simplicissimum esse". — Ferrariensis, op. cit., n. XV, p. 108.

"Sed occasio errandi multis est, quia in resolutione distincta, quaerunt resolvere in unum analogia, sicut consuevit resolveri in unum univocatione. Ita quod quaerunt in analogia quasi unum numero terminum, sicut in univocis: cum tamen terminus in analogia sit unus proportionabiliter tantum. Ita quod et singula resolvable resolvuntur in conceptus simplices obiectivos et mentales, et omnia in conceptum obiectivum et mentalem simplicem et unum proportionabiliter. Ita quod (ut unico verbo rem absolvam): ens esse primo notum in quod fit omnis resolutio, in quod omnia addunt, per modum analogi interpretandum est: cum quo stare potest, quod ens secundum perfectum adaequatum conceptum, non abstrahit a naturis praedicamentalibus, sicut nec aliquid analogum a fundantibus analogiam". — Cajetan, De Conceptu Entis, n. 9.

of being must be carefully distinguished from the abstraction of a generic or specific whole. Here in the latter, as we have seen, there is a perfect precision by the intellect of a univocal potential whole. One can quite well think of animal, for example, without confusedly thinking of the different species of animal, since the notion of animal is realized in the same way in all the species, and can be perfectly abstracted from the differences which are extrinsic to it. In the case of being, on the other hand, there is no perfect abstraction or precision from its inferior; and for that reason the concept attained in such a process has only an inadequate or imperfect unity; it is only proportionally one. (1)

What really takes place, then, when we abstract the concept of being is that the intellect confuses all the analogues in the common ratio of having esse proportionally. All the various ways of having esse are thus confusedly but actually contained in its concept. (2) This confusion of

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(1) "Quod autem aliquando dicit ens dicere intentionem et naturam communem, intelligitur de communitate analogice et proportionis. Quidditas enim substantiae est entitas quaedam et natura significata nomine entis, et similiter quantitatis natura et aliorum. Et conveniunt in intentione communi imperfecta, quae est fundare esse. Et sunt una natura proportionis quaedam et similitudinis. Et quia ratio entis dicta de substantia perfectior est ratione entis dicta de accidente, et ratio substantiae includitur in ratione accidentis secundum quod est ens, ideo de ipsis dicitur secundum prius et posterius". — Ferraricensis, op. cit., n. XV, p. 108.

(2) "Sicut se habet conceptus entis confusus respectu omnium analogatorum; repraesentat enim immediate omnia sub confusione habendi esse, quod solum explicat.... Conceptus autem confuse attingens plura ipse confusione ea unit solumque explicat unitatem illorum plurium non praecisionis, sed confusionis. Unitas autem confusionis requirit actualem pluralitatem eorum, quae confuse accipiuntur, sicut cum videtur multitudo aliqua sub una confusione ..... In illa praedicatione: "Homo est ens", praedicatum, ~~ens~~ est ~~entis~~ confuse omnia analogata respiciat, non rationem aliquam determinatam, quae in potentia continet inferiora, tamen id, quod praedicat, non sunt omnia illa, quae materi-

all the analogues of being in the common ratio of having esse proportionally is brought out by John of St. Thomas in the following manner.

Qui penetraret conceptum entis in communi nihil amplius videret ibi contineri quam omnia entia in confuso; unde non penetraret omnia entia distincte et determinate, quia sic ibi non continentur. Si autem tolleretur confusio, destrueretur illud conceptum entis in communi, qui essentialiter est confusus, et alium distinctum determinati entis formaret. Et ita bene probavit S. Thomas, quod si Deus videret creaturas solum in ratione entis, imperfecte videret, qui cognosceret illas ut confunduntur in ente, non ut inter se distinguuntur et determinantur et secundum proprii modi explicationem; opponitur enim confusio illius conceptus explicationi entium determinantum. Et sic ex sola cognitione et penetratione illius conceptus non potest determinate explicari pluralitas entium, sed sub confusione manere; si vero tollitur confusio, conceptus ille destruitur. (1)

What occurs, consequently, when being is contracted is that the different ways of having esse proportionally which were actually but confusedly in the common ratio of being, now become explicit and more distinct. We no longer, then, have ens commune, but rather special modes of being, the being of the predicaments. (2)

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aliter et implicite continet, sed illa ratio, in quo omnia confunduntur, scilicet habere esse. Haec enim est ratio, non quae praescindit, sed quae confundit omnia, et hanc solum explicat". — John of St. Thomas, op. cit., p. 498 a 4.

(1) Ibid., p. 499 b 25.

(2) "Cum decem praedicamenta non hoc modo se habeant ex additione ad ens, sicut species se habent ex additione differentiarum ad genera, sed hoc ipsum quod est ens, manifestum est quod ens non expectat aliquid additum ad hoc quod fiat hoc, id est substantia, vel quantum, vel quale; sed statim a principio est vel substantia, vel quantitas, vel qualitas. Et haec est causa quare in definitionibus non ponuntur nec unum nec ens, ut genus; quia oporteret quod unum et ens se haberent ut materia ad differentias, per quarum additiones ens fieret vel substantia vel qualitas". — In VIII Metaph., lect. 5, n. 1763.

The foregoing considerations should suggest, at least in a summary way, some of the principal factors underlying our notion and conception of being, as well as the common points of agreement between the commentators. The importance of these factors for the problem we are undertaking, apart from the necessity of presupposing them as starting-points in the controversy, can best be judged, perhaps, only after we have seen a detailed exposition of the positions themselves.

For that reason, no attempt was made at a detailed analysis of any particular point in question, nor was there any insistence upon any such matters that might have proven controversial. To have done otherwise might have prejudiced the whole discussion at the very outset before having taken up the relative positions themselves.

Unfortunately, the task which remains is not without difficulties. In the first place, the nature of the problem necessarily involves both logical as well as metaphysical considerations. This appears quite evident from the previous discussion, and this is another reason why it was deemed necessary to consider the essential factors connected with the concept of being prior to taking up the problem of the signification of being proper as envisioned by Ferrara and Cajetan. Because of the necessary intermingling of the logical with the metaphysical aspects of the investigation, it may not always be clear just which of these two elements predominate in any

given discussion. In view of this, it may not be possible to decide whether the divergencies center chiefly on the logical or on the metaphysical plane or, perhaps, on both. Moreover, it is not always easy to interpret the mind of the commentators themselves. It is particularly difficult to judge what peculiar aspect of being each of the two commentators are intent upon stressing. In other words, are they discussing totally different things, or is there, in some degree at least, an insistence solely upon different points of view of the same thing? Finally, and this is even more difficult still, which of the two positions appear to be more expressive and more in harmony with the mind of St. Thomas?

Because of the nature of these and other problems, and in order to insure a maximum of fidelity to the interpretations involving the two positions, our procedure will be to follow as closely as possible the manner in which the commentators themselves presented their opinions. We shall take up the arguments they offer, as well as the leading texts from St. Thomas which seem to favor such an interpretation. We shall add some references to modern or contemporary authors who seem to align themselves with one or the other given point of view. This will constitute the initial stage of our inquiry. Our next step will be to take up individually or singly the various points at issue from a more critical standpoint. Our main concern here will be with the doctrine of St. Thomas himself, in the course of which we hope to arrive at a solution to this difficult problem.

SECTION TWO

EXPOSITION OF THE TWO POSITIONS CONCERNING  
THE SIGNIFICATION OF BEING