

THEOSOPHY

Trine Being

ANTONIO ROSMINI

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Volume 2

Trine Being

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Note

The many and long quotations given by the author in their original language have been translated. An *asterisk* indicates that the original language can be found in the section entitled *Original Language References* after the *Appendix*.

Square brackets [] indicate notes or additions by the translators or editor of the Critical Edition.

References to this and other works of Rosmini are given by paragraph number unless otherwise stated.

Abbreviations used for Rosmini's quoted works are:

AMS: *Anthropology as an Aid to Moral Science*

CS: *Conscience*

ER: *The Essence of Right*, vol. 1 of *The Philosophy of Right*

IP: *Introduction to Philosophy*, vol. 1, *About the Author's Studies*

NE: *A New Essay concerning the Origin of Ideas*

PE: *Principles of Ethics*

PSY: *Psychology*

TCY: *Theodicy*

Translation of some particular Italian words

Rosmini sometimes uses words whose English equivalent is now obsolete or very rare in contemporary English, or they have changed their meaning. Their translation has been dealt with at length in the Forewords to vol. 1 of *A New Essay* and vol. 1 of *Psychology*. However, the reader may be satisfied with the following summary explanations.

Essere (used as a noun) is translated 'being'. *Ente* is translated 'ens'. In vol. 1 Rosmini defines *being* as 'the act of every ens and entity', and gives two definitions of *ens*: 'a subject that has being' and 'being, with some of its terms' (cf. 211).

Intestino is translated ‘intestine’ meaning simply *internal*, relating in some way to elements connected with sensation. For example, *intestine movement* is movement of internal parts of a body.

Organato is translated ‘organated’, meaning any entity composed of organs.

Organismo, translated as ‘organism’, is *any* organised living unit in general, including the human being. It can also mean any multiplicity discernible in the unity of an ens.

Sensitivo is translated ‘sensitive’, and sometimes ‘feeling’ (adjective), describing that which possesses feeling, and *sensibile* is translated ‘sensible’, and sometimes ‘feelable’, describing that which can be felt.

The English ‘passion’ is retained for the Italian *passione* and simply means that which is experienced in general; it is the opposite of *action*.

Ideologia (and its forms) is translated ‘ideology’. It means the branch of philosophy which investigates *knowledge* and *ideas*. It does not mean some political system, or any system guiding people’s behaviour.

Other words that might cause difficulty at first can be understood from the context or are explained by the author himself.

Book Three

TRINE BEING

PREAMBLE

It is a way that may be easily pointed out, but is by no means easy of application; it is the parent of all the discoveries in the arts*

Plato, *Phileb.* p. 16, c

729. In the previous book I investigated being as one. We saw how its essential unity satisfies the need of the mind that looks for unity in what is knowable. This led me to the *system of dialectical identity* which I contrasted with Schelling's system of absolute identity, demonstrating that he had not sufficiently penetrated the nature of the problem. I then explained how the unity of being does not prejudice either the trinity of forms in which being subsists absolute, or the multiplicity of finite entia which being, while remaining one, makes subsist. We then saw how being is one in the many and what it communicates of itself to the many, and there is no contradiction between the many and the one, because the many pertains to the forms and terms of being, while the one pertains to being itself: hence, there is no simultaneous affirmation and denial of the same thing and in the same respect, which is the formula of contradiction (*Logica*, 346). We also saw that the only multiplicity essential to being is that of the three forms, that this trinity of forms contains virtually all other multiplicity and that this *virtual* containership is not an imperfection, but rather a supreme perfection of being. *Virtuality* is not the same as *potency*, which is an imperfection of ens. A potential cause is that which lacks certain acts, which it can produce, and it remains the subject of these acts which precisely as acts perfect it. *Virtuality* however can be only the containership of other things in themselves. These things are not acts of the ens that contains them, and hence are not perfections of the ens; they are other things different from the perfections and contained in the ens in an eminent way.

We next saw that the multiplicity of finite entia pertains not to

being, which is always one, but to the *real form* of being. This real form is mentally separated by the divine mind from being and from the other forms, with the result that all finite entia originate from the real form and from *limitation*, which is also a work of the divine mind. This limitation is what determines reality in various modes in the mind, where it produces the entia, that is, the determined species. In these determined species, the creative power of being sees and affirms, and thus produces, the finite entia.

This brings me to the subject of the present book in which, with God's help, I intend to discuss trine Being. In the whole of this ontological science that I put forward, one teaching involves another; the teachings intermingle throughout (*Logica*, 701–709). In fact I could not demonstrate how being remains one and identical in the whole multitude of entia without explaining how entia multiply beyond the forms. Nor could I demonstrate how they multiply without involving absolute Being, their cause, subsistent in the three forms. Furthermore, I had to demonstrate that finite things do not pertain to being but are its terms, and that these terms reduce to the real form by an operation of the divine mind, which itself is Being in the real or subjective form. Hence, I could not present the argument of the previous book, that is, the ontological teaching about being as one, without recourse to the teaching about being as three. Nevertheless, although these teachings are necessarily inseparable and constitute one total body of knowledge, my investigations in the previous book differ from the investigation in this book. If I use the same teaching in both, I do not use it in the same way, nor with the same intention: the whole teaching is present in both books, but not totally dealt with in both; one part is in the previous book, another in this. The part treated in this book is outlined in the first, but more virtually than actually.

730. I must now therefore speak about Being in its three forms, not theologically as a trine act of absolute Being, but ontologically as a teaching common to all possible entia, including finite entia. Indeed, in the thought of finite entia, the three forms continually recur, so that without them no teaching about entia in general can be conceived or formulated. Hence, rather than the three forms, I must discuss the three *categories*,

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which in fact are the three forms considered not as subsistent but as common and most universal concepts. However, because it is the task of categorical ontology to deal with the nature of each of the three forms, and because their co-subsistence in the one absolute Being is dealt with in theology, I will give the common, general theory of the connections and relationships between the three forms in all the ways they present themselves to our mind. Thus, in the first book of general ontology I expressed the notion of the three forms of being as supreme concepts which always accompany being and to which all conceivable entities are reducible, as to their supreme classes. I demonstrated the necessary existence of these supreme concepts and their irreducibility to a number of minor concepts. In the second book, I established the unity of being *vis-à-vis* the multiplicity of entities and entia. In this third book, I need to demonstrate how the three forms are present wherever ens is present and multiply into a countless multitude of entities without prejudicing the trinity of the forms. Once the unity of being, as opposed to the multiplicity of entia, has been assured, I must confirm the trinity of the forms as opposed to this multiplicity. At the same time, I will continue to discuss the genesis of this multiplicity, as it grows by means of the relationships between the forms, that is, between the categories. This will provide a satisfactory explanation of the immense variety and multiplicity found in human thought. Consequently, this multiplicity, far from prejudicing either the unity of being or the trinity of categorical forms, will in fact have its origin and ultimate explanation in this unity-trinity. This is precisely what the ontological problem requires of the philosopher.

SECTION ONE

THE CONJUNCTION OF THE THREE
CATEGORICAL FORMS IN
ENS CONSIDERED AS SUBJECT

CHAPTER 1

The conjunction of the three categorical forms
in infinite Ens

731. I said that the conjunction of the three categorical forms in infinite Ens differs from the conjunction in finite ens.

In infinite Ens the conjunction consists in the unity and absolute identity of Being that subsists in all the three forms and is the same most perfect subject in all three. In book one I also indicated how the identity of the one Being subsisting in the three forms produces their conjunction without affecting their distinction or unifying them. I said that 1. Being in each form has, relative to the other forms, the nature of *maximum* container, and the other forms, residing in it, the nature of *content*; that 2. each of these three forms also has the nature of *supreme form*, not as content but as container; and that 3. consequently there are only three supreme forms, each having the nature of maximum container, while identical being (a most perfect subject) always constitutes one, inseparable ens.

However, at the same time as this being subsists identically in the three forms, the forms as such have a real and maximum distinction between them, so that none has anything in common with the other two (except being, a most perfect subject). Hence, they do not reduce to some genus, of which they are the differences.

Although a deeper investigation of this teaching pertains to theology, I must use it to throw light on what I will say later, where the total separation of ontology from the knowledge of first, absolute ens will be seen to be impossible.

CHAPTER 2

The conjunction of the three categorical forms in finite ens

732. The conjunction of the three categorical forms in finite ens is totally different. The differences, indicated in the first volume, are:

1. In finite ens, being does not identify, as in infinite ens, with an individual form. Consequently, in finite ens the subject is never being but only form. For this reason, being is predicated of infinite ens with the copula 'is', but of finite ens only with the copula 'HAS' (*Logica*, 429).

2 Therefore, *form* in infinite ens differs from form in finite ens. In infinite ens, form is being, whereas in finite ens form is not being but pure form separate from being by virtue of the divine abstraction that results in creation.

Hence, the speculative mind thinks the supreme form of being in three ways, as:

a) identical to being in infinite Ens where, as we shall see later, it is called divine *person*;¹

b) existing in finite ens in which all three forms do not exist in an equal way (as we shall see better later on), and as such is called *form or created term*;

c) pure form which the human mind separates from being and ens by abstraction, making the form into a universal concept applied equally and dialectically to both infinite and finite ens. This concept is called *categorical form*.

¹ The word 'form', in the Aristotelian sense that there is only one form in God, is inappropriate to the divine persons (cf. Athanasius, *Orat. contr. Sabellii gregales*; Augustine, *Ep.* 241; St. Thomas, I, q. 31, art. 2, ad 2m). The meaning must be that given by Tertullian when he says: "They are not three by their state but by degree, not by SUBSTANCE BUT BY FORM, not by power but by species, [according to] St. Augustine (*Serm.* 122: 3)* (*Contra Praxeam*, c. 2). In this sense, 'form' is understood as a mode of being. We must note therefore that we do not have and cannot find words adequate for divine mysteries. St Augustine says that the word 'person' was itself introduced by many authoritative Latin authors 'when they did not find another more suitable word to express in words what they understood without words'* (*De Trinitate*, 5, 10).

3. Because each of the three forms of being in infinite Ens is identical being, they are joined in one and the same mode, that is, through the identity of being, which is each form containing the other two. However, in the case of finite entia, the three forms are not joined in the same mode. They are in fact separate, that is, really distinct from being. For this reason, they are not joined by being that is identical with them. Indeed, if they are joined naturally by identical being, then once being is separated by thought, they are no longer joined and their relationships are merely mental. It is precisely in this mental state that they are called *categorical forms*. This explains how *finite ens* could be constituted by God as *subject*, using only one of the three forms, reality. Divided from being, this form could not exist *in se* — without being, it is nothing; being had to be united to it, not by identifying itself with the form but by a *co-presence*, so that being and reality concurred to form finite ens in a perfect co-presence, without their becoming one and the same thing.

733. Because, in finite ens, being cannot be identical with reality but only present to it, we must investigate how there can be this *presence* of being which constitutes the possible conjunction between being and separate reality.

Presence is simply manifestation: without any manifestation, we cannot conceive a presence. If we know nothing, nothing is present to us, and what is not thought cannot be thought as present to something else. Presence either indicates an ens which knows something and therefore has this thing present to it, or indicates something thought together with something else.

We see therefore that the presence of being supposes thought in reality. As ideology demonstrates, thought is constituted by the manifestation of being. Thus, if thought is constituted by the presence of being to reality, we see why I said in the previous book that in the order of finite entia, *intellective ens* must be posited prior to all other entia and as the condition of their existence.

In fact, in finite, intellective ens, being is present to intuition as the objective form of intuition and as cause of the subjective form. At the same time the intelligent subject, who is reality, is separate from and the opposite of the object, that is, of being, which gives itself to intuition. Consequently, the subject and

object can never become identical. In this union, therefore, objective being remains separate from the real subjective form which intuitively being, and this separation is one of the distinctive characteristics of finite ens.

734. *Finite, intellective ens*, constituted in this mode, shows us how other finite entia can exist whether purely sensitive or purely material. The *real form* separate from being can exist, as we saw, in thought. It exists thus through the existence of something else, that is, of the mind thinking it. In fact, only existence *in se* is contrary to the *real form* separate from being, not its existence in thought, where it exists enclosed in the object, and therefore no longer as a categorical form of reality but as an objective categorical form. Granted, therefore, that some finite minds exist, they can perceive and think about real things, pure real things to which being need not be present, that is, they need not be intellective entia.

735. But do these finite minds think these pure real things as pure concepts? And if they do not think them as pure concepts, they think them as entia *in se*. You must therefore either reduce us to a system of idealism or admit that being is present also to real things lacking intelligence, independently of the existence of finite minds?

This specious objection needs a careful answer. Only by replying can we solve the problem 'concerning the way the categorical form of reality is joined to the objective form in finite ens'. This is part of the argument I proposed to deal with in this chapter.

I maintain that intellective ens does not think non-intellective entia as pure concepts. If it thought them as pure concepts, it would think them only as possible; it would not perceive them or affirm them. In my opinion intellective ens does in fact think them as entia *in se*. But how does this take place in human beings who are the only intellective entia of which we have experiential knowledge?

736. We are an intellective ens, a real principle, which has the intuitive presence of being. We perceive and know in this being the thing we feel, our own body (*PSY*, 1: 254–271). In this same being we also perceive ourselves, our own real principle, a rational principle. In being, therefore, we perceive all the *real* that is ours. This real in us, who are intellective entia, is not detached

from being but in being. Hence, we, who are rational entia, are in being, and if we were not in being, we would not apprehend ourselves, would not be rational entia, not human. But this real in the being that manifests the real, is not revealed in the same way in all its parts. We, as real, are each principle and term. We apprehend ourselves as distinct from and the opposite of being, but we do this in being itself, where we apprehend and know all that we apprehend and know. We also distinguish in being between the principle and the real term of ourselves, and understand that the principle is the opposite of the term, and the term the opposite of the principle. Although these two extremes are related to each other and synthesise, they can never be confused: one is naturally the opposite of the other. In so far as we know the principle, we each know ourselves as an intelligent subject; in so far as we know the term, we do not know ourselves but something else, different from ourselves. In being, therefore, we know ourselves as a real principle different from and the opposite of being, but nevertheless resident in being. We also know something different from ourselves, which is the term of the passion and action of ourselves as principle; this term is a pure real. Moreover, we know that this term has the nature of a felt element, an extended felt element, and we feel it exactly as it is — we know that it is not a principle but a term. Finally we know that it is something other than ourselves as principle, and because it is something other than ourselves, we conclude that it is another ens. We call it ens through the necessity of thinking it and, thus thinking it, predicate subjective being of it. It is therefore an ens in itself relative to the mind thinking it.

736a. But at the same time the mind sees that it cannot separate this real term from the real principle, or the real principle from being, which is present and manifest to it. Consequently, the term is not a pure concept, a passivity, but a true real, a real that by its nature has to be joined to the real principle, and the real principle has to be joined to being in order to be a rational ens. Thus the principle, joined in this way to objective being, which contains subjective being, has the power to apprehend and affirm its own term and give it subjective being, through which the term itself becomes an ens before the mind. This term, now known as a felt term, is known and affirmed as an ens relative to

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the feeling principle which is identified with the intellective principle. Hence, the knowledge of this term is imperfect and relative, just as the term itself is an imperfect ens, because real things are known in proportion to their completeness and universality as entia and only in the mode in which they participate in being and not otherwise² — in any other way they are not knowable because they are not.

The *real term* is therefore united to being because it is indivisibly united to the real principle, which itself is united to being by means of *intuition*. As a result, the principle, united in this way to objective being by intuition, has the capacity to unite itself and its term to subjective being by *perception*. Indeed, the soul's connection with the body consists precisely in the first, fundamental perception of the corporeal term, and constitutes the human being as a rational ens (*PSY*, 1: 254 ss.).

737. After seeing how the body of a rational ens is an ens because it is joined to being in the *fundamental perception*, we can understand how foreign bodies can also be entia. They are known only in so far as a) they inexist in our body with their action, and b) their extension is commensurate with the extension of our body and are therefore perceived together with our body, as I explained in *A New Essay* (2: 872–940; 3: 1203–1208).

738. From all this we see the following:

1. Objective being is joined to finite entia by means of intuition; *subjective being* by means of *perception*.

2. Being is joined to some finite entia in both the objective and subjective forms, through intuition and perception. Finite *intellective entia* are of this kind. Being is joined to other entia only in the subjective form by means of perception; these are *non-intellective* finite entia.

² Hence, Genovesi's opinion that 'a philosopher will always find that it is more difficult to prove, without any comparison, the existence of bodies than the existence of minds. I am aware of the mind, but I know bodies only through awareness from sensations which prove more the existence of the feeling, thinking principle than that of bodies' (*Delle scienze metaf.*, pt. 3, *Antrop.*, c. 2, §5, fn.). However, I have shown that the existence of bodies can also be apodictically proved from external sensations (cf. *NE*, 2: 672–691, 754–759; *Rinnovamento*, 591 ss.). But it is still true that this demonstration is more difficult than demonstrating the existence of the soul, as Genovesi notes.

3. All finite entia are reduced to these two supreme genera.

4. The genus of non-intellective entia is not sufficiently close to the genus of intellective entia to make them both reducible to a preceding real genus divisible into two lower genera or species. The genus of intellective entia is a single, prior and supreme genus, whereas the genus of non-intellective entia is a posterior genus, resulting from and dependent on the former. If in fact the real term is united to being solely by means of perception and thus acquires the condition of ens, then clearly it logically supposes prior to itself that ens to which perception is proper, and this ens is intellective being.

739. We must now see whether and how being is joined to finite ens in its third form, that is, moral being.

It is clear that non-intellective ens cannot participate in moral being because it participates only in subjective, not objective being. *Moral being* is the bond and, as it were, the embrace uniting the other two forms. Hence, if the two forms are not present, there can be no moral form.

Intellective ens however does participate in the two forms. Therefore, the natural connection between them, which is the moral form, must also be manifested, and in fact manifests itself in the way that finite intellective ens participates in objective and subjective being. Let us examine this more closely.

Moral being is lovable and loved being. The property that makes being lovable and loved is proper solely to being because it is one of being's three supreme forms. Objective being is joined to the real principle as something other, as something present to the real principle. Hence, objective being, as lovable and loved, is lovable and loved as something other, not as itself. But the principle which loves is the real principle, the intellective principle. It is therefore something *real* which, in loving the *objective being* present to it, joins itself, through this act of love, to being as to something other that is lovable and loved by it. Thus the finite real that has the intuition of objective being, is joined *by means of love* to *moral being*, which is objective being as lovable and loved by something real. But this real subject is itself an ens, that is, it also shares in subjective being, and does so by means of *perception*, a perception it makes of its own real principle. With this perception (and without it it could

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not say 'I') the real subject, in its act of intuiting being, predicates of itself the subjective being it apprehends in the intuited, objective being (*Logica*, 320 ss.). Hence, the being proper to the finite ens is the subjective being contained in the object, and the real principle is a subjective ens in proportion that this subjective being is joined to the real principle by means of perception, that is, through the perceptive act of the real principle itself. Thus, the being proper to the intellectual ens is not in the real intellectual principle but in something different, that is, in subjective being contained in objective being. But because being, *per se*, is lovable and loved, the intellectual principle loves its own being. This act of loving its own being is the *natural love* of itself, necessary to the intellectual ens, and is the principle of all its willed activity. This natural love of self forms part of the *moral form*, in which human beings naturally share.³ But we need to see how this state is moral by nature.

740. We naturally love our own being. But we are not this being; finite ens is never its own being because *per se*, it is not ens but pure real. Loving our own being means that the love we bear towards ourselves is not borne into our own subjective reality as pure real, but into the being of that real. Thus, because the being of the real is something different from the pure real, therefore intellectual ens, loving itself naturally, loves itself as something different. This different thing is subjective being which intellectual ens perceives in objective being. Consequently, intellectual ens, as intellectual being, loves itself objectively, loves itself in object-being. This is the intellectual ens' natural love in so far as such love constitutes the moral form.

But the real principle, the human subject, has a tendency to the greatest act possible, which is pleasant feeling. This feeling tendency, which spurs us to feel all we can, is not moral; it pertains solely to reality and is common to all real principles. This tendency, also called (inappropriately) love, although not *per se* moral, is united in us to subjective being existing in objective

³ In its teachings the Catholic Church always supposes the following truth: there is in human beings a moral state prior to any of their acts. Cf. *Dottrina del peccato originale*, q. 2 in the collection of my works, *Opuscoli morali*, Milan, 1841, vol. 15.

being. It has therefore also joined with it lovable being in the object, because every real act has joined with it initial being; and the love of being which is joined to the tendency is, in so far as in the object, moral. Hence, everything in us, including the natural tendency to essentially pleasant feeling, becomes moral by participation, if it is ordered as an aid to the love of being and in being.

741. To sum up. Human intellectual ens is joined to being in its three forms:

1. to objective being by means of intuition;
2. to subjective being by means of perception; and
3. to moral being by means of natural love. This love is of two kinds:

a) a love borne into objectively intuited being as lovable and loved; and

b) a love borne into subjective being, in so far as the human intellectual ens' own real participates in this being by perception; in other words, it is the intellectual subject's love for its own real, not as a pure real but as an intellectual ens, an ens which intuitively being objectively and perceives itself in this being.

With this second kind of moral love, the human being loves all intellectual entia because the love is borne into real individuals through the species.

Entia that lack intelligence and are entia only relative to the intellectual entia that perceive them, are loved for the same reason, that is, with a love relative to intellectual entia in so far as they are useful to these entia as terms or means.

SECTION TWO

THE CONJUNCTION OF THE THREE CATEGORICAL FORMS IN THE OBJECT

CHAPTER 1

The subsistent object, and the object which does not subsist *in se*

742. We have seen how the three categorical forms are joined in both infinite ens and finite ens considered as subjects.

Being, in each of the three forms, contains the other two and, as we saw, ens as subject is container of the other two. We must now see how the other two forms are also contained in being as object.

There is however this difference between the Subject and the Object is this: although both infinite and finite ens can have the nature of a subsistent subject, only infinite ens can have the nature of a subsistent object. As I have shown, some properties of the object, like eternity, immutability and similar properties, are excluded from the concept of finiteness.

The infinite and most perfect Object subsists because it receives subjectivity (to which subsistence pertains) from the intelligent, infinite subject. This infinite subject, which understands and, in understanding, affirms itself, posits itself *in se* as the object containing it. This most perfect act of intelligence can be made only by intelligent Being, because the acts of being cannot be other than being, and the terms of this act can be only being. On the other hand, finite entia, because not being, cannot give being to the object of their intelligence, which they receive but do not produce.

Consequently, we can certainly ask, 'How are the three

supreme forms of being joined in infinite Ens subsisting as object?', but to ask, 'How are the three supreme forms of being joined in finite ens subsisting as object?' would make no sense, because finite ens does not subsist as object, but solely as finite subject, to which the object is present.

This object, present to the finite subject, is not the object which subsists as subsistent term of the infinite subject that communicates itself by understanding and affirming itself. It is *pure object*, where subsistence and subjectivity remain totally hidden from the finite mind. Indeed, this pure object is present to the mind from the beginning as pure *undetermined being*. Its objective form is adverted to later by reflection.

We have therefore a second question: 'What is the nature of the conjunction of the three forms in the pure object?'

743. In this section therefore which deals with the conjunction of the three categorical forms in the object, two questions concern us: 'What is the nature of the conjunction of the three forms in the *subsistent* object?' and 'What is the nature of the conjunction of the three forms in the *pure* object?', that is, in the idea, which is the name given to the pure, impersonal object present to the human mind.

The first question is certainly the most sublime and indeed the most mysterious of the two, and therefore especially worthy of meditation. But I shall deal only briefly with it because 1. it belongs entirely to theology; 2. we cannot say much about what is mysterious, and 3. that which is perfectly one can in some way be grasped by interior thought but not expressed in successive, separate words; in this sense it is ineffable. Moreover, because the subsistent object is most perfect, infinite ens, the question is already contained in what has been discussed in the previous section. However, it is always helpful to repeat under other aspects such difficult and important teachings.

CHAPTER 2
The conjunction of the three forms in
the subsistent object

744. What is not intelligible is not possible.

If there had been a time when nothing was understood, there would never have been a time when something began to be understood. A thing cannot bring something else from potency to act if the thing itself is not in act.

So if nothing had ever been understood, nothing would have been ever intelligible, and hence nothing would ever have been possible.

Consequently, there must be an eternal intelligence permanently in act, an intelligence which has not passed from the potency of understanding to act.

This proof of the existence of an eternal intelligence was known by Aristotle.

It is drawn from the nature of the *object*, that is, from *the intelligible*, and is an *a priori* proof. It can be summarised as: 'The object is necessary because without it nothing is possible, and if nothing is possible, nothing exists. Therefore, a first intelligence is necessary' (*Sistema [filosofico]*, 179).

745. Just as the necessity of an eternal intelligence is correctly deduced from the *necessity of the object*, so we can argue from the nature of the subject to the existence of an eternal intelligence, as follows.

An ens which does not know it lives, does not live to itself, and an ens which does not know it exists does not exist to itself. If an ens is to live and exist to itself, it must have awareness of its own existence and own life. Hence, he (our attention should be on this word 'he') who does not live and exist to himself because he lacks all awareness, is not; there will be something else, but 'he' is not. What in fact would this 'he' be who knows nothing at all of his own existence and life? Even if we suppose there is existence and life, there is no 'he'; it is life and existence without a subject, without one who truly lives and truly exists. Perfect existence therefore, as also perfect life, requires intelligence,

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because only the principle which knows it exists and lives is he who truly lives and exists. In fact, if we analyse the phrases 'he who lives, he who exists', we see the 'he' expressed in a mode distinct from life and existence, and that life and existence relate to the 'he'; they are concepts essentially relative to him who lives and exists. Hence, anyone who does not live and exist to himself, simply does not live and exist, and anyone who knows nothing of his existence and life does not live and exist to himself: he does not exist at all. Consequently, if there were no intelligent ens, nothing would exist. But granted an intelligent ens, relative to it other entia can exist which do not exist to themselves because the intelligent ens supplies them with what their existence lacks. Therefore, something *eternal* and *intelligent* must exist because, if intelligence had been lacking at any given time, nothing would have existed, nothing would have been which could receive existence.

An eternal subject and an eternal object are thus necessary and apodictically certain.

746. In every *object* of the mind we can distinguish two things: the *essence* seen by the mind, and the *objectivity* of this essence. If there is an eternal object, the essence seen in it must also be eternal and necessary. I said that a subject which had no awareness of itself would not be intelligent. The essence therefore which the eternal subject sees in the eternal object must be its own essence. This is the only way to satisfy the condition that the eternal subject is a subject that knows itself eternally. Thus the eternal, necessary object is the eternal, necessary subject, which has become its own object through the eternal, necessary act of its intelligence. I say 'through the eternal, necessary act of its intelligence' because a subject cannot have knowledge of itself except through an act of its own. Moreover, no other ens can have given the object to an eternal subject whose object is itself. If another ens had given the object from all eternity, this object would have had to make known another essence, not the essence of the subject in question. If this other essence had not virtually contained the essence of the eternal subject, it could not have served as a means for the eternal subject to know itself. This other essence would have had to be more extensive, that is, be the essence of the subject that communicated it, more extensive than the subject to which it was communicated. In

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this case, we must either stop at this other communicating subject, or turn to another antecedent subject. If we do not wish to proceed to an infinite series of subjects (which without a first subject involves absurdity), we must stop at an eternal subject which, with the necessary, eternal act of its intelligence, makes itself object to itself and thus knows itself through itself.

747. But if this eternal subject has to know itself directly, not by applying to itself a form of objectivity received from elsewhere but by making itself object of its own knowledge, this object is clearly subsistent, precisely because the entity revealed in it is subsistent; it is the intelligent subject as object. Moreover, it is clear that it receives everything, objectivity and subsistence simultaneously, from the intelligent subject. But the subsistence is also an object of the intelligent mind and, as object, is the subsistence of the intelligent subject clothed with the form of objectivity, which is a relationship with the mind or intelligent subject. But if we consider this subsistent object in itself, the objectivity is anterior to subsistence. Through objectivity the subsistent object is something different from the intelligent subject. Objectivity therefore is such that it is first and container of the subject. Such is the conjunction of these two forms in the object. On the other hand, in the subject considered in itself, the subject was first and container because it is that which makes itself object, and the act that sees and produces the object is the subject itself containing its object.

748. We must also note that feeling is contained in the concept of an intelligent subject which understands itself. A subject without any feeling would be dead, not alive, and hence could not understand. Ant it could not understand itself because, not feeling itself, it could not find itself by means of understanding. Finally, anyone who does not feel and is not alive, cannot be alive to himself, and anyone who is not alive to himself, cannot understand himself. The subject therefore, understanding itself, is alive to itself and is essentially a feeling. But the essential property of feeling and life is to be pleasant and therefore, when known, lovable. Hence, granted that there is a subject, an eternal feeling, that eternally and directly understands itself in such a way that it is essentially *understood*, it must also be eternally and essentially *loved*. However, in this case, the loved subject is also the *subject* that *understands* and is

understood because, as we have seen, one and the same subject is that which understands and that which is understood. But in that which understands, as understanding and loving, the subject is first and container; in that which is understood, as understood, the object is first and container, and the content is the received subject, understanding and loving. The loving subject therefore is one and the same in both the subjective and objective forms, and loving itself, makes itself eternally. This beloved therefore is still the identical subject, but the first in it and the container is the subject as loved, and is contained as object, and in this is contained as understanding. Hence, in the beloved there is the object, and in this object the subject. Thus, the subject, because in the beloved, understands and loves in it. The loving, understood subject, in so far as subject eternally loved *per se*, is called *per se* holy. This is the third form contained also in the subsistent Object. Because the Object is the subject understanding itself as understood, and this subject is loved also by itself, then that which understands and that which loves is contained in the subsistent Object, and in that which understands and loves the loved subject is also contained.

This is the wonderful connection of the three categorical forms in the subsistent Object, which is the Word of God.

CHAPTER 3

The conjunction of the three forms in the pure object

749. The investigation of the union of the three categorical forms with the pure object requires a longer discussion.

Because everything we know is known by means of the pure form of *objectivity*, the investigation pertains to the problem of ontology in so far as it is presented under the form of an investigation of the ‘theory of knowledge’.

The difficulty reduces to the conjunction of the objective form and the real form. Human beings are given one *pure object* stripped of every reality. Moreover, because we are given reality separately, outside the object, we find it difficult to understand how this reality can be used to understand subjective, real ens in its entirety. If we do not solve this difficulty, we cannot establish ‘a theory of knowledge’, that is, of human knowledge. As regards the moral form, this does not require a long discussion when it becomes clear that the *one pure object* provides us with the faculty to formulate a certain and, in some way, complete teaching about ens. In this case, having attained with our intelligence the first two forms in their fullness, we can easily know their moral act of conjunction.

Our investigation must therefore be restricted to the connection between *ens* in its entirety and the *object* given to our mind as its light. For this purpose we must carefully examine three things:

1. The nature of the *pure object* given to the human mind, its characteristics, and what it includes and excludes.
2. The nature and origin of the *movement of thought* which, beginning from the pure object, forms information about subjective, real ens in its entirety.
3. The nature of the connection between this ens and the pure object.

Article 1

The nature and characteristics of the pure object

750. Ontological thought must move from what is more simple, as logically anterior (*Logica*, 444), to what is more composite and posterior. Consequently, *being*, as the most simple thing of all that is knowable, must be its starting point.

Logical order is a necessary order and consists in this: 'When a thing, whatever it is, cannot be conceived without supposing the concept of something that can stand on its own, the latter is said to be anterior, the former posterior.' *Chronological order*, although different, is not entirely independent of logical order, because what is logically *prior* in the mind can be *simultaneous* with what is logically posterior, but never *posterior in time*.

The concept of being therefore, as logically prior to that of ens, cannot, in the human mind, be posterior in time. Would it be simultaneous?

We cannot determine the answer by turning to awareness, because awareness needs reflection if it is to rise to the first items of information that are in us. To answer the question therefore we need first to investigate what kind of items of information we have acquired, and when we have found these, to investigate whether their acquisition requires some other, non-acquired information. If we find that this non-acquired information is necessary for explaining the fact of all acquired information, we have proved that in us this other information is prior, even in time, to all acquired information.

This is the task of ideology, which demonstrates that, unless we have already the *information of being*, we cannot obtain any other information whatsoever.

751. Granted this principle, we can deduce the limits within which the information of being is given to us by nature. Such information must neither exceed nor fall short of the explanation needed for all acquired information. This logical necessity induces the philosopher to accept this information as given prior to all acquired information (*NE*, 1: 26–28).

From this we can first conclude that this information, the first object of the mind, is *pure being*. All the rest (limitations, determinations, relationships of being, etc.) are clearly acquired by

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the mind by its own acts. *Pure being*, on the contrary, is a concept that cannot be formed by the mind; it is something whose supreme simplicity requires a single, totally simple act of intellectual vision, an act which either is or is not, with nothing in between. Thus, we do not progress from not seeing being to seeing it: if it is seen, it is seen immediately.

We can also extract the two fundamental characteristics of pure being directly visible to the human spirit: they are *infinite extension* and *no inclusion*. Regarding *infinite extension*: if pure being had limits, it would no longer be pure being, and any information about these limits could be acquired by anyone who previously knew the being that receives the limits. For this reason, limits are logically posterior to being. Regarding *no inclusion*: the only thing pure being could include is either reality or its limitations, but reality and limitations are posterior and such that, granted the intuition of pure being, they can be known by subsequent acts.⁴

Being, therefore, present to intuition, is on the one hand *unlimited* and hence supremely perfect, and on the other *perfectly undetermined* and hence supremely imperfect.⁵

⁴ It is of course true that nature endows us with our own reality, but our reality becomes information only when it is seen in being (*NE*, 2: 434–439). Hence, on its own, it does not come within the order of information. And when it is coupled with being, it is, in the logical order, posterior information, although chronologically simultaneous and constitutive of the human being (*PSY*, 1: 254–266).

⁵ Here the distinction I made between the concepts of *limitation* and *determination* must be borne in mind.

An unlimited ens can have all the conditions necessary for its subsistence, whereas an undetermined ens cannot subsist because determination is a necessary condition for subsistence. Determinations are the final acts which complete a real ens; without these acts a real ens is not yet. For example, could an ens subsist that was neither matter nor spirit nor any other determined thing? Could a body exist which did not have a determined size and form, or was neither round nor square nor any shape whatsoever? This is clearly impossible. We know this because subsistence is known through *affirmation*, but we cannot affirm what is undetermined, purely as undetermined: it lacks the object of the affirmation. We cannot even think that it subsists. But that which cannot be thought as subsisting is impossible, and what is impossible does not subsist.

§1. *The a priori movement of thought begins from the two contrary characteristics of intuited being*

752. *A priori* thought moves from and is founded in the first information (being). Therefore, the logical necessity of passing to something else is present only in this information (*NE*, 3: 1378 ss.).

The logical necessity of our thought to pass from one thing to another consists in this: thought, having an object present to it, simultaneously sees that it is impossible for 'this object to stand by itself, unaccompanied by anything else, without incurring contradiction'. Therefore, to avoid this contradiction, thought passes to something else: it concludes that there is not only the first object it sees but *necessarily* something else it does not see.

The first object is such that thought cannot accept it as standing alone; simultaneously, however, because it sees this first object, it cannot deny it. Hence, the object is said to contain the other thing in an implicit, virtual way. In this sense, it is true that contradiction is the cause of the *a priori* movement of thought, that is, it moves to avoid the contradiction.

Hegel deserves credit for seeing that movement arises from contradiction. But he falsified this truth and, instead of attributing limitation to human thought and the consequence of this limitation (which is the contradiction presented to human thought), ascribed the contradiction to being itself. He also transferred to being the movement which pertains only to thought. Thus, by endowing the object with what is proper to the subject, he confused them both.

753. How could a philosopher fall into such an absurdity? At first sight, we could not think that the object standing before our mind is our mind itself. We clearly know that our mind differs from its objects. For the same reason we could never think that our mind produced the objects, like lava issuing from deep within a volcano. Our mind is clearly aware of receiving, not producing, its objects. However, when an object is given to it,

its limitations prevent it in fact from seeing all or totally the object, and so these limitations are attributed to the object. Thus, the subjective limitations are erroneously objectivised. For example, if I see only half of a house because the other half is hidden by the slope of a hill, the object I see seems to be limited and, as seen, is truly limited, but not limited in itself. The same happens in feeling: we attribute to corporeal force, the colours, tastes, etc. which are our sensations, but in fact we could not attribute them to an extrasubjective force if such a force were not truly present; we do not do so even when we dream (*NE*, 2: 763). Because these facts were insufficiently analysed, systems were invented which declared the objects of thought to be the work of thought. No distinction was made between the *objects* and their *limitations* which originate from the limitation of the act of thought itself. This was precisely the error of the idealists of the sensist school when they said that bodies were modifications of the spirit: they did not sufficiently distinguish between the force and the sensible qualities of the second order which we attribute to the force.

754. Being is presented to our spirit, therefore, with a limitation which is not proper to it but comes from the limitation of our thought. This can be understood by considering the following. When we mentally complete being by removing the limitation from it, we see that the whole of being still remains as before, but is no longer limited. The limitation therefore was not proper to it. Indeed, by keeping our gaze only on being, we learnt that the limitation could not pertain to it because limitation would contradict the other properties of being. For this reason alone, thought considers itself authorised to remove the limitation and thus complete being.

If we take being, not as it is in itself but as it appears to our intuition, it involves a contradiction, one of those contradictions I call *antinomies*. These are relative, not absolute contradictions, that is, relative to a limited way of thinking, not to thought itself or to absolute, total thought.

In fact, being, isolated in this way, is *perfect* but at the same time, *imperfect*, from a different point of view. Moreover, there is the antinomy that being, which has infinite extension, includes nothing and, in this respect, is equivalent to nothing. So Hegel was happy to make a play on words and surprise the

reader with the paradoxical proposition that 'being and nothing are identical'. But the *a priori* movement of thought is occasioned by these antinomies: unable to accept a contradiction, thought is aroused and moves to overcome the contradiction.

§2. *The two modes in which human thought thinks being*

755. But because these antinomies are not seen in the intuition of being, intuition is content with being and makes no movement. However, when reflection considers this being in which the first intuition terminates, it becomes aware that being cannot exist *in se* in this way, even though it appears to be *in se*; it lacks something necessary for existence *in se*, that is, it lacks determination. Hence, to accept it as existing *in se* and at the same time omit this necessary condition, which intuition does not apprehend, would be a contradiction. But because thought sees that there cannot be a contradiction in being, it concludes *a priori* that the necessary condition, although not seen by intuition, *MUST* be present.

756. To explain this better, I must firmly establish the first difference between being that stands before intuition and being that is presented to reflection.

The difference is this: intuition sees being not as intuited but as simply being, while reflection sees being as intuited. Intuition adds no thought to being; only reflection can consider being as thought. Hence, because the being of intuition involves no relationship with intuition itself, it is pure *being in se*, independent of every thought.

But reflection, when applied, sees that being cannot be *in se*, that is, in the way it appears to intuition. This means that intuition sees a being *in se* which cannot be *in se*. Hence the antinomy.

757. Nevertheless, the reflection that finds this contradiction also removes it: it notes that the being which appears to intuition as *in se* is intuited. Thus, being does not in fact lack the conditions it needs to be able to be *in se*; they are lacking only relative to intuition which, because it does not see them, sees only an imperfect being.

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But intuition certainly does not at all see an absurd being, for the following reason.

Being, present to first intuition, is the *essence* through which ens is. If therefore being *in se* is present to intuition, the essence by which every ens is *in se* is present, and present absolutely and independently of every mind foreign to it and considering it. Thus, if reflection faithfully interprets intuition, intuition simply tells it that the essence of being is, and necessarily is, and is through itself, but intuition certainly does not tell reflection that this essence is in *that mode*, that is, stripped of and cut off from its terms, as it appears to be. This would indeed be absurdity, an absurdity given to intuition by an unconsidered reflection. Indeed, it is precisely the essence of being apprehended with the first intuition that makes reflection know that the essence is, and at the same time that it could not be, unless it had a term which could make it *ens*. Hence, the term is contained implicitly and virtually in the essence of being in so far as the essence requires the term. The essence cannot not be, and therefore is the fulcrum of reasoning. Reasoning concludes that there *must* also be a term, even though the term does not appear and its nature is not known. Consequently, in intuited being there is the mainstay or support to which reasoning clings to complete its knowledge.

Whenever reflection examines more deeply the conditions which this term of being must have if it is to satisfy the demand of intuited being (which cannot be thought except as existing *in se*), reflection encounters *necessity* and *possibility*. It sees, on the one hand, that a term is *necessary* because being absolutely is, and would not be, if it lacked the term it needs, and on the other that there can be other terms which are not necessary for the essence to be ens. These other terms are contingent, finite entia. Thus, relative to such entia, the essence of being is possibility, because the act through which every ens is makes possible for any subject to be.

In this sense, being, present to intuition, is the possible.⁶ This

⁶ We know positively only the finite terms of being. Through reasoning, we know negatively the infinite term, as I will explain. We can say therefore that in this life being is not known positively except as an ideal principle, that is, as the beginning of what is created.

explains why those who had not understood this teaching, falsely claimed that the possible is nothing because it is not yet ens. They failed to see that the question concerns what stands before the mind. The act of being can certainly stand before the mind without the explicit presence of the subject, but this does not mean that nothing stands before the mind; on the contrary, the act which makes every ens possible stands before the mind.

The contradiction is therefore both posited and removed by reflection. It is posited when reflection, seeing the act of being *in se* before the mind, concludes that ens *in se* exists, but does not see that being has the necessary conditions for ens to be *in se*. The contradiction is removed when reflection, seeing that being is *intuited*, attributes to the intuiting spirit the fact that being is not also apprehended as an absolutely existing subject.

§3. *The characteristics pertaining to being as being in se and to being in se as intuited being*

758. From what has been said we see that the characteristics of being present to intuition divide into two classes. Some characteristics pertain to the nature of being, others to intuition.

Thus the first of the two fundamental characteristics, that is, *infinite extension*, is founded in the nature of being itself. The second, the *lack of all inclusion*, arises from the limitation of both intuition and the intuiting spirit.

These two characteristics are the foundation of the two classes of subordinate characteristics, of which the principal are the following.

759. I. Characteristics of being arising from its nature. Being is:

1. The *pure essence of being*.
2. The *essential object of intelligence* — objectivity is a form so proper to being that it involves no limitation in being and hence must be attributed to the very nature of being.
3. The *possibility of finite ens* — being is the possibility of ens, but in so far as it appears as the possibility of infinite ens, it has undergone a limitation by the intuiting spirit. It is therefore a characteristic of the second class because reflection shows that infinite being is not only possible but necessary. However,

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this is not the case in so far as being is the possibility of finite ens, because the reality of finite ens is not included in the nature of being as object.

4. Being is *universal*.

5. *Necessary*.

6. *Eternal*.

7. *Simple* (*New Essay*, [2: 426]).

8. *Intelligibility, intelligible being* — this follows from the first and second characteristics. If we do not know the essence of a thing, we cannot know anything about it. Ideal being, which is *essence*, the first, universal essence, not a particular essence, gives the first knowledge of things and is the means by which they are understood, before anything real is predicated of them.

9. Being is the *form of minds*, and of knowledge.

10. It is the *objective-subjective form of the real form* of finite entia.

760. The intelligibility of things is the form they have in so far as they are, not in so far as they are this or that particular thing. This intelligibility must inform the mind, otherwise the mind could not understand things in so far as they are. Pure being is therefore simultaneously *form of the mind* and very first, universal form of real things, that is, *form of their form*, in so far as they appear in the mind as existing absolutely. As a result of this double function, pure being is a kind of mediator between the mind and things. Furthermore, form of the form of (real) things is the same as saying the *first act* on which things depend, or their *antecedent beginning*. We can therefore call it *initial being*.

If, however, we consider objective being as form of the mind, the question arises: 'Does the subject acquire some new *quality* from the presence of the object?' If the answer is 'yes', we will conclude that this quality must be called *form of the subject* rather than of the object, because form is that which is involved most proximately in making a thing what it is. I agree that the subject acquires intelligence from the presence of object-being, that it becomes mind, and I also accept that the expression, 'Being is the cause of the form which constitutes intelligence' (*PSY*, 2: 1291), is correct. But we should not be deceived by the way being constitutes the form of intellectual ens. Intelligence, which this form is, is not in any way constituted by pure objective

being as a distant cause able to produce this effect; if pure objective being ceased to be present to the subject, intelligence would cease. Hence, the *presence* of pure being to the subject has the nature of formal cause: if removed, there is no other formal cause capable of making the subject intelligent. Granted this presence, however, there is the formal cause. We can say therefore that relative to the mind (and, as I said, relative to diverse entia), being can be called 'form of form.'⁷ But the thing distinct from object-being is the act of the subject that sees being, that is, intuition [*App.*, no. 1].

761. II. Characteristics of being arising from the nature of intuition.

Being is:

1. *Ideal* — this is a corollary of indetermination, because in order that an ens may subsist, it must be determined. Not to subsist therefore means exactly the same as not to have reality, that is, to be idea.

2. *Relative nothingness* — that is, a nothingness of reality, not *absolute nothingness*.

3. *The possibility of infinite ens* — the possibility of *finite ens* is an intrinsic characteristic of being, and comes from its nature ([cf. 757]), but the possibility of infinite being is a characteristic arising from the imperfection of intuition.

When reflection concentrates on intuited being, it is aware that 1. being must have its determinations, because it must subsist, even if the determinations are not visible to intuition; 2. being can be determined by limitations and, when thus determined, can subsist. Logical possibility means that there is no contradiction in the concept. Further reflection reveals that such a possibility, relative to infinite being, changes into absolute necessity — but not so with finite being. This explains why ideal being is called 'possible'. Being is said to be possible, not in relationship to what is in the mind but to what could be in the mind with determinations or outside. In short, possibility does not relate to being (which would involve absurdity) but to its determinations.

Nevertheless, if the human mind intuits pure being and sees in

⁷ Later I will show that the presence of being to a mind is so essential to being that the presence is itself a constitutive of being.

it *what is possible*, this being is the *light of reason*. If we analyse all the operations of the mind and remove the possible, wherever it may be, whether on its own or mixed with the real, all these operations are annihilated, and therefore all the objects. This happens to a quantity made up of many factors when one of them is zero — there would no longer be knowledge, no knowing mind. All these characteristics are found and distinguished by reflection; *intuition* itself distinguishes nothing. They exist anterior to reflection, and if they did not exist, reflection could not find and distinguish them.

§4. *Errors arising from defective knowledge of the nature of being from which the movement of thought begins*

762. Philosophers who took ens as the principle of the logical process and the means of thought, and thus failed to distinguish accurately between being and ens, succeeded only in fabricating paradoxical and erroneous systems. I have noted elsewhere how anyone who teaches that the means of knowledge is subsistent Being, not undetermined being, as Gioberti teaches, must finish up in pantheism. Spinoza himself, as others⁸ have observed, fell into his error for the same reason: he did not distinguish sufficiently between being in potency, that is, being without determinations, and existing being, that is, in act. Although Charles Secrétan thinks very differently from me in other things, he openly acknowledges with me that ‘the starting point of philosophical investigation is undetermined being, being which can become everything and which is still nothing, being which is purely the potency of being.’⁹ Immediately after accepting this principle, he notes that ‘the start of Spinoza’s philosophy is not the potency of being but fixed being. Consequently this being could not by itself explain the origin of finite entia’ [*App.*, no. 2].

763. The same confusion between being of intuition and complete ens, which happens when one is taken for the other,

⁸ Letter to Alessandro Pestalozza in *Introduzione alla Filosofia*, pp. 428–433.

⁹ *La philosophie de la liberté*, Leçon 11.

explains the origin of the pantheism of the Eleatics, Schelling and Hegel.

The following shows how acutely and truthfully the philosopher I have quoted judges these systems:

Being in potency,¹⁰ still undetermined in its being,¹¹ potency that can become existence¹² or, to use the language of this philosophy, the primal *indifference* of the subject and object (Schelling's first principle), existed solely in Schelling's thought because it is not something experienced. — Hence, because the absolute antecedent of all development and reality existed only in thought, it was, strictly speaking, only a thought,¹³ the first of all thoughts, the necessary antecedent of thought. But Schelling did not understand it in this way. He took primal potency not only as a universal potency, but also as a real potency, not a metaphysical abstraction.¹⁴ When he spoke about being, that is, about existing being or being in potency, he possessed in effect only the abstract idea of being, but he meant real being, substantial being or being understood as a substantive of what is.¹⁵ His thought was this: primal being (*ens primum*), which is the basis of all experience, is an infinite potency; it is, in other words, something infinite and real,

¹⁰ I would say 'ens in potency'.

¹¹ More correctly: 'undetermined relative to its subsistence'.

¹² Strictly speaking, being, in itself, cannot become anything. It is only the human mind that passes from seeing being more imperfectly to seeing it more perfectly. Becoming and change are relative only to the human mind.

¹³ This induction is greatly mistaken and is the source of the principal errors of German philosophy. It is true that being, severed from its determinations, is solely in thought, but false that it is thought. Thought is the subjective act which intuits being, it is not intuited being. Thought is particular and contingent (we are talking about human thought); being is universal and necessary. There is therefore confusion between subject and object. This totally gratuitous and erroneous identification was the foundation on which German philosophy, from Kant to Hegel, was built.

¹⁴ The being of intuition is not in any way the being abstracted from finite entia. This being could be only finite if the human spirit did not add the being which it directly intuits.

¹⁵ This really means ens. Schelling confuses being with ens. To the former he attributed what is proper to the latter and, according to Secrétan's observation, this is the start of his errors.

indifferent to both existence and the negation of existence, to subjectivity and objectivity. It always remains the same, whether manifested as objective existence or still in potency.¹⁶ This is the meaning Schelling gives to his thesis.

Secrétan then shows how Hegel's idealism was founded on this very equivocation.

At first sight, it seems that Hegel had no right to speak about *being* in the sense of *what is* (ens), about τὸ ὄν, about being as substantive, but only about being in the sense of a category or attribute of τὸ εἶναι. In fact we are not sure that with pure thought we know ὄν, real being, but we are sure we know εἶναι, because εἶναι, the fact, the quality of being, is simply 'thought'.¹⁷ We do not know what is, unless we have apprehended it, but we cannot be ignorant of what being is. To keep philosophy within the sphere of pure thought or pure *a priori* deduction, it was necessary to identify ὄν with εἶναι, that is, to identify real being, that which is, with the being of thought, being as attribute, that which is being (the essence of being). This identification is the very foundation of idealism and, understood correctly, of all rationalism. It is the central point of Hegel's philosophy.¹⁸

764. So we see how Hegel wished to accommodate Schelling's system. Schelling began from being as pure quality and then spoke of it as subsistent. Hegel saw that this did not make sufficient sense, so he extricated himself by denying the subsistent real; in other words he claimed that the real was purely and simply a mode of the idea.

Secrétan continues:

By being, Schelling understood more than the abstract quality of being. But his method was not rigorous unless

¹⁶ Here, 'existence' (from *ex-stare* [stand out]) seems to be understood as subsistence and, strictly speaking, is attributed to finite entities. But I have shown in my observations on Caluso, who was the first in Italy to insist on the difference between being and existence, how 'existence' can be fittingly used both of God and of ideas. Cf. *Principii di Filosofia per gli iniziati nelle Matematiche, volgarizzati dal prof. Corte*, etc, Turin, 1840, c. 1.

¹⁷ He should have said that, separated in this way, it is only object of human thought.

¹⁸ Leçon 11.

the being he was discussing was understood in the sense of abstract quality. Because Hegel wanted to make the method rigorous, he reduced the being, which metaphysics deals with at its start, to mean only the abstract quality of being, the fact of being. However, because he wanted his philosophy to be objective,¹⁹ he posited the axiom: 'What is, is the fact of being; real being contains precisely what is contained in our thought when we say the word 'being'.²⁰

This is easy to assert, just as it is easy to say that a thing is something else. Secrétan continues with a similar judgment about the emendment that Hegel claimed to make to his master's system:

This is a frightful paradox. But granted that the paradox is established and understood as well as possible, we have the key to the whole of Hegel's philosophy and can range through it freely. The paradox, 'Real being is nothing more than what we think when we understand the meaning of the verb *to be*' is, I repeat, implicit in all resulting rationalism.²¹

Secrétan finally observes that Parmenides' system also started from the identification, or rather the confusion, between substantive ens and the quality of being. But I do not wish to enter into this question of erudition.

We see therefore how necessary it is that we clearly understand how the starting point of philosophical meditation is not ens but being which informs all knowledge and is the first, universal form of all entia. We need to understand that this very precise being is certainly not ens.

¹⁹ 'Objective' is always used inappropriately to indicate what really subsists, when, as I will explain later, the pure idea is also a true object, and thus essentially object.

²⁰ Leçon 11.

²¹ *Ibid.*

Article 3

The connection between real ens and the pure object

§1. *The intimate connection between essence and subject*

765. 'Being' expresses *act*, not *subject*.²² However a subject must be understood or implicitly contained in it. If our mind were forced to think an act and at the same time think there were no subject of the act, it would be forced to think a contradiction, which means it would never think these two things simultaneously.

766. How does our mind make us see the necessity of the following principle (the principle of subject): 'No act exists without a subject'?

The mind must see the necessity in the very concept of act and, because being is act, also in the concept of pure being. The principle means: 'Act would not be act if there were no subject of the act', or: 'Being would not be being unless something were.'

It cannot be objected that the question, put in this way, supposes that *being* is *act*. If being is what is first known and is not known through anything prior to it, reflection need only show what is in the object of intuition, that is, in being, in order to indicate what being is. I say therefore that the first activity is in being, the object of intuition, and that the only proof is manifest being itself. Either we admit that being is known by us, in which case we see that it is act, or we deny such knowledge and hence deny everything, in which case human knowledge is non-existent and impossible.

Granted we know that being is the first activity, how do we show in its concept that this activity supposes a subject, in such a way that if we deny the subject, the activity can no longer be thought? I say 'deny the subject' because thinking being without thinking the subject (which we can do) is one thing, but

²² We do indeed say about everything else that it is, and thus attribute essence to everything else. But strictly speaking we would not say that essence is, not because *being* is not, but because being is primally intuited by us as *attributable* to a subject and not itself as subject.

thinking being and *denying* a subject (which we cannot do) is another — we can think the first thought but not the second. In thinking being without thinking the subject which is, the mind clearly does not deny or affirm the subject. The mind does not even ask: 'Is a subject necessary?' It leaves the matter where it is, as if saying to itself: 'If a subject is necessary, there is a subject; if not necessary, then no subject. I am not interested in finding out.'

But here the question I asked returns: 'If we do not think any distinct subject in pure being, how does reflection, when thinking about the matter and about the question of a subject, clearly conclude that a subject must be present?[]' What is the rule that guides reflection here? Who shows it this necessity?

This question of course presents itself to us only after we have already perceived different subjects and thus formed the distinct concept of subject. But the experience that has given us knowledge of particular subjects cannot make us know that every act of being must have its subject. Nor can it show us that between the concept of subject and that of being there is such an intimacy that being supposes or implies a subject without presenting the subject to thought as something distinct.

We must say therefore that pure being implicitly contains a subject, not distinguished by intuition, and that through the action of reflection this subject emerges from the depths, as it were, of pure being, in the following way. We first perceive some particular entia and in them subjects. We then form the concept of subject in general and compare this concept with the concept of pure being. In doing so, we see that being supposes a subject in such a way that, if the subject were denied, being would be denied. Finally, with a higher reflection we conclude that, because we cannot deny being, we cannot deny that a subject is understood in it, even if implicitly and indistinctly.

767. We must always remember the very important distinction between 'what being shows to the human mind in intuition' and 'what is contained implicitly and indistinctly in being and later becomes explicit and distinct through reflection enriched by experience'. We must also note, relative to the discussion, that the first meaning of 'being' is being as shown to intuition. Its characteristics are the following:

1. It presents no distinction in itself, and therefore is

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perfectly simple and uniform. Consequently, it can be called only pure being, not object or subject, not real or ideal, not genus or species, nor any such thing.

2. It makes us see the necessity of a subject when reflection compares it with particular, perceived entia or with these entia as subjects of their own being and of all their acts, or with the abstract concept of subject drawn from these entia. This happens because pure being implicitly contains all forms and acts. Hence, when one of these forms or acts is presented separately to the mind, the mind recognises it as implicit in being and sees on what condition it is present, that is, whether it is necessary or not to being. This is confirmed when we consider that forms and particular acts of being could not be presented to the mind without being; in other words, they are presented to the mind in so far as they are, and once presented, they are the same as being appearing to the mind with some of its distinctions. Thus, relative to intuition, what was indistinctly and implicitly present was made explicit and distinct in being by feeling and reflection. This explains why pure being is the supreme rule for all the conditions of being and of individual entia. If individual entia are compared with pure being, we see in it what is indispensable for their existence, that is, we see all that pure being presents to the mind in their concept, through which being has made them conceivable.

768. As a consequence of this, being identifies with diverse mental forms when these are compared with it. To make this understood, I will analyse the phrase, 'essence of being'. Here, being takes the form of *subject*. Because 'essence' means the quiddity through which a subject is, we can express 'essence of being' as 'that quiddity through which subject-being is'. This quiddity is being itself. Thus, being presents itself to the mind under two forms, as *subject* and as *act*, but remains the same most simple being. This could not be the case if the *subject* were not itself *act*, and the *act* were not itself *subject*.

For the same reason, the *quiddity* through which subject-being is, is also itself being. Here therefore, being is conceived in a third form, the form of *quiddity*, through which it is. But the subject and the act of this subject and the quiddity through which the subject is are always the same being seen by the mind

from three different points of view; being identifies therefore with these three forms.

But if the being we are discussing is most simple, how can it admit this triple distinction of forms?

We should remember that before the human mind can make this distinction through reflection, it must first work upon finite entia. Hence, in finite entia, we find a basis for distinguishing the subject, the act and the essence. But let us see in what mode, and how, being can receive the three forms from a relationship with them.

I will take the essence of a finite ens, for example, man.

The essence is humanity. If we compare this with man as an ideal subject, we see that although it prescind from the subject, it does not deny it; it keeps the subject implicit in itself because the quiddity of man cannot exist *in se* except as subject-man. Hence, ideal man and humanity differ only in dialectical form in so far as the mind, when thinking humanity, considers the subject only virtually, that is, as understood in human nature, but not actually; it considers the objective form, abstracting from the subjective form within it.

With these two forms in our mind therefore, both *ideal man* and *humanity* (which is more abstract than ideal man) can be compared with pure being.

If both did not have being, they would not be, yet being is neither one nor the other. They add a determination therefore to the pure concept of being, so that when they are considered as determinations of being, being acquires, relative to both, the form of *subject* of the determination.

768a. But *being* as humanity and *being* as ideal man still mean the same thing. In the first mode, it retains the dialectical form that contains the subject only virtually; in the second mode it retains the dialectical form in which the subject appears actual.

Consequently, the thing determined in the first case is the *essence*, in the second *what is*: humanity-essence, man-what-is. Hence, *being* (subject of the determination) is susceptible of the two dialectical forms.

But if we consider *being* in itself, it appears as act of both ideal man and humanity. Being is therefore *act* which, united to the ideal finite ens that has these two forms, becomes clothed with both forms.

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However the two forms, man and humanity, compared with being taken as subject of the determinations, do not have the same level in the logical order. We can say, for example, that 'being, determined by *humanity*, is ideal man'. Here, depending on the degree of the abstractions, humanity is conceived as *midway* between being and man: being is most abstract, humanity less abstract, and man least abstract. Hence, when the mind wishes to determine by stages what it sees as most undetermined, it first adds what seems a minor determination and then adds the other greater determination.

All this is still in the order of ideas where, strictly speaking, there is no *subject* but only a form of subject.

The subject is found in real man who in the logical order is posterior to *being*, *humanity* and *ideal man*. But in the chronological order of human cognitions, the *real subject* precedes the *abstract subject*. Indeed, only when the real subject is perceived does *being* appear to us as the dialectical subject of the determination. This determination, the real subject (for example, a human being), contains simultaneously real and ideal man undivided. Later, the mind divides them and sees only *ideal man*. Still later, the mind changes ideal man into the concept of *humanity* by referring ideal man to being as a determination of being and abstracting from man as subject.

Whenever therefore the mind thinks *being* or *humanity* or *man*, it always thinks an *act*, but an act ever more determined. But the more undetermined the act is, the purer it is. Hence, being, as most undetermined, is *most pure act*.

769. I said that this very pure act appears to the mind as subject, where the act is not considered purely in itself but in relationship to its determinations. It will help if I explain this further.

Speaking most generally, subject is understood as a first act without any prior act that may support it and from which it may derive. Furthermore, an act can be first in more than one way: either *absolutely* (examples are God and pure being; no other act whatsoever precedes or can precede these), or *relatively*, that is, relative to a posterior, dependent act so that anything prior to this posterior act is regarded as subject. Our mind does this through a species of abstraction or separation: it abstracts from prior acts and leaves them aside. Thus, when we

say 'man-being', being is an *absolute* dialectical *subject*, but when we say, 'man is', man is a *relative subject*, even though we are dealing with a real subject, because the mind understands it as a first act independent of any prior act. In this case, the act of this subject is expressed in the monosyllable 'is'; in other words, the act is *being*. This being which appears as the act of the man-subject is not, we must note, the same being that first appeared as absolute dialectical subject. As absolute dialectical subject it was pure, undetermined, universal being, which was later determined by its act as man (first determinable). On the other hand, being, appearing in the second expression as act, is being, determined and limited to man as its subject (final determination).

770. We see then how our mind distinguishes *subject*, *act* and *essence* in being.

Subject 'is a first act which is considered as independent and on which other acts depend'.

The word 'act' applies to both first, independent acts and posterior, dependent acts. It is therefore more universal than subject, in fact so universal that it cannot be defined. We have to place it among things known *per se*, things known directly in being which is absolutely first act. But when act is contrasted with subject (for example, in the phrase, 'the act of the subject'), it takes the form of a second act, and is a particular meaning of 'act'. Hence, just as 'subject' indicates a first act that has a relationship of cause with a second act, so 'act', in its concept, does not involve any similar relationship. 'Essence' indicates everything through which a given subject is what it is, that is, an abstraction from the subject which remains understood as an implicit condition. Hence, the essence of a given thing always determines the subject to be that thing, but this determination can either be conceived by the mind either prior to the actual determination, as essence able to determine but not yet determining, or conceived in the act itself which determines the subject. Thus in the phrase 'man-being', being holds the place of the subject, and man the place of the act. Here, the essence, that is, humanity, pertains to the act because it is an act that determines being. However, in the expression, 'man is', man is the subject to which humanity pertains, whereas 'is' is the act of the subject but not the act determining the subject. So when the essence is

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considered as the quiddity of the subject, the subject is immersed in the essence. This fact is only relative to the mind, which does not consider the subject but thinks it implicitly in the object. On the other hand, when the essence is considered as the quiddity of the act determining the subject, the act is ignored in the sense that it is immersed in the essence, that is, the mind thinks it as potential in the essence. The essence (for example, humanity) is understood as that which can receive the act by which it changes into man.

771. If we are talking about some determined, finite ens and not pure, undetermined being, the mind makes these distinctions between subject, act and essence. When it has found the distinctions, it applies them to pure, undetermined being, and when asked what is the subject of this pure being, it replies: 'Pure being itself'; when asked what is its act, it replies: 'Again, pure being', and when asked what is its essence, it replies a final time: 'Pure being'. Hence, it considers being identical under these three forms through its three diverse relationships with entia.

Our mind could not find these three forms (act, subject and essence) unless it saw them distinct in determined, finite entia. But once it has found them, it compares them with first undetermined being, and looks for them also in this being. It sees that if it takes a finite ens under the form of subject and compares it under this form with first undetermined being, this being also is found to be subject. If it then compares the finite ens under the form of act with first being, it again finds this being there because first being is act, and if it compares the essence of the finite being with first being it finds that this being is essence. In this way, the distinction present in finite entia disappears into being, which remains always identical and indistinct. Nevertheless, being retains the relationship of identity with each of the three aspects under which finite entia are considered by the mind. Although each of these aspects has a different foundation in entia, in being each has the same foundation, which is totally simple being.

§2. *An essential relationship between being and a mind*

772. Pure being is not in itself triple but has a triple relationship of identity with the three forms in which finite, determined entia are conceived. The mind does not make this distinction by itself alone; it finds it in determined entia and applies it to pure, undetermined being. Although it posits in being some distinctions that are not there, it does not err because in all its operations it knows what it posits of its own. We can certainly err, through our will, when we make our reason say what it is not saying, or make it say more, or less, than what it says, or something different from what it says.

Our investigation however must go deeper: the dispute that our vacillating thinking has with itself must be cut short. If we fail to do this, the dispute will be endless, as happened with scepticism. We must combat the mistaken preconception of those who suppose that being is something totally separate from the mind, and they cannot conceive how the relationships between being and the mind do not falsify being. We ask therefore what is the relationship between being and the mind, and this brings us back to my question [concerning] the connection between real ens and the pure object.

773. Three systems, corresponding to three philosophies, deal with this question: the *popular* system, the *pre-eminently sophisticated* system and the *true* system (NE, 1: 29–34).

The popular system arises from the prejudice I have mentioned, that being is separate from every mind without exception; being is essentially outside every mind and purely *in se*.

The pre-eminently sophisticated system, on the other hand, goes to the opposite extreme. It makes the claim that being is actual thought itself. This system appeared in Italy with the Eleatics, whose principle was: 'Thought is the same as being.'²³ It was often reproduced up to the time of Hegel.

²³ Parmenides, Karsten, vs. 41. I do not think that the learned Gottfried Stallbaum correctly understood the mind of the Eleatics when he wrote in his Prolegomena to Plato's Parmenides that they 'ALSO attributed external truth, which today they call objective, to the notion of essence'* (bk. 1, s. 1). Clearly, Parmenides, in my opinion, did not distinguish two modes of existence proper to being, one relative to the mind (internal existence), the other *in se* (external existence). On the contrary, he did not get as far as

The third and true system lies between the other two. Being is certainly 'thought' but not every being is 'thought'. We must distinguish between the content of the *concept of being* and the content of the *concept of thought*. Nevertheless, being, in so far as it is not 'thought', has an *essential relationship* with 'thought'; indeed, if every mind were removed, there would be no being. We have an important result from this: these *essential relationships* between being and the mind, far from counterfeiting or falsifying being, constitute it and at the same time make known what it is. For this reason, the two objections against the truth of knowledge, the sceptical objection which comes from the popular system, and the idealist-sceptic objection which originates from the pre-eminently sophisticated system, disappear.

774. If we can demonstrate that the middle system, which does not separate being from thought but acknowledges some essential relationships between them and describes being as it is, then that system is the true system (a true system about being is certainly the system that describes being as it is). The demonstration is the following.

The fifth characteristic of pure, undetermined being is that it is the *pure object of the mind*. If it were not, we could not reason about it. But we know that this *object-being of intuition* lacks all determination (second characteristic) and therefore lacks reality (third characteristic). It is purely ideal, and an examination of it tells us straightaway that no undetermined being can be realised

considering the modes of being; he simply stopped at being without modes, taking this being to be the same as thought, as he clearly says in the quoted hemistich. He gave being a true existence but identified it with thought, failing to see that the essence of being, although simple, has two distinct, inconfusable relationships, and that being *in se* is one thing, while *being in se* before a mind is another. This is the defect of the Eleatic system. The origin of this defect was their inability to distinguish between *undetermined being* present to the first intuition and being known by *reflection*, which completes and makes being absolute. Consequently, they passed from one to the other without noting the difference. Moreover, because thought and being are the same in absolute being, they said that being is the same as thought. But the two relationships mentioned above remained also in absolute being because, although being is identical, *being in se* must be distinguished from *understood being in se*. Hence Parmenides attributed determinations to being or rather to ens (τῷ ὄντι). I think περὶ αὐτοῦ must be interpreted this way, if it is not to remain endless (ἀτελεστέον).

unless it is first determined. However, such being is not nothing (fourth characteristic). Hence, a pure undetermined being exists which has an *essential relationship* with the mind. It resides in the mind and is very visible to the mind intuiting it. But this being is not the mind intuiting it, because the intuiting mind is something subsistent and determined. On the other hand, being, as I said, is undetermined, and as such cannot subsist. Being does not have any of the acts, accidents or modifications proper to the mind, because any act, accident, mode or modification (or any other similar word) of a determined, subsistent ens is something determined, and cannot in any way be without determinations. Moreover, the mind, that is, the ens thinking and reflecting on itself, is conscious that it is not its own object but a subject intuiting the object. It cannot err in this, because a thinking subject is such only in so far as it thinks and knows that it thinks. And in so far as it thinks and knows it thinks, it knows that it is not impersonal, undetermined being. Indeed, it knows it is a determined ens and person who intuits something different from and the opposite of itself. Although it intuits this different thing, it does not experience the affections of the intuited thing, but knows and feels that it experiences its own affections.

The mind, therefore, cannot be mistaken when it differentiates itself from its object, because the nature of a conscious ens is to be that of which it is conscious. It is therefore that which is conscious of being, and to be conscious of being is the same as to be. Moreover, the concept expressed by 'subject' is not only different from, but the opposite of, the concept expressed by 'object'. The one excludes and is the opposite of the other: the subject, as subject, excludes and is the opposite of the object as object, and vice versa. The thinking subject therefore would be mistaken by making itself object. It would in fact destroy itself, would deny its own essential characteristics and endow itself with characteristics excluded by its own essence and incompatible with them.

775. If someone said that the subject, as such, is an appearance, they can certainly be accused of error, as I have accused them elsewhere (*Rinnovamento*).²⁴ But even without this

²⁴ L. 3, cc. 37–38.

accusation, I could reply that my argument remains valid even if the subject is an appearance. I am not investigating what the subject is but, whatever it is, I am showing that it is distinct from the object which is its opposite. Moreover, saying that the subject is an appearance certainly denies the substantiality of the subject but does not show there is another real subject which is the object. If there were this subject, it would be different from the object that is its opposite. The question therefore about the appearance and the substantiality of the thinking subject differs from and is posterior to my question, which it cannot in any way weaken.

Furthermore, whatever the being is we are thinking and speaking about, it has to be in some way an object of our mind, otherwise we could neither think nor speak about it. Consequently, it is certain that the being of which we speak and which knowledge deals with, the being concerned in the question whether there is or is not an essential relationship with the mind, has certainly and clearly this relationship. Moreover, the being of which any mind, not just a human mind, might think, would still have a relationship with a mind. Thus, if there were a being that had no essential relationship with any mind, it would have to be primarily a kind of being that was not thought by any mind, not even by itself. But this would still not be sufficient for us to exclude any essential relationship whatsoever between such a being and a mind, because it would not only have to be not thought, but also such that it *could* not be thought by any mind, whether divine or human — if it could be thought, it would have an essential relationship with the mind, through the possibility itself of being thought. However, the following reasons demonstrate that it is contradictory and absurd that there can be a being that has an intrinsic impossibility of being thought by any mind:

1. We would have to show that this being and the thought of it would be contradictory and would exclude each other, which cannot be shown.

2. The essential object of the mind is the first act of being, an act receptive of all determinations. This first act with its different determinations includes all the possibility of being and all possible beings. Intelligence is therefore endowed with a means of knowledge that extends to all possible entia,

whether subsistent or not; indeed, the essence of being is the form that is essential to intelligence. Thus, everything participating in the essence of being must be intelligible. Again, pure being intuited by intelligence is the intelligibility of things, which is the essence of being. Hence, the essence of being cannot exist if it is not intelligible.

We see therefore an essential relationship between being and intelligence: every entity has the essential element of being intelligible.

We can conclude that: 1. the essential relationships between being and a mind, far from altering being, partly constitute it; 2. being and these *relationships* must be known if knowledge of it is to be true and full (*PSY*, 1: 1328–1336).

§3. *The two modes in which the human mind thinks being as something separate from the mind and as essentially joined to a mind*

776. If I were asked whether being is something totally separate from every mind so that it lacks all intelligibility, that is, lacks every relationship with the mind, I would wonder whether that person knows what being is. If we had no knowledge whatsoever of being, the question could not be asked, but if we do have knowledge of it, then the being mentioned in the question is such that the question itself supposes being to be known. The question is therefore answered in its asking.

However, it is true that the human mind thinks ens in two ways. It first thinks it as if it were truly separate from it and from every mind. This is the case in the act of intuition, as I have explained. In this act, the intuiting person is not thinking at all of himself; he is thinking and understanding only being, not the relationships it can have with the mind. It does not follow from this however that such relationships do not exist, but simply that they are not present in the object of human thought.

The same is true in perception and in every thought of finite or infinite entia. These can be thought without our simultaneously thinking that they are understood by themselves or by us or by others, and without our thinking they are intelligible. But because the essential relationship of being with a mind

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certainly exists (as we have seen), these acts of our mind must have an essential limitation. This limitation must be attributed to the fact that with these acts we do not see explicitly all that is contained in the essence of being. On the other hand, if we accept from them only what they give us and nothing more, the limitation does not falsify being or cause error. I call this mode of thinking being (prescinding from every relationship it has with a mind) the ‘anoetical mode’, and being, thought in this way, I call ‘anoetical being’.

When we think being and its essential relationship with the mind, I call it the ‘dianoetical mode’²⁵ or ‘dianoetical being’. This way of thinking, relative to being in all its universality, is done only by reflection. Reflection lets us see that being is *essentially intelligible* and, as I will explain later, essentially understood. This second dianoetical manner of thinking being is more perfect and richer than the anoetical manner.

§4. *Difference between the dianoetical and dialectical modes of thinking being or ens*

777. The *dialectical mode* of thinking must be distinguished from the *dianoetical mode*. The *dialectical mode* generally means thought in so far as thought obeys the laws of a reasoning mind, or thought which at least sees the reasoned connection between the concepts of the entia we understand. Hence, when any entity is taken as the *subject* of a proposition or of an argument it is generally called dialectical ens.

Such an entity is either 1. that being or ens *in se* that I have called anoetical, that is, it is considered as it is *in se* by the mind and lacks its essential relationship with the mind, or 2. it is the being or ens that is clothed with this relationship and I have called *dianoetical*, or finally, 3. it can be something that is neither ens nor being but understood in human speech as if it were an ens and a subject, so that we can use it for reasoning. This is

²⁵ ‘Dianoetical’ is used by Plato (*Tim.*, p. 89 A) and many times by Aristotle with different meanings. Here I find it necessary to limit it to mean being in so far as being has an essential relationship with a mind, that is, is essentially understood.

called *simply ens* or *dialectical subject*, or *purely dialectical ens* and subject.²⁶

‘Dialectical’ has therefore several meanings. Its first and more general meaning is an entity used or considered by the mind for the purpose of reasoning; in other words, it is an entity thought according to the laws of the reasoning mind.

But an entity has two kinds of relationship with the mind: *dianoetical relationships*, founded in the nature of ens and of being, and *dialectical relationships*, founded in the special nature of a limited mind.

Ens and being are thus each conceived more fully *in se* when conceived with their *dianoetical relationships*, which are essential to them. If thought sets these relationships aside and considers being or ens *in se* without these essential relationships, it is called *anoetical*.

This is a first separation of ens or being made by the mind and does not pertain to ens *in se*. The separation is done either through the mind’s natural limitation, as in the case of the object of human intuition which, as I said, is *anoetical*, or through the mind’s free power of abstraction.

The second separation is carried out through free abstraction, and the entity left is, properly speaking, called an *abstract*.

But if the mind clothes an entity with an abstract form not proper to the entity, for example, it clothes a non-subject with the form of subject, the entity is, properly speaking, called a *dialectical entity*.

Hence, there is a great difference between *dianoetical*, *anoetical*, *abstract* and *dialectical* conception.

But it is difficult to maintain constantly the correct use of these four names. The last three always involve some action of the mind, and could be called, with some propriety, *three modes of dialectical thinking*. The second and third involve the separation of ens or being by the mind, and so could be called, also with some propriety, *two modes of abstract thought*.

The reader must always bear this in mind whenever I myself use this second way of speaking instead of the first to avoid a very complicated explanation.

²⁶ The Greeks called these purely dialectical entia ἐννοηματα (Eustrat. in Eth., Aristotle, p. 111).

§5. *The disharmonies between the anoetical and dianoetical modes of thinking ens. — The universal principle of antinomies*

778. The anoetical mode of thinking ens is natural and common to all human beings, while the dianoetical mode is attained only by those who have reached a certain advanced degree of development through the work of certain minds that are ahead of the rest of human race. At the start of this mental transition a kind of crisis arises: our intelligence is surprised and disturbed by the newness of it and falls into error (*Logica*, 36–42).

It happens as follows. We all have a natural, complete confidence in the truthfulness of intelligence; we have no doubts whatsoever that things are as we naturally think them. Although there is no error here, our confidence itself is a cause of error. When we begin to think being dianoetically, we see that it is not totally what it first appeared to be, that is, anoetical. We rashly judge that the persuasion we had of the truthfulness of our intelligence may have deceived us. But this conclusion is invalid. Our reasoning should be: 'Although natural, anoetical thought did not make me know explicitly everything contained in the depths of being, nevertheless what it did show me was true; what I know now completes what I knew before.' This reasoning is legitimate but difficult to carry out because of the depth and gravity of the reflection it requires. We have a natural instinct to judge immediately; we want our judgment to be easy, and if reason does not supply this judgment, we create it with our imagination. If we don't create it, we experience too much trouble in having to affirm our assent (*Logica*).

The logical genesis of this error is the following. Anoetical thought presents us with being without explicitly giving us the intelligibility of being, which remains hidden and indistinct in the depth of being. This is *limitation*, but with our free will we substitute *denial* for the limitation: we arbitrarily deny what we do not explicitly see in the object, and do so because it is easier to *deny* than to *observe* — denial, like affirmation, is an act dependent on our willed activity which is naturally very ready to act. Observation is more reception than action, although we prefer to act rather than passively receive. Hence, when we have made great progress in the development of our mind and come

to dianoetical thought, we find ourselves obliged to affirm what we had first denied, because this kind of thinking makes us discover things beyond the previous limitations.

This explains the *antinomies* of human reason. Antinomies, at the moment we discover them, affect us differently, depending on our various dispositions and the degree of our intellectual power.

People of *weak intellect* as well as *immoral* people, who are little influenced by the evidence of moral principles, pass rapidly from *popular dogmatism* to *scepticism*, that is, to a total mistrust of human reason. For them, *appearances* become the rules of their practical life.

People with a great mind and a strong moral character easily become *partly sceptical* and *partly dogmatic*. They say that *anoetical* thought cannot be trusted at all but *dianoetical* thought can be totally trusted. Parmenides and his school seem to have been of this kind.

779. Parmenides did in fact divide everything people say into two categories: *truth* and *opinion* or appearance. This explains the two parts of his philosophical poem.²⁷ In the first part he dealt with ens considered dianoetically, and in the second, ens thought anoetically. He removes all trust from this way of thinking, granting it only to the first part. For him, our eyes are *blind*, and our ears *dulled*; these, and language as well, should not be given the attention they are given by the uneducated; only dianoetical ens can be admitted.²⁸ But it is excessive to consider everything presented by the senses as false. If we limit our mental judgment to affirming sensible things, it pronounces the truth and is not obliged to say that the senses present what they do not present.

That this is Parmenides' opinion we can see by examining his

²⁷ They called the first τὰ πρὸς ἀλήθειαν [Matters concerning truth] or περὶ τοῦ νοητοῦ [On what is thinkable]; the second, τὰ πρὸς δόξαν [Matters concerning opinion] or περὶ τοῦ αἰσθητοῦ [On what is perceptible to the senses].

²⁸ 'Restrain your mind from this path of investigation.
Do not let popular custom force you down this aimless way,
guided by unseeing eye, dulled ear
and speech. But judge with reason the [clever] argument
I put before you'* (vv. 53–57).

argument. He says, 'There is nothing between being and non-being; being is truth, non-being falsehood.'²⁹ But, he argues, being has nothing to do with anything that comes and goes, like the things that fall under our senses. Such things are therefore false. If this were not so, we would have to say what other philosophers have said: such things are and are not, are identical and different from themselves, a mixture of being and non-being. But this is a contradiction because between being and nothing there is nothing.³⁰ Once again, things of this kind are false appearances. For Parmenides, therefore, we see that contingency and flux were contrary to the character of ens. Hence, he accepted being wherever anything necessary was present.³¹ According to him, this being, which cannot not be, was grasped only by the mind and not by the senses.³² *Thought itself* was being, he said, beginning his argument with the essential relationship between being and thinking, and arguing to their identification.

780. Nor is the matter remedied by saying that Parmenides was discussing metaphysical truth instead of logic; the distinction of two truths is a kind of logomachy. Truth is one, and always refers to thought; it must therefore always be logical. Thus, every fact, including a feelable fact, is true relative to

²⁹ 'Come now, listen carefully to what I say and I will tell you
the only path that leads to knowledge:
One way tells us that what is cannot not be.
It is the way of persuasion and has truth for company.
The other way concerns what is not and must not be.
Such a way, I tell you, is plainly false,
for your mind cannot comprehend non-being (it cannot be),
and you cannot express it in words'* (vv. 33–40).

³⁰ 'We must say and think that being is, because being is,
but nothing is not — do not lose sight of this.
Turn your mind from this path of investigation
and from the path pursued by ignorant and uncertain mortals.
Hesitation in their hearts agitates the fluctuating mind.
Blind and deaf, stupefied, a demented brood,
they consider that being and non-being are the same
and not the same.
All that they approve follows an opposite direction'* (vv. 43–51).

³¹ 'That which is cannot not be'* (v. 35).

³² 'But judge the argument with reason'* (v. 55).

thought, whenever thought considers a fact for what it is. But if thought takes it for what it is not, the error is not in the fact but precisely in the false judgment of the thought. Even if feelable facts were not appearances but totally nothing, they would still not be false: falsehood is one thing, nothingness is another. Falsehood can apply equally to nothingness as to everything else, when our thought judges something to be different from what it is.

Nevertheless being is truth (cf. *New Essay*). But we cannot rightly infer from this that nothingness is falsehood. When we say, 'Being is truth', we are speaking about being in its essential relationship with thought. When we are talking about nothingness, being is absolutely excluded and therefore understood in a different way. Hence the statement 'Being is truth' must mean 'Being intuited by the mind is truth in so far as the mind compares things to it and sees that they all share in it.'

But if the mind judges that things share in more being or less being than they do, the mind pronounces a falsehood, not because the things themselves are false, but because the mind judges them to have a being they do not have, or removes a being they have. Truth is therefore one, but because it has two relationships (with things and the mind), we can call the first appropriately metaphysical and the second logical. However, if in the place of metaphysical truth and logical truth we substituted the *metaphysical aspect* and *logical aspect* of truth, the equivocation would be avoided. Falsehood is entirely in any mind that denies fact, that is, denies the participation or non-participation in being, proper to the thing. Hence, the phrase 'metaphysical falsehood' is totally inaccurate.

We could correctly describe falsehood in this way: 'The mind pronounces falsehood when its pronouncement does not conform to metaphysical truth.' But in this expression metaphysical truth would again be separated from logical truth, and the former would be made to precede the latter as exemplar. This would not be correct because careful consideration shows that metaphysical truth taken as exemplar of logical truth is itself logical truth. In fact, metaphysical truth is normally made to consist in a thing's participation in being, and this is totally independent of the mind. However, if the fact of a thing's participation in being [serves] as *exemplar* and *norm* for regulating our

mental judgment, does this not mean a relationship with the mind? How could the mind use an exemplar and norm that were not present to it? Hence, we see the explanation precisely why the participation of things in being is called the metaphysical truth of things: the participation stands before the mind through intuition or any other mode of knowledge. The being therefore participated in by things can be considered either *anoetically*, in which case the participation can, it seems, stand on its own, without a relationship with a mind, or *dianoetically*, that is, considered more deeply and completely. In this case, being, when participated in by things, does not stand on its own but involves an essential relationship with a mind. Indeed, the word 'participation' supposes a comparison between that which participates and that which is participated, and all comparisons are made by the mind.

It may be objected that, if metaphysical truth involves a relationship with the mind, this truth is still different from logical truth, of which metaphysical truth is the norm and exemplar. I reply: there can be no error in the first apprehension of things, as is universally acknowledged by philosophers, including the master of the Schools, Aristotle. He excluded all possibility of error in the non-complex knowledge (as he called it) of simple or indivisible things. If we want to call this knowledge true because it is a metaphysical truth, it is such solely because it presents what it presents.

There can be no falsehood here. However, if this knowledge is overridden by the judgment which says that the knowledge presents what it does not present, then falsehood would enter in, but only in the mind. Consequently, if we want to call the *truth* of the first apprehension metaphysical and distinguish it from the truth of the judgment we make about it and call it logical truth, I can see no objection. However, two things must be firmly maintained:

1. The first truth itself that is attributed to apprehension does not consist in things, that is, in their participation in being, but in the apprehension by the mind.
2. In this species of truth that some would call metaphysical, there neither is nor can be falsehood. Hence, falsehood is totally logical.

All this is sufficient for us to conclude that calling sensible and

changing things false, as some philosophers have done, is impropriety of language.

781. But I have conceded too much by admitting that we can call 'metaphysical truth' the participation of things in being, a participation apprehended by the mind and not yet judged. Nevertheless, I have used careful language in doing so. In fact, an illusion easily arises here. Why is it said that the first apprehension is true and cannot be false? What is the origin of this opinion? — If we examine the process by which our thought came to this opinion, we will easily see that the first apprehension is supposed true because it corresponds faithfully to things themselves. But this supposition is false, which explains my earlier statement that the first apprehension can be called true solely 'because it presents what it presents'. In fact, this apprehension of things makes us know their existence but not their intimate nature; being is given us in the intuition and can be only what it is. On the other hand, what we apprehend by means of our senses makes known not so much the nature of things but the effects and signs produced in us by agents different from us. Hence, the first apprehension is totally true, not because it corresponds to the things but because it presents what it presents. Indeed, the question itself, 'Does the first apprehension of things correspond perfectly to them?', involves reflection; it does not pertain to the first apprehension and therefore not to metaphysical truth if it is classed as this; it pertains to logical truth, that is, to the truth of our judgment, not of the things.

Once again therefore metaphysical truth, taken in this sense of the correspondence between the first apprehension and things, is a logical truth, 'the logical truth of the first apprehension' — Here there can be falsehood. In fact, we judge falsely if we judge that the objects we apprehend conform totally to the things. But if we judge that the objects truly are, not in so far as they are the things but in so far as they are purely objects, and that they participate in being, we judge truly. Metaphysical truth therefore, if we wish to retain the name, is reduced solely to the participation by mental objects in being. We are again in the order of intelligence; we are dealing with mental objects and with participation in being intuited by the mind. Hence, there is no metaphysical truth of things in so far as these are independent of the mind, but we must at most restrict this phrase to

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being that is intuited by the mind and to the objects that participate in being. Furthermore, this truth would not be, if it were not known or at least could not be known by the mind. Being is truth in so far as it is used to impart knowledge of the things apprehended in feeling, and known things are true in so far as they participate in the being through which they are known.

782. What therefore is the force of the thought of those philosophers who claim that changing and sensible things are false? They argue from a comparison between these things and being, and say that because the things lack being's characteristics, they are false. But an analysis of this way of reasoning shows that basically the falsehood they assert is totally logical, because they are attributing the falsehood to thought not to sensible things. However, such things either participate or do not participate in being. If they do not participate in it, they are nothing and therefore are neither true nor false because nothing has no quality. If however they are not nothing, they are certainly true because they participate in being. They can be called false only because we suppose that people take them for what they are not, that is, for more than what they are, by attributing to them a greater participation in being than they have. In this sense they can certainly be called false. But the truly false part is the judgment commonly made by human beings. We are dealing with a purely logical falsehood, not a metaphysical falsehood. Parmenides confirms this: in the fragments we have of his poem he inveighs against 'the ignorance of mortals who wander about in ambiguity. Hesitation in their hearts agitates the fluctuating mind. Blind, deaf and stupefied, they are a demented brood, who think that being, non-being and the different are the same.'³³

§6. *The objectivity of being relative to the anoetical and
dianoetical modes of conceiving it*

783. We know that being, through its essence, is object. From this we necessarily deduce that it is never divided from any

³³ Vv. 43–51, quoted in fn. 30 above.

mind, but through its very essence has relationships with a mind; object-being expresses precisely the presence of being to a mind.

Being is present to the mind whether conceived anoetically or dianoetically. It is therefore object in both these modes: in the first, the objectivity is solely as *means to knowledge* and not as *something known*; in the second, the objectivity is understood in the thing known.

Consequently, nothing can be thought in any mode whatsoever without objectivity being involved, at least in the first mode, as means of knowledge. This confirms that being is essentially object-being as well as essentially thinkable. Many modern philosophers introduce a pernicious equivocation when they call objective truth that which refers solely to reality; this is one of the principal sources of the errors that contaminate Hegelian philosophy [*App.*, no. 3]. Their manner of speaking originates from certain opinions of uneducated people, which they take as tacitly understood in their arguments and do not expressly indicate or prove them. The only value of these opinions is the value of prejudices. For example, such thinkers take the following proposition as tacitly understood: 'Reality is the equivalent of existence; in other words, there is nothing but the real.'

784. Thus G. M. Bertini defines philosophy as 'knowledge of what is real', making the word 'real' synonymous with 'something'.³⁴ Yet he says that 'philosophy starts from the *pure concept* of the real and consists entirely in meditating on this concept'.³⁵ He fails to note that the *concept of the real* is one thing, the *real* is another, and that if these were not two entities they would not be expressed with two words. He also calls philosophy 'the knowledge of universal reality', and elsewhere calls this concept

³⁴ Sig. Bertini cannot continue expressing himself in this way because it is contrary to the common reason of human beings, which has invented language. Shortly afterwards, when speaking about sceptics, he says: 'They must either deny or doubt or affirm the *reality* of something' (*Idea d'una Filosofia della vita*, Turin, 1850, vol. 1, p. 24). Here, reality is distinct from something; a something is supposed of which both reality and non-reality can be predicated. This something is therefore clearly ens which can be only real or also ideal, and therefore the real is not the same as something.

³⁵ *Idea d'una Filosofia della vita*, cc. 3–4.

of reality 'concept of most undetermined reality'.³⁶ Reality however is never universal, but its concept is, and it is never undetermined. Bertini himself acknowledges the principle that 'the objective existence of undetermined reality is impossible'³⁷ (although here again we find the expression 'objective existence' wrongly applied). He also says that philosophy investigates questions concerning the real, 'whether it is one or many, finite or infinite, necessary or contingent, temporary or eternal'. But all these questions pertain to the *concept*, to the ideal order of reality, not to reality itself separate from the idea.

Again, he says that 'if something is thought, it exists' because 'if the totally mutable real is in perpetual flux, as Heraclitus imagined, the illusory appearance and falsified truth of human understanding are nevertheless always *something* existing in an objective, absolute mode'.³⁸ He says this to refute the idealists, but he is clearly taking a purely ideal object as *something*. He is therefore re-establishing the true sense of the word 'object', which concerns both the real and the ideal; in fact, as I will explain later, it concerns in the first place the ideal. However, because he had first called *something* 'real', he now calls 'real concept' that 'which implies the existence of its own object', where again he limits the word 'object' to mean the real.

By 'real concept' he understands 'a concept which clearly implies the existence of its own object'. This, according to him, is the concept of something because a concept is itself something.³⁹ Certainly, a concept is something but we can ask whether it is something ideal or *real* or sometimes one and sometimes the other. However, because a concept is purely an idea, we must say that we are dealing with something ideal, not real. Hence, Sig. Bertini himself, beginning as he says from the *concept of most undetermined real*, begins in fact, although unaware of doing so, from the idea of undetermined being, as I do. In other words, he begins from ideal being and not from *real* being as he supposes in his misuse of words.

³⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 27.

³⁷ *Ibid.*, c. 4.

³⁸ *Ibid.*, c. 4.

³⁹ *Ibid.*, c. 4.

His efforts however to find a beginning are futile because they show more clearly the impossibility of such an attempt.

By comparing two places in his book, we will see how this philosopher had fallen into contradiction.

785. In one place he says that he will not take as certain the concepts and principles with which he begins to reason but consider them as pure suppositions and with them discover the existence of God, and after arguing to this real, infinite being, he will have found the light which will justify the principles and means he has used.

He says that we

possess many concepts and many principles which support us and guide us in our meditation. Of course, we do not know the legitimacy of these supports nor their ability to give us a good result. But because we have a solid and indubitable point to which they can be applied, we can use them in our attempt to attain truth. When we have come to the realm of truth and acknowledged our presence there, we will find that the means and paths we followed are verified and justified.

The philosophising spirit can 1. accept as tacitly understood the principle that *the objective existence of the undetermined real is impossible*, 2. take for granted the principle of contradiction and all the other principles presupposed in all reasoning, and 3. avail itself of the concept of limit and of the concepts of life, perfection, entity, intelligence, activity, love, freedom, etc. If it does all this, it sees that, by means of a series of reflections, which it would be superfluous to repeat here, it is endowed with a direct, immanent intuition of the Infinite, of absolute life that is God. When this point has been reached, it finds itself in the region of light, truth and certainty. It can therefore acknowledge as true and legitimate the concepts, principles, reflections that led it there. When the spirit begins to philosophise, it necessarily finds itself in the world of *opinion* which, for it, can be either a truth or an illusion. But after a short examination of this world, it comes upon the world of *knowledge* and truth, and is now able to judge about itself, its concepts, principles and the whole of its previous process.⁴⁰

⁴⁰ *Idea d'una Filosofia della vita*, c. 12.

Here, Bertini puts the objection whether this process does not beg the question: 'How can the results you have obtained enjoy greater validity and certainty than the conditions and principles from which you began? And if these *principles*, if the *intellectual faculties* themselves were suspected of error, why cannot this suspicion be applied to all their results?' He replies that the *principles* and *intellective faculties* applied for the purpose of coming to the reality of God are *material conditions*, just as the intellectual faculties, the corporeal senses, the reality and precision of shapes and instruments are material conditions for the geometer who is proving a theorem: the efficacy of the proofs does not depend on the legitimacy of each of those things. But Bertini is confusing *material conditions* with *formal conditions*. If the question were about purely intellectual faculties, sensory organs, shapes and corporeal instruments, certainly the discussion would be about material conditions. But we cannot in any way give this name to ideas and to the principles of reason, for example, to the principle of contradiction, from which we argue, and which he himself uses to prove the infinite real. There can be no belief in the existence of the infinite real, if previously there is no belief in the efficacy of the principle of contradiction and of the other principles we use in this case.

786. I will quote here the fine simile used by Sig. Bertini to demonstrate that the material conditions of the proof do not need prior proof but can be taken simply as appearances without diminishing the validity of the proof. I quote it to show precisely that, although valid for *material conditions*, it is not valid for formal conditions, which are the principles of reasoning, to which however Sig. Bertini applies it. His reasoning is:

Suppose I doubt the existence of bodies and consider their appearances as pure subjective illusions similar to those in dreams or in delirium, and in this state I come across a book which contains a rigorous and satisfactory proof of the existence of bodies (for the moment we suppose that such a proof is possible). Although the pages and the letters are purely an illusion, I persevere with the illusion and continue to read and follow the author to the conclusion of his proof, the validity of which does not depend in any way on the reality of the book itself. When I reach the end,

both the external bodies and the book will, for me, have been transformed into real objects.⁴¹

It is clear that the material book and the signs of the letters used for writing it are material conditions. They simply stimulate and direct thought to see the proof. The materiality of the book and the coloured signs it contains direct me to the principles of reasoning, with which I interiorly form or intuit the proof. The book and the writing are therefore a material condition, but the principles of reasoning and their connection are not the material conditions of the proof — they are the proof itself, they are formal principles from which the proof results. The simile cannot therefore be used to show that the principles of reasoning are simply material conditions. The truth of the proof cannot be totally independent of the truthfulness of these conditions and the materiality of the book.

But Sig. Bertini, who in this part of his work classes ‘the principle of contradiction and all the other principles presupposed in reasoning’ among material conditions, in another part distinguishes between *logical principles* and the *material conditions* of the proof, while maintaining that the idea of the infinite is the sole logical principle. He says:

The logical principle from which we deduce the reality of the infinite is its idea, which is clearly and directly recognised as identical to its reality. The material conditions, without which this deduction, or better this recognition, cannot be made, are 1. the existence of a mind which intuitively the infinite; 2. the mobility of this mind, that is, its aptitude to move from what it actually, determinedly and clearly thinks to that which it thinks solely in an intuitive and obscure way.⁴²

Even here he is arguing to the existence of something infinite and real by starting from an *idea*, not from a *reality*. And before coming to the demonstration of the infinite real, he applies the principle of identity to that idea, stating that the idea is clearly and directly identical with its reality. Hence, before believing in the existence of what is real, he is obliged to

⁴¹ *Ibid.*

⁴² *Ibid.*, c. 6, p. 50.

believe in the existence of the idea, that this idea is something, not nothing. Moreover, he argues that if this idea is something, it must be real because he sees (or believes he sees) that it would be contradictory if it were the idea of the infinite real but not the infinite real itself. The principle of contradiction is therefore present in the order of his thought. But Sig. Bertini will not say that the idea of the infinite real, the principle of identity and the principle of contradiction are purely material conditions on which the demonstration does not depend. He does not say this because it is clear (at least just as clear as his demonstration) that the demonstration either has no force or, if it has, receives all its force from those ideal principles that are woven into it or are tacitly understood by the thinker or expressed by words. Hence, he is constrained to contradict himself when he says elsewhere that the principle of contradiction and all the other principles presupposed in every reasoning receive their force of proof from the existence of the infinite real which they themselves demonstrate — the vicious circle is obvious. Consequently, in different ways he is obliged, contrary to his will, to begin the process of reasoning from the ideal order and to believe in the truthfulness of this order before believing in the existence of something real. Indeed he cannot believe in the existence of the real except on the evidence of the idea. He is thus obliged to say that ‘the logical principle from which the reality of the infinite is deduced is the idea of this reality’.

787. We must also note that language itself, which contains the common sense of human beings, obliges him to admit that the *reality of the infinite* is deduced (which means that relative to our mind it is not direct), and deduced from its *idea* as from a logical principle. We have here an undeniable distinction between the reality of the infinite and its idea from which it is deduced. Relative to our mind, language keeps these two things (idea and reality of the infinite) distinct, even though Sig. Bertini says that the idea of the infinite ‘is clearly and directly recognised as identical to its reality’. The mind in fact cannot recognise this idea as identical unless it has already thought the idea as separate from the reality. Also, if the mind can think these two things as separate, we can ask which of the two does it think first. Sig. Bertini himself indirectly admits that the idea is

thought first because it gives us both the reality as deduced from it, and the idea as principle of the deduction.

This is indeed so true that we can think the idea of the infinite without thinking the existence of infinite reality, and the existence of God needs to be demonstrated but not the idea of God, because no one denies the idea. Hence, there are atheists who deny the existence of God but not the idea of God. They could not deny the real existence of infinite being if they did not have, and admit having, the idea of the God they deny. It is well known, even without reference to atheists, that antiquity itself asked whether the idea of the infinite implied its real existence. Some great minds, like St. Anselm, Descartes and others, said it did, while other equally powerful minds, like St. Thomas Aquinas, said it did not. But merely asking the question shows that the human mind thinks the idea of God separately and differently from his real existence, which is confirmed by the possibility of opposite answers. Our mind then is conditioned by these two ways of knowing: by intuition, whose term is idea, and by the judgment with which the mind affirms reality. Hence, the modes of knowledge are diverse; the acts of the spirit are also diverse. Idea and reality are known separately, and their order requires that the former is known first and then the latter; we cannot say a thing exists of which we do not have the idea.

It is clear that if reality is contained in the idea of the real infinite, it can be contained only implicitly and virtually. This explains how the above question is possible. If the reality were contained explicitly, with the same clarity that makes us aware that we have the idea, we would be aware of having the divine reality present, and no one would deny perceiving this divine reality, just as no one denies intuiting idea, or seeing the sun. But because many do deny this reality (I am certainly among their number, and I think my teaching is the common teaching), Sig. Bertini exaggerates when he says that the identity of the idea and the infinite reality are 'clearly and directly' acknowledged.

788. But Sig. Bertini is directly denying a truth that on nearly every page of his book he has indirectly admitted and tacitly understood. He denies that we can attain knowledge of an infinite real without a principle of obvious certainty. He also

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denies that the only idea we need is that which is the source of the logical principles endowed with an obvious certainty, a certainty precisely through which these principles are capable of demonstrating that an infinite real exists. Without this truth he could not reason, nor could he demonstrate his principle that the idea of the infinite includes the existence of the reality of the infinite, and that when we have found this reality, we have found the light that shows truth and certainty. None of this would in fact be true if what is found in the idea and is deduced from ideal principles were not truth.

Sig. Bertini begins from the idea of 'something': 'This concept is itself something.'⁴³ We must note that the *concept* itself of something is certainly something, but something understood in a different sense; it is not the 'something' of which it is a concept. When we say 'concept of something', this 'something' is an undetermined entity and therefore merely ideal, whereas when we say that the concept itself is something, we are talking about a particular, real something, something therefore determined, where the word 'something' changes its meaning. Hence, there is something captious and sophistic in Sig. Bertini's next words: 'similar concepts implying the reality of their own object, because they are their own object considered under a particular aspect.'⁴⁴ The words are captious because:

788a. 1. A concept is never its own object but is the object itself intuited by the mind, an ideal object. This definition is valid for all concepts, not simply for those Sig. Bertini calls real.

2. If 'concept' meant the intuition itself and not the ideal object, all concepts would be real because intuition is always a real act. But if it means the intuited object, all concepts are ideal.

3. Some concepts certainly imply a reality, but this implication of a reality means simply that we can argue to the reality. In order to infer the existence of the reality from the concepts, reasoning must be used as a means, and reasoning requires logical principles. Hence, it is not true that this truth is directly intuited in the concept.

4. The existing reality to which we argue from a concept

⁴³ *Ibid.*, c. 4, p. 25.

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 25.

is never the concept itself, whether understood as *intuition* or *object*. It is not the reality of intuition because intuition does not know itself, nor is it its own object; it is known only by means of a reflection. Nor is it the object because the object is ideal and therefore not the reality to which we argue from the object. Furthermore, if we say that the object is real, we must distinguish between its reality and its idea. The concept is purely the idea of the real, whether the real exists or not. If the real exists, it adds nothing to its concept. It is therefore not known by means of a concept but by the other means I mentioned: by feeling, apprehension, affirmation, predication, etc. These are modes of knowing, which suppose the concept of the real thing; they neither constitute nor add to nor subtract from its concept.

788b. 5. When Sig. Bertini says that ‘the concept of *something* is itself *something*’, he takes this second *something* to mean a real something (we see here that for him a concept is the *intuition* of something, not something as intuited). The intuited something, precisely because it is undetermined, is purely ideal, that is, most universal, whereas the something of the concept is particular, determined, real. Hence, the conceived something is in the concept of the something in the way that the real is in the ideal, the determined in the undetermined, the particular in the universal; it is there simply as knowable and nothing more. Thus, when he says that his concept is something real, he cannot induce the real existence of this concept solely from the concept of something — he must introduce awareness and direct perception of the concept. In fact, how does he know that his concept exists? Could he know this if he had the concept of something without the awareness of the concept? The awareness of the concept, which would attest for him the reality of the concept, would be simply his internal perception of it. But he could not internally perceive the concept or know that it is an entity, that it is something, and something real, without first having the idea of ens and universal entity.

788c. Hence, in order to have knowledge of the real, he needs two things, not one. He needs 1. the concept of ens in all its universality, which is ideal, but if this is all he has, he can deduce only ideality, and 2. the feeling of himself and therefore of his

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act of knowledge or intuition. When he has both these means of knowledge, he asks what is the concept he feels, and replies: it is a particular something, a particular felt entity, that is, a real entity, because he already knows what the entity is, that it is the something in its universality. Now, when he says that this concept is a something, he makes a judgment; he asserts, he affirms. If he affirmed nothing, he would never know that his concept was something real, because the real is known only by means of affirmation. But this affirmation cannot be made unless it is preceded in our minds by the idea, that is, by the universal information of the thing we affirm as felt and hence as particular. The affirmation supposes the object and pronounces the object's reality. When it abstracts from the object, it has a *felt* term but not an *understood* term; this term is given to it because it term is the idea. This object given to it, and the affirmed felt term added to the object constitute together the intellective perception of the real. The real something therefore that the concept is, is not the object of the concept of something but is a feeling, of which the object is predicated, that is, it is the essence or entity intuited in the concept.

788d. 6. It is not true therefore that there are concepts which 'are themselves the proper object considered in a particular respect'. We can consider the universal, undetermined object as much as we like in a particular respect, but this alone will never make it real. In fact, we can add as many determinations as we want to what is ideal but these will never make it real.

789. If we want to find the causes why Sig. Bertini believes that the principle of truth and certainty is found solely in infinite, real being, refusing to acknowledge that it is in ideal being, the answer, we will see, are the following two prejudices, which he probably took from the works of Vincenzo Gioberti:

1. He considered ideal being as something subjective and therefore lacking the absoluteness required by truth. This is clear because he understood the concept of something solely as an act of the human spirit and, if it is an act, it is certainly *real*. On the other hand, if he had taken the concept as an intuited object, he would have seen that it is essentially ideal. But he did not stop here. Incoherent in another way, he made the object of the concept a real object, but called it *totally undetermined*

real,⁴⁵ as if there could be an undetermined real. But when he says that 'the objective existence of the undetermined real is impossible',⁴⁶ he falls into a new logomachy, because an impossible real is certainly not real. We also see that he confuses the ideal object with the subjective faculties by placing the faculties of the spirit and the principles of reasoning among the *material conditions* of the proof. The result is the contradiction we have seen: he is arguing to the existence of infinite real being from what is given by simple ideas. He believes in this existence because he believes in the truth of these ideas. He then says, 'When this point had been reached' (where he knew the infinite real), 'he found himself in the region of light, truth and certainty. He could now acknowledge as true and legitimate the concepts, principles and reflections which had led him there'.⁴⁷

789a. But it is impossible to think that our mind has uncovered the principle of truth simply by demonstrating the existence of the infinite real. On the contrary, I said that we discovered the principle only by starting from an idea and using ideal principles in the demonstration. Surely, the truths that 'a thing cannot at the same time be and not be', 'two things equal to a third are equal to each other' and 'two plus two make four' (all of which are ideal truths) have greater evidence than the truth that 'the infinite real is contained in the idea of the infinite real'? No one denies or can deny the first truths, but many deny and can deny the second. If we say we begin with the supposition that ideal principles are true but the supposition changes into a certain truth only after we have demonstrated that the infinite real exists, I say that as long as ideal principles are in doubt, everything must be in doubt, including the existence of the infinite real. For example, if we are uncertain that a thing cannot be and not be at the same time, we must be equally uncertain whether the idea is and is not at the same time, and whether the infinite real is and is not at the same time. Hence, the clear certainty of the principle of contradiction must be admitted before we can admit the existence of the infinite real, not vice versa. The certainty of this second truth

⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 27.

⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 230.

⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 230.

is conditioned and preceded by the first; the first is not dependent on the second.

789b. 2. Bertini confused the concepts of logical and metaphysical truth. I have already shown that strictly speaking these are not two truths, because every truth always reduces to logical truth. Sig. Bertini however supposes (and this is an illusion of Hegel shared by Gioberti) that truth is present wherever a reality corresponds to an idea, and that any idea which has no corresponding reality cannot be considered true. He is speaking of objective truth, and thus makes objectivity synonymous with reality, as I said above. But the truth which human thought seeks is the opposite of falsehood, and falsehood comes from all ideas whether something real corresponds to them or not. In fact, Sig. Bertini himself says that when we have found the existence of the infinite real we can know that the concepts of the principles that we first supposed, are true and legitimate, because if they were false, then God himself, whose existence has been acknowledged, would be false.⁴⁸ But if these concepts and principles are not false for those who already know God's existence, they are true in themselves, and were true even before we knew God's existence — unless of course we wish to say that because they were not true *per se*, they were made true through an act of God's will. But I do not think that Sig. Bertini would ever say this. On the other hand, if they are true in themselves by their own nature and not by an act of the divine will, why cannot we see their truthfulness? Do we need to invoke the holiness of God who will not deceive us? Ideal principles are certainly of a perfect simplicity and present themselves in their entirety to our mind. Our mind therefore sees them in their full nature without our having to turn to something else in order to know that their nature is totally true. Moreover, many of these *concepts* are not fully realised when they relate to finite things, and some are not fully realisable; for example, the concept of human is never exhausted no matter how many human individuals are born. Yet this concept seems true also to Sig. Bertini, after God's existence has been acknowledged, even though there is no reality corresponding to the concept; the only reality there is, is infinitely inadequate compared to its capacity, a

⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, c. 7, p. 78.

reality which is neither increased nor diminished by our acknowledgement or non-acknowledgement of God's existence.

790. What then does the truthfulness of ideas and ideal principles consist in?

If I considered an idea or concept and saw in it, or could deduce from it, the existence of something real that in fact does not exist, the idea would be false because it would lead me into error. But ideas never deceive; they are never false but true or, to speak more appropriately, they are truth. For example, Sig. Bertini says that only the idea of the infinite real shows in itself the reality of the infinite; other ideas do not. Hence, he concludes that the idea of the infinite real is the principle of truth and certainty because it alone has *objective truth*, as he calls it. But how does he know that other ideas do not show in themselves the existence of some corresponding real thing? Other ideas, considered in themselves, certainly do not tell him that they necessarily have something real corresponding to them. He therefore puts his faith in them, and acknowledges them as truthful. He thus admits their truthfulness, but then contradicts himself by attacking them, as if they were suspect and had to be justified. He uses a truth, which they themselves give him, in order to doubt that they are telling the truth. If they told him that the real corresponding to them necessarily exists, and then he found that the real does not exist or its existence is doubtful, he could say they are either untruthful or uncertain. But because they tell him what is, and he believes them, how does he say that they do not give a truth which is certain? Surely, he believes in the idea of the infinite real because, according to him, he sees this real in the idea? If he believes in this idea which affirms or which gives him a reason to affirm, he must also believe in the other ideas which either deny or give him a reason for denying. A person can be telling the truth whether affirming or denying something. Truthfulness consists in this: when something is affirmed, the thing is what it is affirmed to be, and when something is denied, it is not what is denied. The question concerning the principle of truth and certainty discussed by sceptics deals only with this kind of truth and not any other. It does not concern what was called metaphysical truth, which rested on the existence of something real

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corresponding to the idea. The real *must* exist in order that a judgment that affirms its existence be true, not in order that an idea that does not affirm its existence be true.

Objective truth therefore is simply the truth of ideas, whether the real corresponding to them exists or not. This truth of ideas is always present when an ideal object stands before the mind. The opposite of this truth is the impossible, the absurd. Whenever contradiction is explicit or implicit, the ideal object does not exist before the mind,⁴⁹ and if we believe it exists, we are deluded. Here again, falsehood consists in our judgment: we judge we have an object before our mind when in fact we do not have it; all we have are contradictory elements that can constitute several objects but never a single object.

791. But the common prejudice, and what I must especially refute in this chapter, is the view that the true object of the mind is the real, not the ideal. On the contrary, the opposite is true: only the ideal is *per se* object of the mind. The real (except the divine real when revealed) is not and cannot be *per se* object of the mind. It becomes the mind's object only through the ideal, when it is thought as an unnecessary complement of the ideal. Hence, it is thought in and through the ideal; this is intellectual perception. I have frequently demonstrated the truth of what I am saying and will briefly repeat the demonstration here.

We obviously do not know that something real truly subsists unless our thought has first pronounced that it subsists. We therefore know the subsistence through a judgment, not through a simple idea. It is also clear that we cannot judge that a thing subsists if we have no information or any idea about it. For example, I cannot affirm that a human being subsists unless I have at least some knowledge of what a human being is. But the means by which I know the thing whose subsistence I know is the idea. Therefore the only way I can know what a human being is, is through the idea of such a being. However the idea of a human being does not, by itself, let me know the subsistence of such a being. To know this, I need to pronounce the judgment that the thing whose idea I have subsists, that a human being subsists who is the reality

⁴⁹ *Logica*, [1066].

corresponding to the idea I have of such a being. The reason is obvious: the human being I am thinking in the idea is the ideal human being, not the real human being. The ideal, possible, essential human being, no matter what we call such a being, is the object that I must have before my mind before pronouncing its subsistence. Consequently, as long as I have the ideal object and nothing else before my mind, I know the essence of the thing in question but not its subsistence — this object alone is not sufficient for me to know the subsistence. But when I pronounce my judgment on its subsistence, my judgment refers to the object which I already knew in the idea and of which I predicate the subsistence. Hence, this judgment which has subsistence as its term could not be made if my mind had not first had the object about which the judgment is made. The object is therefore given in the idea and is the essence of the thing. The judgment which predicates the object's subsistence does not in any way create the object; it presupposes it standing before it. Hence, the subsistence or the reality is not the object but what is predicated of the object, and because predicated of the object, itself becomes object; it is therefore understood, that is, perceived intellectually as a complement of the object. The judgment with which the real is pronounced and known (this judgment is called intellectual perception) simply presents the subsistence to the mind, in the preceding object, as an attribute, a predicate, a complement of the object. This operation makes the subsistence knowable because the subsistence now becomes an appurtenance of the object that is knowable *per se*. Consequently, before the subsistence appears before the mind as essence that continues and is completed in its realisation (this essence is the object given in the idea), it is not intelligible, although it can be apprehended in feeling.

791a. Here a difficulty may arise: if we say that the mind joins the subsistence to the essence, we are supposing that the mind knows the subsistence before uniting it to the essence. In this case the subsistence must be the object of the mind, otherwise the mind could not unite it to the essence.

This difficulty, carefully examined, has no force. The whole problem consists in our seeing how the human spirit comes to know the subsistence. To know it, a mental operation of

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varying duration is required (and I have shown that this is the case). Prior to the completion of this operation, subsistence certainly cannot be known. Hence, it is not contradictory that the human spirit, before knowing subsistence, has certain other forces that act on the subsistence which is not yet known but simply apprehended by feeling, and that the last effect of these natural operations prior to the knowledge is the knowledge itself. This is exactly what Aristotle supposes when he introduced his acting intellect as a power that made its phantasms intelligible by the two operations of illumination and abstraction.⁵⁰ Clearly, when this intellect acted on its phantasms, it had not yet completed its operations and could not know them because knowledge has to be their last effect. Yet no one would find it strange that the soul had a force that could act on its unknown phantasms and, while acting, make them known. On the contrary, this must happen in every system because if knowledge of something requires acts, there is no knowledge until these acts are produced. But these acts are done naturally and lead the soul in a hidden and obscure way, as it were, to the light. Certainly a light illuminating these operations is never absent; there is light in the essence intuited in the idea, and in the essence the possible reality is implicit. Hence, as soon as this reality, when united to the essence, is presented to the soul, the soul explicitly acknowledges the reality as a manifestation of what was first implicit in the ideal object.

792. We can conclude as follows:

1. The only object given *per se* is ideal being, or essence.
2. Subsistence, that is, the real, is not object *per se* (with exception always of the divine real, which I exclude from the discussion) and therefore is not *per se* intelligible.
3. For the real to become intelligible, it needs to be presented to the mind in union with and dependent on the object, that is, dependent on the essence intuited in the idea; it is presented as complement and actuation of this essence.
4. The expression 'objective truth' is inappropriate and false if used to mean that the idea has its opposite and corresponding reality. It can mean only the truth of the object, and the object of the mind is the essence, that is, ideal being.

⁵⁰ Cf. *NE*, 2: 494–498.

Thus, the truth of the object means that it is a true object of the mind, and therefore contains no contradiction, because everything that contains no contradiction is an object of the mind.

5. The question 'whether something real exists' must not be confused with the principle of truth and certainty. The latter is a more general question, the former is a question of application. Once we possess the principle of truth and certainty present in the idea, we can deal with the question 'whether there is something real', but not vice versa. A judgment is required for knowing the real, but a judgment cannot be made without ideas. Hence, the first truth for human beings is in ideas, and all other ideas logically depend on this first truth.

§7. *What we know implicitly in intuited being.*
Deontological reasoning

793. Nobody would deny that consequences are virtually contained in principles or that acts are potentially contained in potency or that an algebraic formula, for example, can express all the relationships of the numbers that can be substituted for the letters.

In the world of ideas, this fact of the implicitness of one concept in another cannot be doubted by common sense. However, as soon as we engage in philosophical reflection, the fact appears so mysterious and insoluble that many people, in their desperation to explain it, take the very easy way out and deny it.

It is not my wish to deny facts; I can never deny them, no matter how obscure they may appear. I am prepared to attempt to explain them, and if unsuccessful, willingly admit my ignorance.

I have unhesitatingly acknowledged that the essence of being, an essence naturally known to us, has a *relationship* with the mind such that there would be no essence of being without a mind to intuit it. The reason is that the essence *per se*, detached from every other consideration and determination, neither affirms nor denies anything to be subsistent; it is simply being in its possibility, and being in its possibility is being in so far as purely understood, that is, present to a mind.

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794. The fact that being has this act by which it is present in a mind is a first fact which has nothing prior to it, because there is nothing prior to being. I am pleased to see that Sig. Bertini has acknowledged this. It is true that when he states this fact, he believes he is talking about real, infinite ens. However, because he deduces this infinite real from the idea, he is presupposing the idea. Even if he thinks he intuites the real in the idea, he is by that very fact distinguishing the idea from the infinite real which he intuites in the idea.

The infinite, present to me, cannot be a false Infinite, that is, purely *apparent*. It appears to me as it is; *it is before me as it is in itself*. This formula, which seems contradictory, expresses the primal fact of intelligence and at the same time shows its infallibility.

This fact is certainly very difficult to grasp. How can Ens be perceived in its absolute being by my mind? 'To be perceived by my mind' means 'to exist to the mind', that is, 'to have an existence relative to my mind'. How can this contradiction be avoided? I admit my ignorance but this ignorance is no reason why I should deny the fact of the intellectual perception of Ens, and of real entia in general. Intellectual perception consists essentially in our apprehending things in their being. This contradiction is the hidden source of all the difficulties that philosophers encountered when explaining the knowledge we have of things different from us, particularly external things.⁵¹

The fact acknowledged with these words certainly does not pertain to the ideal infinite in the case of the human mind, precisely because the fact is 'the primal fact of intelligence'. But knowledge of the existence of an infinite real is not the primal fact; we do not know a real thing exists unless we first judge it subsistent. And we cannot judge it subsistent if we do not first have the idea of it.

The *primal fact* is thus knowledge of the essence of being, without determinations. The following is therefore valid: 'Being is present to the mind as *pure* being, that is, without the mind', which is equivalent to Sig. Bertini's statement: 'Being is present to me in so far as it is *in se*'. These statements contain no

⁵¹ *Idea d'una Filosofia della vita*, c. 12, p. 235.

contradiction: *to have an existence relative to the mind* does not contradict *to have an absolute existence in se*, as Signor Bertini thinks, nor can we extract the twofold nature of being from them. They demonstrate that 'one, identical being has two forms necessary to its essence. In the first form it is present to minds; in the second it is absolutely *in se*, independently of the mind'.⁵² Hence, identity is in being, diversity in determinations.

795. Here I must clear up an equivocation. The absolute existence *in se* of being must be distinguished according to the two ways of conceiving and thinking the existence: the absolute existence *in se* can be thought anoetically (which is an imperfect way) and dianoetically.

In fact natural intuition sees being *in se* because it does not include the mind intuiting it. Hence being, intuited in this way, does not reveal to intuition its essential relationship with the mind. Reflection then takes place and becomes aware that intuited being has an essential relationship with mind, that is, that it would not be, unless there were a mind to which it was present. However, this presence of being to the mind does not prevent the mind from seeing it *in se* by means of intuition. It therefore correctly *deduces* and in no way *intuits* that precisely because this being shows itself to intuition as absolutely being, the being must have more than what appears to intuition and is necessary for its subsistence. Granted that there is necessarily an appurtenance of subsistence, it follows that there is all the subsistence that is hidden.

Relative to intuition therefore, being appears as being *in se*, as absolutely being (this is the anoetical way of conceiving it), but

⁵² To be independently of the mind means either the *form of subsistence* or something that pertains to *subsistence*. An appurtenance of subsistence is everything that the mind abstracts from subsistence and considers as an element of it; for example, 'the abstract subject' is an appurtenance of subsistence. Hence, the expression 'to be *in se*' has two meanings: it means that which subsists and that which is abstracted from being that subsists in so far as it subsists. — Moreover, the mind can consider being *in se* because it can consider it in so far as it is independently of the mind. The essence of being has therefore two forms: 1. with one form it is *necessarily* in the mind; 2. with the other it is independently of the mind, but even with this second form it *can* be present to the mind by means of the first form.

relative to subsequent reflection it clearly appears as an *apparent contradiction*, for the following reasons:

1. The being that appeared to intuition as absolutely being involves an essential relationship to a mind, a relationship of objectivity, although the relationship is hidden from intuition.

2. This relationship with the mind, far from making the being subjective, as if it were a product or modification of the mind, makes it known as absolutely being.

3. However the being that appears to intuition lacks, as pure essence of being, determination and as such cannot exist *in se*; it has to have a subjectivity and activity of its own, truly distinct from that of the mind intuiting it.

The apparent contradiction therefore consists in this: being appears to intuition as absolutely being, but subsequent reflection judges that this being, because undetermined, cannot subsist *in se* (subjectively) but only in the mind intuiting it.

The apparent contradiction does not therefore lie in the fact that being has an existence relative to the mind and also an existence *in se*, and that these existences are identical; indeed, knowledge consists in this: the mind knows ens *in se*. Hence, being's relationship of objectivity with the mind is knowledge of its absolute existence *in se*, a knowledge seen however in the object. The true contradiction is the following: while we know through intuition that being is absolutely and *in se* and necessarily so (otherwise being would not be), we do not find in purely intuited being the conditions necessary for this absolute existence *in se* with its own subjectivity and activity.

We need to remedy this deficiency and reconcile the truth present in the two following apprehensions of the mind: 1. intuited being absolutely is, and 2. intuited being cannot absolutely be with a subjective existence and activity because it is undetermined.

These two propositions cannot be denied. Reason reconciles them by saying that, although intuited being, which exists absolutely, lacks the conditions for it to have an absolute subjective and active existence, this existence is not excluded and denied. Therefore it must be hidden, and intuition must be considered a limited faculty that does not apprehend everything in being. Granted these conditions, whatever intuition inserts in us

remains totally reconciled with whatever reflection, applied to intuited being, places in us.

796. If we consider this kind of reasoning, which I used to prove *a priori* the existence of God (I gave the same proof in *A New Essay*, but in different words),⁵³ we see that the argument moves from what is to what must be. It is a kind of *deontological* reasoning.

Deontological reasoning occupies an immense field in the branches of knowledge. It is therefore worthwhile my explaining its nature and effectiveness. I have shown how it rests on what is virtual in our cognitions and that it is a faculty of thought which actually makes knowable, at least partly, what is virtually and implicitly known.

Knowing that something absolutely is is not the same as knowing the conditions of its absolute existence. In the primal intuition we know that being is, through its very essence, but we are totally ignorant of the conditions of this existence. When reflection begins, it discovers some of the conditions and, as I have said, argues in this way: 'Being is, absolutely. But it would not be without these conditions. Therefore these conditions also are.' What we must do here is investigate how reflection finds these conditions necessary for the absolute existence of being seen in intuition.

797. The conditions are not seen by intuition or reflection but are argued to, which is something quite different. We do not know directly that they are, but understand that they must be, and so conclude that they are.

This explains fully the hidden reasoning of reflection. Being, intuited by the human mind, has an essential relationship with

⁵³ *NE*, 3: 1456–1460. — The demonstration of the existence of God *a priori*, which I presented as a corollary of ideology, seemed new to some people. However, its foundation is the thought of all antiquity and a thought natural to human beings. Something divine was always seen in ideas, because human beings, never lacking ideas, have the facility to rise, through instinct as it were, to the thought of God. Plato attributes to the divine element in human beings, that is, to idea, the necessity they have of admitting that Gods, divinity, exist: 'My friend, because you confess that there are Gods, we are dealing with a certain natural relationship with God that impels you to revere what is innate and natural in you and causes you to judge that it exists'* (*De Legibus*, bk. 10).

the human mind, but the mind is clearly not intuited being, just as intuited being is not the mind: intuited being is undetermined, the mind determined; intuited being is object, the mind subject, etc. Hence, the mind knows through its intimate consciousness that it intuits, but is not the being it intuits. Now if the only existence possessed by intuited being were that through which it is present to the human mind, it would not absolutely be, such as it in fact appears to intuition. But because *ens* is and cannot not be, it must have an existence that is subjective and not purely relative to the human mind. On the contrary, it is through the relationship with the mind that the absolute existence of *ens* is known. Hence, relative existence to a mind, far from destroying absolute existence, establishes it, witnesses to it and makes it knowable. Although this is true for a mind, it is not, strictly speaking, true for the human mind, which differs from and is the opposite of intuited being: the human mind is particular and contingent, whereas intuited being is universal, necessary and eternal. Thus, there must be a relationship of being with a mind that does not differ from being and is not human, but is necessary and eternal, like being. Being, therefore, 1. must have an existence independent of the human mind and of every mind separate from it; it must therefore also be real, not purely ideal, as it appears to the human mind; 2. this real being, which absolutely is, must have *intelligence*, and not be only intelligible. All this however remains hidden from our human intuition and direct perception.

797a. Beginning therefore from being which *absolutely is*, reasoning brings us to *absolute being*.⁵⁴

This transition made by the mind, as it reasons from being that *absolutely is* to absolute being, could not be made if the foundations of its reasoning were not virtually contained in being that absolutely is, and is given in intuition. These foundations are, as it were, the springboard from which the mind projects itself into what it neither intuits nor perceives but finds, as if by a kind of natural divination.

This jumping-off point is given and virtually known in

⁵⁴ The difference between *absolute being* and *what absolutely is* is similar to the difference I have shown between *absolute good* and what has the *absolute notion of good*, in *PE*, 58–61.

intuited being because 'when we know being, we know non-being at the same time, and we know that the latter is excluded by the former. Hence, whenever we find something that contradicts known being, we cannot think that this thing is together with being. This is the principle of contradiction'. As soon as the mind knows being through intuition, it virtually excludes everything contradictory to being by means of that knowledge. If it admitted this contradictory element, it would be denying intuited being. But it cannot deny intuited being because this is present to it in great clarity; it therefore denies what is the opposite of intuited being. Hence, the mind, guided by this necessary principle, denies that the only existence being has is relative to the mind; it considers this contradictory to the being it intuits as absolutely being. In this way, it argues to the reality of being which it neither intuits nor perceives. The principle of contradiction, virtually included in being, is therefore the foundation on which the mind bases itself in order to argue to the reality of absolute being as a necessary condition of ideal being.

Reflection acts in the same way. It sees that intuited being has an essential objectivity and therefore an essential relationship with a mind, and that through this relationship being is knowable as absolutely being. At the same time it understands that without a mind intrinsic to being and, like being, eternal, the relationship could not be essential to being, could not be valid. Reflection concludes therefore that in being, in so far as real and hidden from the direct apprehension of the human mind, there must be a mind, and that this mind cannot be human or be any other mind which might differ from intuited being, or be finite or contingent. Reflection comes to know therefore that essential being is necessarily intelligent, for without this condition it cannot be ideal, directly-intuited being and, as such, undeniable. Consequently, to admit ideal being (and we must admit it) and simultaneously deny its intelligence or its reality would be a contradiction because it would no longer be true that being absolutely is, as seen in intuition.

798. The ideal being of intuition therefore contains implicitly its conditions and we must admit these, just as we admit ideal being itself. Intuition does not distinguish the conditions; reflection makes them explicit and distinct by analysing the

content of ideal being and excluding everything that contradicts it, as in the two propositions: 'Ideal being is present only to the human mind' and 'Ideal being has no essential relationship with a mind'. If these two propositions are false, then contradictory propositions are true. Thus the mind finds that *absolute being* is necessary, if being is to absolutely be. This appears in intuition.

Being is given therefore in intuition. Everything that contradicts this being is false, and everything that contradicts what is contradictory to this being is true. These are the two principles that reason uses to pass from the knowledge of intuited being to the knowledge of something else not in intuited being. But the knowledge of something else not in intuited being is said to be contained in it *implicitly*, *virtually* or *potentially*, because the knowledge is drawn from it by the use of the above two principles. And reflection finds these two principles implicit in intuited being. If being could not be, it would be a contradiction and there is no contradiction in intuited being because contradiction can be neither thought nor in any way be. Hence, if intuited being is necessary, anything contradicting it is false for the same reason. Also for the same reason, anything contradicting what is contradictory to being is true. In this reasoning the mind is guided always by the light of being; it reads all this in being.

Note however: if intuited being on which I reflect with my mind leads me to deny what contradicts being and affirm what contradicts that which contradicts being, and if as a result intuited being leads me to make many denials and affirmations about things which do not fall within intuition, and I do so because the things contradict or harmonise with intuited being, we must conclude as follows:

1. Everything pertaining to being is not contained in the object-being of natural intuition; if it were, everything would be actually known.

2. We can pass from being which we know in intuition to the knowledge of other things which pertain to being, because by knowing being we also know whether other things pertain to or contradict it.

This is exactly what I said: being, naturally intuited by us, contains some cognitions virtually and implicitly.

Moreover, these cognitions, extracted from being and

therefore virtually included in it, constitute all the development of human knowledge. Hence, we can say that in the last analysis the faculty of human reason is simply 'the faculty for completing the primal intuition' or 'the faculty for knowing what pertains to being but is not given in the intuition'.

799. But we need to discuss still further this distinction between being given in intuition and what is lacking to this being; we arrive at this distinction by the use our mind makes of intuited being (hence we deduce that the distinction is virtually contained in intuited being).

We must first admit as evident the proposition that 'everything we know is always *being* because, granted it is something, there is nothing that does not pertain to being. Nothing and denials are also known with being and with an operation of the spirit that is the denial of being'.

Secondly, we must admit as a result of what I have said that 'the being of intuition appears to intuition as one and most simple', so that intuition distinguishes no plurality in it. But whenever reflection investigates a contradiction of being, it finds many things contradicting being. In this case, our knowledge of being begins to multiply precisely because now we no longer know being but know what being contradicts and excludes from itself because contradictory to it. This is the first way by which our knowledge of being is enriched. But once we know the things that contradict being and are denied in it, our mind investigates that which contradicts the contradictions. When these are found by a double negative, which now becomes an affirmative, they are things that must be affirmed of being. Thus, our knowledge of being is again enriched not only by negative information but also by positive, distinct information.

799a. To do this the human mind needs only being, because what is negative is known through what is positive, and being is what is positive. Therefore everything denied about being is known through being.

It is true that to do this, and particularly to carry out these kinds of reasoning in a distinct, philosophical way, the human mind must have free movement and have been enriched beforehand by other cognitions. But all this is simply a *material condition*. The very existence of the human mind is itself a material condition, as Sig. Bertini acutely observed. Similarly, the faculty

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of denying what is contrary to being is also a material condition. Feeling is another material condition: the mind, using intellectual perception and abstraction, takes from feeling both the particular elements that it denies to being as contrary to being and the elements that harmonise with being. Another material condition is language or a sequence of signs, which must first be perceived entities; the mind needs these signs to fix and limit its attention when, as it were, it dissects the object of thought.

But I repeat: these conditions do not constitute or form knowledge or the object of knowledge, and therefore have no part in the evident truth of the object. Nor do we need to assure ourselves of the object by first showing that our faculties are not mistaken, because the object is evident *per se* and not through our faculties. Indeed, it is precisely because the object we know is itself clearly true that our faculties demonstrate their efficacy for making us know what is true. Hence the clarity of the object demonstrates the goodness of the faculties, which reveal the object to us and not vice versa. This is also true with regards to our existence, which is not known and certain *per se* but revealed to us by the very clear truth of being that is given to us to intuit.

Among material conditions I have included a certain number of perceptions (to which the signs of language reduce). Such perceptions, we must note, are material conditions not in so far as they are formed by and in us, but *in so far as they precede* the reasoning with which we either deny to being what is contrary to it or grant what harmonises with it.

I must therefore investigate how perception is formed through the power implicit in intuited being.

800. We all accept that *feeling*, or what occurs in feeling, is. This is an undeniable fact. To accept that feeling, or what occurs in feeling, is, means to perceive feeling intellectually. In this operation in which we accept feeling and what occurs in it, we do not say that feeling, any feeling whatsoever, is the whole of being. On the contrary, whatever this feeling, proper to our nature, is, whatever the felt element is, we can readily know that it does not embrace the whole of being; being extends beyond it. Hence in perception, reflection observes a distinction between being and the particular feeling of which being is predicated. Therefore an *affirmation* and a *negation* are

simultaneously implicit in perception: we *affirm* that the felt element is, and at the same time we *deny* that the felt element is the act of being in all its extension. The inclusion of the negation is so true that we attribute being not to only one felt element but to very many and very diverse felt elements, and we know that we can attribute it also to many more. Hence, although this act of being is one, we attribute it to innumerable felt elements; it is common to all of them, and precisely for this reason does not constitute those felt elements, which differ from each other. However, one felt element differs in nature from another *ex toto*, as the Scholastics say, and I say, in its total self. Thus the act of being that I attribute to the felt elements does not constitute their individual nature, it does not in any way constitute them. It is a condition through which they are, and are constituted; it is their necessary dependence on being, an *essential relationship* they have with being. If this relationship is removed, they cease to be. Hence, although they cannot be conceived without being, they are not identical with being, nor is being identical with them. This explains the origin of our knowledge of what is real and contingent and distinct from purely ideal being. Because the being we attribute to felt elements does not constitute any of them, it seems to be on its own and simple, free from every contingent reality, and is called ideal so as to distinguish it and contrast it with the felt elements. But because the felt elements need this act of being on which they depend, although not constituted by it, they are not called simply beings but real beings and, if being is abstracted, *simply real*, and in this state of separation from being we see that they are inconceivable and impossible. They are therefore known only in a kind of indirect way, in the way that we know what is contradictory. This can also explain the twelfth characteristic of being, namely, that being is the *antecedent beginning* of real things; in other words, being precedes real things but they depend on it as on their initiation.

Surely therefore, we must not separate felt elements from being and ask what they are, and what feeling is? If feeling and felt elements are something, they are, and if they are, how can they be separated from being? If we separate them from being, we annihilate them, and the problem now concerns nothing, not felt elements. Therefore we cannot ask what are felt

elements separated from being without falling into contradiction. Hence, if we are obliged to talk about felt elements united with being, everything already said remains true, that felt elements depend on being but being does not constitute what they are. Being extends far beyond them, to all felt elements, whereas one felt element does not extend to another. Consequently, although felt elements depend on being, being is antecedent to them, and is not their form but rather the form of their forms. This is the being that our mind sees in intuition before it perceives felt elements; later it discovers that this being is the antecedent act (the act of the act) of all felt elements. Being therefore does two things simultaneously: it makes the felt elements to be, and makes them intelligible to the mind. I normally express this ontological fact as 'identical being is simultaneously ideal and real, the antecedent act of things and of their knowability'.

801. Here someone will make the usual objection which I have already refuted many times: 'If you unite the felt element with ideal being, you must first have the felt element separate, otherwise you could not join it and perceive it. But if you have it separate, you either know it or do not know it. If you know it, you no longer need to perceive it and unite it to being in order to know it. If you do not know it, it exists even before united to being. Therefore, it is not correct to say that it is absurd to think it separate from being.'⁵⁵

The paralogism in this objection lies in the last consequence and in a previous supposition. To say that the felt element, if present to us without our knowing it, is not united to being would suppose that the element is joined only in our mind. But the felt element can and must be united to being, although this union is not formed in and by us; it can be and undoubtedly is united to being; otherwise, relative to the eternal mind that creates it, it would not be. Hence, it is not impossible that the felt element, relative to a particular ens, is without being, of which it is an act. We do in fact conceive it as separate in brute animals, and because we conceive it as separate, we say that they have feeling but not intelligence. However, although we can conceive it as separate relative to brute animals, we cannot conceive it as

⁵⁵ Cf. *Introduzione alla Filosofia: Sistema filosofico*, 43–50.

separate from that universal, common act of being by which it simultaneously is and is intelligible to the eternal mind and to every mind that conceives it. We conceive animal feeling in brute animals but they do not know the feeling because they lack the intelligence that makes them see their feeling united to that being which is the antecedent, universal act. To see feeling joined to being, as we do, is the same as conceiving it. Relative to us who think it therefore, it is united, but relative to brute animals it is separate. Feeling must be united to being for it to absolutely be, but it need not have a relationship to all contingent things as the condition of its existence. This condition, relative to contingent things, can remain hidden, which means that it can relatively not be. Thus, the essential condition of feeling in brute animals remains totally hidden from them, and in the case of corporeal matter there is totally lacking that completion of being that is called feeling.

801a. Consequently, we see that even if human beings had feeling separate from the being that simultaneously makes them be and makes them intelligible, this feeling would not, as a result, be absolutely separate from being. But the supposition that human beings first have feeling separate from being and then unite it and thus perceive it is false. All the feeling they have is perceived through nature, as we saw in *Psychology*.⁵⁶ It is therefore always joined to the act of being which constitutes the object of intuition. If anyone asked why do I say, 'Human beings unite feeling with being' and call this first operation of the soul 'primal synthesis' or 'perception', I would answer as follows. Although we always perceive intellectually the feeling we experience, and although this feeling can never, in us, be separate from the act of being, as that which is known *per se*, nevertheless the act of being (the light and form of intelligence) stands present before the human soul, prior to the soul's reception of many particular, accidental feelings. Because these feelings come to us who already have the intuition of being, they are not considered necessary to being, which was present to us without them. They therefore seem to be entities separate from being and, as it were, coming from outside. But the fact is that as soon as we have these feelings, as soon as they arise in us, they are

⁵⁶ *PSY*, 1: 247–428.

immediately perceived, if not with a conscious attention then certainly with an unconscious, primal perception by which we intellectually perceive everything to which our feeling extends. Hence, when I speak about the primal synthesis, the primal judgment, of perception, I am speaking about an operation that is carried out naturally, instantaneously and contemporaneously with the existence of new feelings. The fact that we have a new feeling and have perceived it intellectually is altogether a single act to which we apply analysis and abstraction.

802. From all this we have the following results:

1. Feeling is never absolutely separate from being.
2. Feeling is never separate from being relative to us.
3. If feeling is, it is through being, because a contradiction is implied if feeling is but does not have being, meaning that it both is and is not.
4. This being through which feeling is, is a more universal act than feeling itself. It is an act through which all things that are, are, and is not therefore any contingent thing, although all things depend on it, and are, by means of it.
5. It is *per se* intelligible, and as such, light of the mind through which the mind understands things. This being (light of the mind) is identical with the being that is the antecedent act of things, the act through which things are, although it is not the things themselves. This is clearly the case because the mind conceives being as having being in an absolute mode and not as relative to the mind. Hence, what the mind intuits or conceives in being is precisely the act of universal being through which all things that are, are.
6. In addition to all this, we must note that whatever is said about any feeling whatsoever can also be said about the smallest part of a feeling, and about every quality the mind can see in a feeling. If each smallest part or quality is, it is so through being, so that being penetrates all parts and qualities and makes them be, for without being they clearly are not. Being is therefore apt for making known all things and everything in them; all this is always with and through being from which it receives act. Nevertheless, the act of being through which things are, is not the things, although things are inseparable from it. As I have already explained, the act is universal and common to everything, is one and inseparable,

whereas things are many and particular, such that none of them enters into another in any way.

803. I am describing the fact, and the fact, when certain, as I believe it is, [cannot be disputed]. Nevertheless, I will deal with the very specious argument that can be brought against it.

This argument, which presents itself immediately to the mind, is the following: 'Things are either being or not being. If they are not being, being differs from them. How then can we know things by means of what is different from them? Moreover, if being differs from things (this is proved in speech when we distinguish one thing from another), they have an entity proper to them that makes them an abstraction made from being. If on the other hand they are being itself, they will all be knowable *per se*, and nothing different from them will be needed to make them subsist, to make them known.'

First, the act of being is one and universal, but things are many and particular. Therefore things are certainly not being. It is pointless to deal with the absurdities that could result from the hypothesis that things are being; we would be dealing with something that is obviously false. We must also bear in mind the fact discussed above. It states two things simultaneously: 1. things lacking being are nothing; saying that they are conceived or subsist as something separate from being is contradictory; 2. when they are united to being, only then does the mind distinguish them from being, but is unable to separate them from it. Hence when in being, they differ from being, from which they receive that they are something; when separated from being, they are nothing.

803a. But to this, someone may reply, 'When contingent things are united to being in this way and therefore are, and are distinct from being, what are they if not being itself?'

I answer that they are not *being itself* but nevertheless are being (entia, entities). When I say 'being itself', I mean the universal act through which all things without exception are, as I have often said. But when I say that things are being, I understand 'being' to be a particular term of being in which the action of being finishes. There is no contradiction in that the terms are many but the act of being is one. They are called beings precisely as particular terms of the action of being, because a term participates in the nature of the act that finishes in the term.

[803–803a]

Consequently, being, as universal act, is called initial being in contrast to its terms. When that being is conceived with its terms it is called terminated or determined being.

This is not the place to investigate how many terms there are of the act of being, and which terms are necessary to the act and which contingent. It is sufficient for us to see clearly that the universal act of being, as it appears to natural human intuition, is pure act and does not show us the terms in which it finishes. In perceived feeling we find only some of these terms because to perceive feeling intellectually means exactly the same as finding these terms. Thus, just as the initiation of being, the pure undetermined act, is given by natural *intuition*, so the term of being is given by *perception*. This is the true, specific difference between the two operations. For this reason, I said above that perception completes intuition because being is always what is known through one or other of these. If however we still doubted that the natural object of knowledge is initial being (as I have often demonstrated), I would not need to deal with the question, that is, whether being, without its terms, is the object of intuition. It is sufficient that human beings think it as such; no one denies this, not even those who tell us that this thought is carried out through a subsequent abstraction. For the moment therefore let this be the case, and if it is the case, then the pure act of being, the act totally common to all things that are, is precisely what I have discussed and dealt with in the above arguments.

804. We have then the following results:

1. Contingent things are not separate from the most common act of being, nor can be thought separate from it.
2. This act common to everything does not constitute what is proper to each. What is proper to each and makes each to be what it is, is a different term of that act which is most common to all things, and is therefore a different thing from the act. Consequently, something different from being must be admitted in so far as being is pure, most common act and, in my opinion, is the object of intuition. However, this thing, different from being as pure act, is itself also being, in the sense that it is a term of the action of being and a completion of being.

This term is *virtually* in undetermined being. This is clearly the case because the nature of the terms of an act [depends] on the nature of the act itself, just as in the nature of a potency the

acts are predetermined to what each potency can do. If the reason why being can have this or that term comes from the nature of being considered as undetermined act, all its terms are virtually and potentially in it; in other words, we have the explanation for all the terms. Hence:

1. When something contradictory is presented to our mind, we immediately understand that it cannot be numbered among the terms of being, because being cannot essentially contradict itself.

2. Whenever something is presented free from all contradiction, it is immediately recognised as a possible term.

3. Finally, nature, which gives us feelings, simultaneously makes us perceive them as a real term in being, because feelings are purely a revelation of these terms of the act of being that stood before us without them. As I said, the feeling that takes place in anyone who intuitively being, appears naturally to them as it exists. This means precisely that it appears to them as a term of being which they intuit.

If we therefore recall how we come to know actually and explicitly what is implicitly and virtually in pure, undetermined, initial being, we see, from what has so far been said, that there are three ways: by simple affirmation or by negation or by negation of a negation.

The first way, simple affirmation, is given us by nature when nature provides us as intelligent beings with a feeling. We receive the feeling as a term of being, as something existing; in fact intelligence cannot receive a feeling in any other way.

In the second way, negation, we compare with being something that involves contradiction, and recognise that it is excluded by being. We can create this contradictory figment of our mind by means of the faculty of negation and affirmation, and take its matter from perceptions and abstractions. By this means we find a great many propositions capable of enriching human knowledge.

In the third way, negation of a negation, we find that the propositions contradicting being are false. We then infer from this the truth of the propositions which contradict the first contradictory propositions.

§8. *The form and matter of thought*

805. Being, as first universal act, contains the power and reason that define its possible terms; in other words, the terms are virtually contained in it: 'A thing is said to be virtually contained in another when the thing can naturally terminate with its action in the other.'

Hence, the terms of being, when they exist distinct and explicit either to the mind as possible or to the feeling as real, are conceived as *content* relative to being, and being is conceived as *container*.

The terms are also called *matter* of knowledge, and being is called *form*. The terms, on their own and separate from being, cannot exist or be known; they are, and are recognised, through being. Hence, it is being that posits them in the double act of their intelligibility and reality, and 'that which immediately posits a thing in its act' is precisely called *form*.

All things that are have a most common act: the act of being. They also have a determined act, in virtue of which each is what it is, separate from all other things. That which determines the thing to this act is normally called the *form of the thing* (either proximate or specific form). But being, itself, is either the *first universal, most common form* or, as I called it, the *form of forms*, or finally, not the form of this or that thing, but simply *form*.

From this we see:

1. How human thought is distinguished into *formal* thought (also called 'logic') and full, *materiated* thought.

Formal thought is that in which pure being is used without its terms. Full, materiated thought is when the concepts with which being is interwoven are concepts of being with its terms, not of being without its terms.

2. We also see how formal thought is naturally given to us and constitutes the principle of human reasoning. Natural intuition, the act which generates human intelligence, is precisely an act of formal thought. This gives us the origin of this way of thinking proper to us.

806. No demonstration is necessary to show that the primal intuition is an act of formal thought because its object, as we have seen, is initial, most formal being. However, further

investigation is necessary to see whether the primal intuition contains the origin of all the other acts of formal thought we carry out. Moreover, if intuition makes such thought possible in all its extension, we also need to investigate whether it is the source of the faculty of all formal, logical reasonings. The truth will be found by careful attention to the meaning of *initial being*.

By 'initial being' I mean the act of being conceived prior to every determination, to every term and to every mode of being. All these things are excluded from initial being or rather are hidden in it and totally invisible. As long as our mind does not see any terms or determinations or modes (or any other similar word, if there be any), then clearly the mind cannot make a judgment about them or determine whether they are appropriate to being or not. This explains the human faculty of abstraction, which pertains to formal thought and constitutes a very large part of this thought. Abstraction simply takes an element or something, whatever it may be, of an ens, and considers it as an ens. For example, when we abstract a line and a surface from solid space, we are simply considering the line and surface as entia. In this operation our mind certainly attributes the first, initial act of being to the line and surface, but does not ask, 'Can the line and surface subsist?', that is, the mind does not in any way compare the line and surface with being in order to acknowledge that they are its true terms, which it would have to do if it wanted to know whether they can subsist. Instead, just as the mind first thought totally undetermined being and did not ask whether such being could subsist to itself and *in se*, so it thinks the line and surface without asking whether they can subsist *in se* or of themselves. However, when reflection takes place much later and asks the same question, it answers negatively. After this negative response and with further reflection the mind gathers together and re-orders all its thoughts, and reasons as follows: a line and surface cannot subsist *in se* because they are undetermined entities, yet I think them. I think them as undetermined beings (we must think being) in the same way I think totally undetermined being. But thought is no more than the apprehension of a thing in so far as it absolutely is. Therefore, undetermined being, like a line and surface, absolutely is, before my mind,

although I know that it is not *in se*. Hence, it can absolutely be in two modes: either before a foreign mind that conceives it, or *in se*. Being, when absolutely undetermined, is in the first mode, not the second, and no contradiction is involved: undetermined being is therefore ideal not real. We call this ideal mode abstract when we have come to it through the action called abstraction. But if it is given in this mode by nature, it is called only ideal. However, what is abstract as such is always formal and ideal. The mind intuits formal being prior to every acquired perception of real beings and, after these perceptions, carries out abstraction, which is a return to the primal ideal mode.

Similarly, because the first act of being devoid of its terms is the object of intuition, we see how it is possible for us to have not only the faculty for abstracts but also for mental beings of any kind. Whatever the image, whatever the feeling or the more or less abstract determination of being, whatever the grouping of these, we think and conceive them as entia, because this is the nature of conception or thought in apprehending ens. When we do this, we do not judge that these entia subsist; we omit this judgment and give them the first, initial act of being (which means we think them). At this point, this first act of being, whose terms are not naturally seen, receives any term whatsoever from the mind through supposition. The mind can do this because being contains all terms virtually, and this results in the presumption that everything can be its term, nothing excluded. When we conceive anything at all as a term of ens, we take it as a term through a certain natural presupposition, as I said, and in virtue of a natural assent. In this primal judgment with which we first pronounce that anything whatsoever is (the first thought of the thing consists in this), we see the confused thing as something very general rather than with precise, particular knowledge. Because a thing is presented to us by a word, or joined to a sign or some image or a group of signs and images, we do not, at first sight, examine in detail what is behind the word or other signs, nor can we. We have to begin by saying that it is, so that later we can investigate what it is. The first thought of the thing, by which we admit that the thing is, is followed by the application of reflection to see whether the thing is truly a term of being, as has been supposed.

807. This investigation can have four results. We judge that the supposed term of being is:

1. either truly such, which is always the case when the term is given by perception; or
2. is a determination of being, but not, strictly speaking, a final term, as in the case of all abstracts; or
3. is a figment of our imagination. The figment could be a term of being that lacks proof of its subsistence, as when our imagination puts before our thought something that it has made up and contains no contradiction. But because it has a contingent nature, it is not accompanied by proof of its existence, as would be, for example, its constant action on our sensory organs; or finally

4. is a thought which involves a contradiction. This obviously cannot be a term or a determination of being, although in our first thought we supposed it was. Indeed, we could not even speak about the contradiction and say in any way that it is not being, if we did not first think it (the contradiction), and to think it is an admission that it is. Consequently, in *Logica* I said that we think and speak about a contradiction not because it truly is, but because we suppose that it is. Moreover, because a contradiction totally is not, our mind could not suppose that it is, without having to think it *in se* and think the explicit mode in which it is not thinkable. Our mind therefore thinks a contradiction in an implicit mode, using the word or sign that expresses it as an entity called contradiction, but does not examine what the entity is. If, however, in order to think a contradiction in any way whatsoever, we had to examine what the entity called contradiction is, we would never think it because in itself it is unthinkable. We therefore think it not as a contradiction but as an entity called contradiction and do not know what it is. Thus, what is unthinkable becomes thinkable by replacing it with a thinkable sign and a relationship of this sign which is the power to indicate something, and this power itself is also thinkable. The relationship refers to a thing that, because we do not know whether it is thinkable or not, we assume by means of a supposition to be thinkable. We could not do this if the act of being attributed to things by thinking them were an ultimate act and not simply an initial, termless act, because an ultimate act means we can think an ens only with its terms. Hence we can

never think a mental ens or an abstract or absurd ens where we posit simple determinations instead of terms or invent terms or there are in fact no terms, as in absurdities. In all these things we can always think the act of being, supposing the things to be as terms, although they are not. We can do this because in the initial act of being the terms are potentially thought and therefore we have the faculty to suppose them; on the other hand, in complete being, endowed with its terms, we cannot suppose anything. Consequently, if complete being were the object of natural intuition, the nature of human thought would be inexplicable.

808. From this we also understand the following. Because being can be added to simple determinations, which do not constitute a final term of being but need to be determined themselves, formal thought does not consist solely in totally undetermined being, that is, the being of intuition; it is interwoven with concepts of varying indetermination, and is made formal, that is, more or less void of matter, precisely by this indetermination.

Finally, from what has been said, we can see that *formal thought* is by its nature imperfect thought. This fact demonstrates one of the *essential limitations of human intelligence*. The reason for this limitation is: 'The human mind cannot produce any knowledge for itself if a foreign cause does not offer it the matter (the terms) of the knowledge', as I said in *Theodicy* (85–116). Moreover, many of these terms are not given to the mind by nature.

809. Although formal thought is limited, it provides a very noble service. From it we draw a great part of the philosophical sciences, as we shall see elsewhere.

However, we must not conclude from the limitation of this kind of thought that it is *per se* mistaken, as if it took its form from the nature of the subject. It does indeed receive limitation from the human subject, or rather its limitation is a limitation of the human subject. But there is a big difference between knowing an object in a limited way and knowing it falsely or erroneously.

Formal thought would contain error if we were obliged to consider the limited object as unlimited, and consider formal thought as full, materiased thought. We can know a limited object and at the same time know, or can know, that it is limited;

we can also know that our formal thought is thought devoid of matter, a thought of being only in its principle, not in its term. But here, our mind makes no error because everything we know is true.

All I need show therefore is that we are in fact aware of this limitation of formal thought, and when aware of it, we cannot be led into error. But it is clear that we are aware of it because if we were not, we could not distinguish the formal manner of thought from the materiated manner, and know that the former is limited and imperfect relative to the latter. Sceptics argue that the limitation of formal thought deceives us because it is limited. I answer: 'If you know that it is limited, it no longer deceives. And even if it deceives (which is not the case), you can protect yourself against the deception as soon as you know it deceives — no one can deceive a person who knows he is being deceived by words.'

The whole case consists in demonstrating that we have not only the faculty of formal thought but also the faculty of knowing the limits of this thought. We may ask how we become aware of these limits and where we obtain the rule for knowing them. The answer is initial being, devoid of terms, the source of formal thought. This results from what was said in the previous chapter.

Initial being is certainly devoid of its terms and therefore of what is called the matter of knowledge. This is the origin of *formal thought*, which uses only more or less universal or undetermined concepts. But it is also true that in the nature of pure, most formal being, all its possible terms are virtually comprised ([804]). I have used this virtuality of being to distinguish three ways of extracting the virtual content of pure, undetermined being. I said the second way was 'to compare with being a thing that involves contradicting being'. Thus, if we compare with initial being as it is in our mind the concept of a being that is not only before our mind but is also to itself (real being), we find it contradictory. We therefore conclude that initial being, entirely devoid of content, of matter (this lack constitutes formal thought), can certainly be intuited and thought by a mind but cannot exist to itself. Thus, in undetermined being that appears to the mind, we find implicit the conditions according to which being, or a being, is to itself. We have in fact seen that it is proper to the mind to intuit being, not being relative to our

mind but being that absolutely is, that is, our mind intuits being not as subsistent but as possible to subsist. Hence, if it intuits the possibility of being or possible being, it must simultaneously see the conditions according to which being is possible, one of which is that being has its terms or is fully determined. Thus, in the intuition of being we see that both this initial being and every other being that is not fully determined cannot subsist in reality, and hence that the object of formal thought is limited.

The purely formal being of intuition therefore does not deceive us because it has within itself the capacity to show us the necessity of its terms in order that it be independent of all intelligence foreign to it.

Fully undetermined being, in the way it appears to us independently of every perception, is also called 'most formal', but through it and through abstraction, there are many other formal concepts, all of which place non-fully determined entia before our mind. Formal thought is interwoven with all these concepts, which I will classify later.

810. I have shown that formal thought does not necessarily deceive us. I must now indicate some of its properties.

The first two result from what has been said:

1. Every entity appearing to our mind and lacking a determination contains implicitly and virtually all the possible determinations of which it is susceptible. These determinations are not seen beforehand as distinct by the intuitions of the mind, precisely because they are implicit and virtual.

2. To distinguish them, reflection is needed, and also the comparison between any particular determination and the undetermined entity present to intelligence.

Note: this determination can be given by sense, in which case it is a true term of being and the origin of perception. It can also be an undetermined, formal entity, in which case it is not a final term but a simple, abstract determination.

For greater clarity, I will use the word 'term' from now on to indicate the final term of being, and use 'determination' in a more general sense to mean all the entities or qualities that reduce the indetermination of being. I will therefore distinguish determinations into two kinds: formal or *logical determinations*, and *real determinations* or terms of being in the proper sense.

811. Leaving aside real determinations and concerning ourselves solely with logical determinations, we see that these can determine a concept that is more undetermined than they are. In this case they can be called a *content* of the concept in so far as the less extended is contained in the more extended, as species in genus.

Furthermore, logical determinations appear as possible to the mind in themselves, but when compared with the concept that we wish to determine by their means, the concept cannot sometimes receive them because it contradicts them. A question therefore arises: can this concept receive such a determination or not? If we suppose that it cannot receive it, we will normally say that the determination is impossible. But this causes a new difficulty: if the determination is impossible, how can it be thought, because the essential object of intelligence is what is possible, and intelligence cannot think the impossible? The answer is that the determination is not impossible *in se* and hence can be thought. Granted that it can be thought, it is easy to understand how we can deny the possibility of applying it to determine a concept which it does not fit; after all, the impossible is thought by denying the possible.

812. But to know whether a concept can or cannot receive a determination, we must admit, as I said, the intervention of reflection, which may find the determination in the virtuality of the concept ([810]). As long as reflection has not completed this action, we cannot be certain whether some particular determination is comprised in the concept or not. Hence, our mind has illusions: it is sometimes quick to suppose that certain concepts contain determinations which they do not truly contain. This happens principally when the being, seen in the undetermined concept, is given neither by intuition nor by nature, but is contrived, that is, composed by mental operations. For example, the concept of a *circle* is not given by the senses because they cannot apprehend a continuous curvature: a polygon of very many, very short sides appears to them as a circle. Nor is this concept given by intuition, to which only the presence of being is given. The mind has done all this of itself, by *supposing* that the change of direction of the line describing the circle is continuous. The concept of a circle is a determination of the concept of a line, and people generally accept that the concept of

[811–812]

a line admits this determination. Indeed, because there is no doubt about this, it is granted without any investigation. But some people may not think so, and this in fact is my own opinion, at least in the case of real circles and lines. To resolve the problem, we must see whether the determination 'continuous curvature' is present in the virtuality of the concept of a line. Let us suppose that it is not present. In this case the concept of a circle would conceal not just an error but an absurdity, that is, an impossibility, and an absolute not a relative impossibility. Although we cannot truly think this kind of impossibility because the object of our thought is the possible, we can think the impossibility implicitly by thinking of the elements which in themselves are possible, and mistakenly add an impossible connection. Thus, in thinking the circle, the elements are the line and the change of direction (according to a certain law), which are possible and therefore thinkable; the connection is the continuity of the change. The continuity is supposed possible not because it is seen such by the mind but because of the faculty we have to *suppose* it such, before examining whether it is such. Because we are endowed with possible being and this being is detached from its terms, we are not obliged by nature to see the connection between being and its terms. Hence, as I have just said, we have the faculty to suppose the connection if we choose.

813. I said that very many of the sciences are a product of formal thought. If we divide all that is knowable into two large classes, which can appropriately be called *histories* and *sciences*, all sciences are a work of formal thought, while histories are the work of materiased thought.

All the principles of reasoning are formal. Logic is the science of formal thought. In mathematics, especially algebra, there are forms of thought which, when combined in different ways, lead to other forms, which themselves are sought precisely for their usefulness when applied to realities.

814. The letters of the alphabet used in algebra express the formal concept of number. This concept does not in itself demonstrate any particular number but contains them all virtually. Each letter is the totally undetermined concept of number. But when two letters are joined (for example, with the plus sign, as in $a+b$), the mind is already beginning to add determinations. It begins a mental operation with which it gradually makes

explicit some of the particular numbers virtually understood in the totally undetermined concept of number, that is, the particular numbers it needs for some purpose. Thus the expression $a+b$ does not in itself determine the two letters to mean a particular number but demonstrates that:

1. Neither a nor b is taken as a simple, totally undetermined concept of number but as particular numbers not yet known.
2. Because there are two letters, two particular numbers are understood.
3. Because the two letters are connected by the plus sign, the particular numbers, whatever they are, represented by one letter, are added to the particular numbers represented by the other letter.
4. Nevertheless, both letters represent a particular number whatever it might be.

If we now introduce another determination, for example, $a+b=10$, one of the two letters represents a particular number whatever it might be, but for every particular number represented by this letter, the other letter represents a particular number which is the difference between the sum and the number supposed as given for the first letter, that is, $b=10-a$.

If we then add a new determination, this determination, joined to the previous determination, can determine the value of all the letters involved. For example, if we had $ab=25$, we would acknowledge that the value for both a and b must be 5, because if the two quantities, when added, are to make 10, and when multiplied, make 25, a must equal 5, and b equal 5 (whether both numbers are taken positively or negatively). Thus, when the totally undetermined concept of number is compared with various determinations, it shows what was virtually and implicitly contained in it. In the example given:

1. The possibility of many particular numbers was universally drawn from the concept of totally undetermined number. The possibility is seen in the concept, because totally undetermined number is simply possible number.
2. Granted two numbers, we saw that it was possible to add them together, that is, form a single number.
3. We also saw the possibility of a particular number constituted by the sum of the two numbers. The mind, following

upon perception and using abstraction, fixed itself on the number 10, taking it as the sum of the two previous numbers.

4. Granted all this, we deduced that if one of the two numbers indicated by a can be any particular number, the other, indicated by b , cannot be any number but only the particular number which the first lacked, in order to make 10.

5. We also saw the possibility of a third number which expressed the product of the two numbers. If this product is fixed at 25, the two numbers indicated by the two letters were very determined and particular.

Thus, the very formal concept of number led the mind to know other less formal concepts of numbers but still formal. In fact, even particular numbers are undetermined, empty and therefore formal concepts.

815. But because a letter of the alphabet expresses purely totally undetermined number, that is, *initial number*, and the terms of this number are not visible to the mind's eye as long as the mind does not know them as particular determinations which it finds by reasoning and by abstractions carried out on perceptions, the following can happen, and does in fact happen: as long as the mind finds no determinations that allow it to fix the value of a letter or of an algebraic formula, it can, by a certain free judgment or by some reasoning, find that the letters do not express a true number, although initially it *supposed* they did. The mind can indeed begin by supposing that they express a number but then find that granted certain conditions and determinations, they do not express it at all. This is precisely what I said about *initial being*: initial being, as an act devoid of all its terms, can be attributed to terms which we supposed to be terms but are not; on the contrary, they are either abstracts or fictions or absurdities. We have the same situation in algebra relative to the value of letters. These are understood according to the *supposition* that they express a particular number which, as a determination, takes the place of a term relative to totally undetermined, initial number. But this supposition can later be found false, and in place of a particular number we can find or freely posit either nothing or something undeterminable or even something absurd. Thus, in the formula $a+b=10$, we can suppose $a=0$ or $a=\sqrt{2}$ or $a=\sqrt{-2}$. These three values which I have arbitrarily given to a are frequently a necessary result of calculus.

What does $a=0$ in fact mean? It means that a does not express any number, and because it is the form of number, our mind, which does not see a necessarily tied to a number, can invent something which is not a pure, formal number, on the basis that later, through reflection, it will recognise that it is not such but only supposed it such before it carried out this investigative reflection.

What does $a=\sqrt{2}$ mean? Here, a is not equal to a determined number but to an undeterminable number and hence truly unfindable because unmeasurable. Once again, the mind has taken the totally undetermined concept of number and supposed that what is unmeasurable and undeterminable lies under this pure form, as if it were the content of the form. This happens because in the first intuition of the form we see that the form rejects nothing; we therefore suppose that the form fits everything relating to number. But when reflection is later applied and begins the comparison, it finds a contradiction and knows that what is unmeasurable is not a determination of the form as was supposed prior to the comparison.

Finally, in the equation $a=\sqrt{-2}$, a is made equal to an absurd quantity because there is no square root of minus two. The fact that there is no such square root is not understood when it is first conceived; its impossibility is shown only later by reflection.

816. Clearly we see here how formal thought can lead the mind into error, although never by necessity. When a form, severed from its terms, is conceived by the mind, the mind supplies it with terms which do not pertain to it and are not terms. The mind does this through a natural instinct, that is, through the very necessity of conceiving terms. Terms cannot be rejected unless they are first conceived, and they cannot be conceived except through a form, that is, through being or any other formal concept. After this conception carried out by a pure supposition, reflection often follows and shows that the supposed terms are in fact not terms. But sometimes reflection does not follow, or fails to make an accurate judgment. This explains the error for which formal thought is normally and simply an occasion, namely, we accept as true entities those which are not entities but are either nothing or absurdities. It is the same when we consider abstracts or chimera of the imagination as realities.

§9. *Some contemporary realist-ideologists*

817. After my attempt to define the principle of ideology and reduce it to ideal being, some modern thinkers tried to return to real being. Three of these are Gioberti, Nallino and Bertini.

I call these authors *realist-ideologists*⁵⁷ because they posit reality in the idea, which is a contradiction in terms. This contradiction cannot be attributed to me, and I do not think they can reject the title I have given them.

Leaving aside the theological consequences of this substitution (the intuition of real being would be the vision of God considered as natural to the human being), many other things demonstrate that this essential change to the system I have presented is false.

1. There is no need to use the intuition of what is real as a hypothesis to explain the origin of ideas and the facts of the human spirit. All these facts are explained by the intuition of ideal being given to a real subject endowed with feeling, indeed to a subject which itself is feeling, as the human being is. No one has ever been able to demonstrate that my explanation of the facts is defective.

2. If we consult consciousness, we are not conscious of naturally intuiting what is infinitely real, that is, God. Such a teaching is refuted by common sense; indeed, it is an undoubted fact that the human mind intuits and thinks undetermined being. Someone may object that our mind also thinks of infinite real being. I reply: our mind thinks it, but does not intuit it, see it or perceive it. The human mind thinks by means of logical determinations and relationships of other things that it positively knows. It comes to think of infinite real being through reasoning and arguing to its existence without ever learning how it intrinsically is. We have seen that Bertini himself argues from the idea of being to its real subsistence, but this is deduction, certainly not intuition.

3. In previous works, I showed by the use of many direct and indirect arguments that natural intuition terminates in

⁵⁷ Elsewhere I refuted them under the title of *pseudomystics* because their system claims to elevate man to real communication with God through natural reason. This is a false mysticism. Cf. *PSY*, 2: 1315–1325.

ideal being, and I indicated the absurdities which would arise if natural intuition were made to terminate in real being. These arguments have never had a reply.

818. But I want to confirm this truth with a new argument provided by the nature of *formal thought*, which is so familiar to the human being and was discussed in the previous chapter [cf. §8].

Formal thought plays such an important role in human reasoning that we cannot reason without it, which means therefore that totally materiatered thought is impossible. All the principles of reasoning, that is, of *knowledge*, *identity*, *contradiction*, substance, cause, etc., are all formal principles. All ideas are forms devoid of reality; the only doubt possible about them would concern solely the idea of absolute being. If we look at human speech, we see 1. that the greatest part of it, for example, all common and abstract nouns, indicates forms, that is, ideas; 2. that all verbs also pertain to formal knowledge, and 3. that all that remains are proper nouns and some particles which express the ultimate, real determinations of things and are therefore used by materiatered thought. Even real things are expressed and thought by us by means of formal, logical determinations combined in such a way as to determine the things. For example, if we said, 'The man who is running', we would certainly be talking about a real human being, but only by means of a union of words, none of which expresses something totally determined (what is not determined is not real). Hence, the union of several formal determinations made by the mind serves excellently for thinking something real as existing, but does not make us perceive the thing and still less intuit it; in short, it does not make us apprehend it directly in its nature.

This law of human intelligence that the mind must continually proceed formally and help itself by making use of forms, even when it wants to think and reason about real things that act as matter of knowledge, provides us with a new demonstration that human beings are not naturally given real being but formal being devoid of all reality. Indeed if we admit that formal being is the term of the natural intuition which constitutes human intelligence, we find a very natural explanation for the essential law of human reasoning that it must continually proceed by means of principles and formal cognitions.

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On the other hand, if we thought that the human mind were bound naturally to the perception of real being, we would not see how it could ever abandon the reality of being that would necessarily bring with it its own thoughts, and how the mind could think, even once, in a totally formal way. The primal intuition is the very basis of human intelligence, the first act necessarily repeated in all other subsequent acts; all the development of the human mind is simply the development of the first act of intuition that continually increases. If the human mind therefore were bound naturally to the perception of real being, the thought of reality would never have to be lacking in the successive acts of the mind; the matter of thought would have to be always present, and any thought entirely devoid of this matter would become impossible. And if on the other hand we cannot deny that we think formally and abstractly, that we think of pure possibilities without affirming any subsistence, we would have to explain this fact by imagining that human beings had two diverse intelligences: one arising from materialized thought founded, as has been said, on the intuition of what is real, and the other founded on the intuition of what is ideal. But nothing could be more absurd. Among other difficulties this would divide the human being into two because where there were two intelligences there would be two human beings, and one of them might perhaps know nothing of the other.⁵⁸

§10. *Hegel did not know the nature of formal thought*

819. Everything said so far refutes the various erroneous systems philosophers have produced at different times about the relationship between ideal being and real existing things.

These systems can be reduced to two opposite extremes, with the truth lying between them.

The first pertains to popular philosophy. It notes the difference between the idea and the real thing, but failing to

⁵⁸ I have already pointed out that if we do not grant that man naturally intuits ideal being, the laws of abstraction remain inexplicable. Cf. *NE*, 3: 1454–1455.

examine this relationship further, supposes that the real exists independently of every idea and mind. I call this system *absolute anoetical* because it considers being from the one point of view where being appears to us as entirely separate both from the idea and from the mind which conceives it.

Philosophers who follow this system would, if they were coherent, inevitably fall into an ontological dualism and should be called *dualists*, like those who would admit two primal beings: an ideal being and a real being. But they are not generally coherent and neglect the ideal as if it were nothing or were simply a subjective modification of the real.

The second system, pertaining to serious philosophy, notes the intimate connection between ideal ens and the real. Aware that the real cannot lack the former, it concludes that the real is simply an emanation of the ideal. Hence, the system admits only one being, that is, the idea. This idea takes different forms, one of which is precisely reality. This system can be called *absolute dianoetical* because it considers real being in so far as it is intimately united to the ideal, but does not consider it sufficiently in so far as distinct from the ideal. Philosophers who follow this system can be called *unitarians*: they not only do not content themselves with acknowledging the unity of being but, through an excessive tendency to unify everything, confuse even the diverse forms of being with nothing.

The truth lies between these two systems because it neither multiplies being, like the first, nor unifies the forms of being, like the second. It fully acknowledges that the first act of being is one only and therefore being is essentially one. At the same time it acknowledges the absolute, inconfusable distinction between the two forms under which being lies: the ideal and the real — later we will see that a third form must be added to these two. This ontological system could fittingly be called *unitrinitarian*.

820. Among unitarian or absolute dianoetical systems, the system that aroused much discussion was Hegel's. According to this great-grandson of Kant, 'The *concept* (*Begriff*) is the form of things, and this free, infinite form constitutes universal matter' (Hegel declared the diversity of matter an illusion).⁵⁹

⁵⁹ *Encyclop.* §128, addit.

821. All that has been said above can explain how a philosophical mind can easily fall into this error, which to common sense seems incredible.

We have seen how undetermined being, present before the human mind and constituting it, has two properties which at first sight seem, but are not, contradictory:

The first property is that the being which appears to the mind devoid of all its terms simply makes known to the mind through itself only the first act of being most common to all things. It would seem that nothing more could be known by its means.

The second property is this: whenever the intellective subject which intuits initial being has a feeling (and this subject is itself feeling) and therefore has something real (anything felt is always real), it does not possess this real as simply real but as a term of being. And to have it as a term of being means to know it because the essence of knowledge is to have something real as a term of intuited being.⁶⁰

Undetermined being therefore which informs human intelligence not only manifests itself to this intelligence, but gives it the power to know its real terms (which is what the felt elements are), whenever the intelligent subject feels. Therefore this undetermined being [has] a virtuality relative to its terms. But if the subject which intuits being has a feeling, it has it as a term of intuited being. This is explained by the nature of the thing because the felt element is truly a term of being. In this case, being is present to the intelligent subject together with its term and always with it. However, we must also note that as every potency has in its nature the determination of its acts, even before they are posited, — anyone who fully knew a potency would necessarily know the acts to which it can be extended — so all the terms of being are contained, but only virtually, in the nature of undetermined being. When therefore a particular term of being is presented to us, we do not know it as something new but, as it were, as something pre-known. In fact we say naturally and without any surprise that everything we feel is; we do not doubt what we are saying when we say 'is', nor do we think we learn it. Not only do we do this but we distinguish what cannot be a term of ens, because whenever we see that two

⁶⁰ Cf. *Introduzione alla filosofia*, 4: p. 343 ss. [Critical Ed., p. 305 ss.].

assertions contradict each other, we say they do not go together. By denying the contradictory part, we are saying it cannot be a term of ens, and we say this because we know what being is. Hence we know in the essence of ens what is contrary to ens. After finding many negative propositions by this process, we know we must affirm their contradictory parts. Thus, by means of negations, and negations of negations, we eventually produce an immense quantity of propositions which deny or affirm, and are woven into every branch of knowledge. All this is contained in the power of undetermined or most formal being. Once we know initial being, we find in this knowledge the power to know all that we know, whether it comes to us from perception or reasoning.

If this immense virtuality of undetermined or initial being is not considered with the greatest care, it can make a mockery of our mind. Any philosopher, having discovered its fecundity, can rashly conclude that everything, including reality, issues from the idea, like a stream from a spring, and that a concept is, as Hegel himself says, the form from which matter issues.

822. The illusion of these philosophers arises from their lack of consideration. Knowledge of real things consists in our apprehending them as terms of the being we first intuited without them. But this cannot be done if the terms are not given. No matter what efforts we make with our mind, we will never extract anything real from the depths of this idea. Consequently it remains perpetually unproductive, unless being is presented under some other form, that is, under the real form. These two forms must therefore be granted as perpetually coexisting; one irreducible to the other and such that one, of itself, never produces the other. On the contrary, even when we have a real feeling and know we have it, that is, have it as a term of intuited being, and even when intuited being is applied to the feeling, the two forms still remain totally distinct and unmixed. Hence, no sane human being will say that the idea of what is felt is the felt thing itself or that the felt thing is simply the idea. If we were to say this, language itself would show we were wrong because language keeps the two things totally distinct.

Here, Hegel falls into an *antinomy* that he accepts as a true contradiction but, unable to rid himself of it, makes his peace with it by declaring it the foundation of philosophy.

[822]

The antinomy is this. On the one hand he sees that pure being, as the first most common act, is *empty*; it has no content of any kind. He rashly concludes that *pure being* and *nothing* are entirely the same. He thus introduces into philosophy the Avidyâ of the Buddhists.⁶¹

On the other hand, he sees the virtuality of pure being, that is, of his nothing, which is also pure *form*. He therefore brings into the discussion various arguments to prove that the *reality* of things issues from the *form of thought*.

If we look carefully at the stages followed by Hegel in these arguments, we will find that he continually takes a false step.

Indeed, sometimes he wants to show that if reality does not issue from the depths of the idea, we will have absurdities. He does this, for example, in his *Introduction to the Science of Logic*. Sometimes he tries to describe for his readers the emergence of this external reality from the idea, invoking them as witnesses of this extraordinary birth, as he does in the *Encyclopedia*.

Everywhere his reasoning is founded upon equivocations or the most benighted of preconceptions.

823. In the *Introduction* he notes, 'It is absurd to say that logic prescind from all content and lays down only the rules of thought without examining what thought is. — If thought and the rules of thought are its object, this is precisely its proper content.'⁶² But no one in his right mind has ever denied that the rules of thought are the object of logic. No one has ever asserted that this science lacks content. The equivocation is between *logic* and *pure being*. Logic certainly has a content which consists precisely of pure being, of ideas and ideal principles, and teaches us how to deal with these. We say, however, that this being, these ideas, these principles, are said to be undetermined and in this sense lack content; they do not contain the final determinations and, much less, the realities. Hegel therefore makes a puerile censure of the logicians who preceded him, a

⁶¹ Avidyâ, which means *non-being*, *non-knowing*, is the principle from which all existences issue in those systems. Cf. Burnouf, *Introduction à l'histoire du bouddhisme indien*, T. 1, 485, 507, 623.

⁶² If he wishes to maintain that pure, formal *being* has a content, why or how does he call it empty and equal to nothing?

censure founded upon his false understanding. Even if his censure were true, it would not follow that the form of thought itself produced matter. But let us hear an argument which is a little more serious:

‘The supposition is that the content of knowledge exists like a neat complete world outside thought. Thought is *per se* empty and added externally as a form to the matter that fills it. In this way thought acquires a content and becomes a real knowledge.

In this case these two constitutive parts have the following order: the object is *per se* something complete and total which, in order to be in its reality, has no need at all of thought, while on the contrary thought is something defective which must be completed in a term and, like some weak, undetermined form, adapt itself to its matter. Truth is the correspondence of thought with the object, and to produce this correspondence (because it does not exist in itself and through itself), thought must be applied to and adjusted to the object.’

824. These words contain in part a reasonable critique of the absolute anoetical system. But besides containing many inexactitudes, they do not harm in any way the true system I have proposed. This is clear from the following considerations:

1. The argument rests on the misuse of the word ‘object’. I have noted that reality does not have the nature of object and that this nature is proper only to intelligible being and hence to the idea. Consequently, the real that is not object becomes object through the act of being intuited in the idea, of which the real is a term. Hence I do not admit that ‘truth consists in the correspondence between thought and object’. On the contrary, thought does not exist without an object, and must always correspond absolutely with its object, because an essential synthesis exists between thought and object.

2. In my system it is far less true that ‘such correspondence between thought and object cannot exist unless thought adapts itself to the object’, because this is always the case and cannot be otherwise if by object we mean what the word means, that is what is placed against the act of thought, what is present to the understanding.

3. Hence, truth for me, and for Aristotle and ancient thinkers, is generally not what Hegel supposes and on which he bases his vain censure of ancient logic. We always possess

truth when we affirm what is true by an internal judgment, not only by thinking the object but by acknowledging what we naturally think. Hence, there is an affirmation and a true negation, and the negation can concern both the form and matter of thought. This is why the question of the form and matter of thought and the relationship between them has nothing to do with knowledge, whether we possess truth or not. It was modern philosophers,⁶³ mainly the Germans, who confused these very different questions.

4. It is false then if, in order to possess truth, matter must be united to the form, or as Hegel says, 'if thought is to become real knowledge'. Adding matter to the form certainly increases the *quantity* of our knowledge but does not change its quality in such a way that knowledge passes from being false to being true. Knowledge can vary both in its extension and in its materiation, but both can be equally true. So, the question of the truth of knowledge does not depend on the matter of knowledge but on making true judgments about both the form and the matter of knowledge.

5. It is a misuse of words to call the union of the form and matter a real knowledge. All human knowledge is real, even if it were purely formal. Although the object of knowledge is a pure idea, the act of thought terminating in it is as real as the intelligent subject performing the act.

In all Hegel's words quoted above the only truth is this: absolute anoeticians are in error when they consider the matter of thought to be reality, as if it were a world existing on its own, totally cut off from and independent of thought. I have already shown how this is erroneous. But Hegel did not pay sufficient attention to the error; his own examination led him into the

⁶³ This confusion arose when philosophers abandoned the speculative, rational teaching of the Scholastics and turned to the study of natural sciences. The only knowledge which subsequently appeared was materiated knowledge, knowledge concerned with physical things. Dialectics and formal thought were rejected; the latter was declared useless and empty. The outcome was belief that truth itself was confined to the kingdom of the facts of nature. This prejudice spread into Germany where it was received with all the ingenuity proper to the thinkers there and gave rise to questions about *objective truth*, *real knowledge*, etc., that is, expressions which falsified thought because permeated with the above prejudice.

opposite error. Although it can be proved that the real world cannot exist without a mind, what Hegel claims does not follow at all, namely, that there is an absolute dependence between external reality and the human mind. If we are talking about the world as we actually know it, this dependence can certainly be seen, but when we think the world, we think it as absolutely being and therefore as independent of the thought with which we think it. However, with a higher reflection, we see that for the world really to be, some mind must think it, precisely because the act of being on which it depends is eternal and *per se* intelligible, and therefore understood from eternity.

825. I must also make an observation about the other argument Hegel uses to support his system.

He starts from a sensist prejudice, because in these philosophies which seem so reflective, there is always fundamentally present, as we shall see, sensism and materialism. 'Ordinary consciousness tells us that only reflection enables us to grasp the reality of objects. Reflection modifies the way in which the object is first given in sensation and perception. Hence, the true nature of the object comes into our consciousness only through a modification produced by thought. — Thus, if thought apprehends the true nature of things and is also certainly my action, the true nature must be produced by my spirit as a thinking subject, it must be a product of my freedom.'⁶⁴

This is how Hegel claims to demonstrate that the matter and reality of things issue from their forms, that is, from ideas. In my opinion, everyone who sees anything great in this thesis and understands how paradoxical it is, will require, before accepting it, a proof that is a little less flimsy and, as it were, slick than this.

826. An analysis of the thesis reveals its many faults.

1. Its foundation is *sensism*, a sensism embraced as a preconception, that is, supposed true without proofs. Indeed, Hegel supposes as certain that the object is in sensation and perception, that is, in sense-perception, as is clear from the context. But I have shown elsewhere that this is precisely the preconception of sensism.⁶⁵ If we admit that sense gives us the object, feeling is changed into thinking. But there is an

⁶⁴ *Encycloped.*, §19–25.

⁶⁵ *Introduzione*, 4, p. 343 ss.; *NE*, 2: 528–538.

essential difference between feeling and thought: feeling has only a term, not an object; thought has an object. Sensation is a modification, a mode of being of that which feels; idea is an object totally different from the thinker and never a modification of him, a mode of his being.

2. Hegel falsely calls *reflection* what in fact is only *intellective perception*, with which we apprehend real being as a term of initial or ideal being. But perception, which presents real things to our thought, is a *direct* operation, precisely because sense has no previous object; it simply contributes an element to the object of intellective perception. Reflection however is *indirect* because it supposes the object as previously given; reflection itself is not first in apprehending the object. This error caused Hegel to fall into the other error (also an absurdity) that anything *direct* is not true, and all truth is *indirect*.

3. Similarly, it is completely false and a base falsehood of sensism to say that reflection produces a modification in the object first given in sensations. This is doubly false because:

a) As I have just said, the object is not given in sensation (the object is simply being, intuited by the mind and not present in sense). Therefore, reflection cannot modify it. Instead, the truth is that intellective perception does not modify the object but constitutes it for us. Perception is the act of intelligence with which real things are directly known, as I have said.

b) Reflection does not modify or change the objects, as I have often shown.⁶⁶

4. Even if we supposed that Hegel's reflection modified the objects, the inference he draws would be gratuitous. He infers that 'through reflection a modification is made to the way in which the object is first given in sensation. Thus, the true nature of the object comes to our consciousness by means of a modification produced by thought.' If the object is in sensation and the modified object in reflection, how does he know that the object's true nature results from this modification and is not the nature given us by the sensation? What proof does he bring? How does he justify his predilection for reflection? He gives us no intrinsic reason. This man however, who in everything else takes little account of common sense

⁶⁶ *Rinnovamento*, 3: 47.

and of the ancient philosophers, and tells us he is content with few judges, is happy here to turn to the authority of common sense and of the ancient logicians, interpreted however in his way. He assures us: 'Common sense grants that to know the true nature of things we must, with our thought, elaborate and change the data. Ancient philosophy acknowledged the harmony between ideas and things and granted that things are precisely as thought conceives them.' He concludes: 'Thought therefore is the truth of things, objective truth.' That common sense and ancient philosophy both admit the harmony between ideas and things is entirely true, but it does not in any way follow from this that thought produces things. If we used the word 'idea' instead of the equivocal, subjective word 'thought' (Hegel himself often uses them indifferently, with consequent confusion in his reasoning), I myself would say that the idea is the *objective truth* of things.⁶⁷ But this does not mean that human subjective thought produces objective truth, that is, the idea. On the contrary, the idea is given to the human subject to be intuited as object. It cannot therefore be a production of thought — thought does not exist without or prior to the idea; it does not exist without its natural object. Hence the object (ideal being) is joined with real things, like a principle with its terms; the latter are not without the former. However, *terminated being*, that is, being with its terms, is prior to and independent of human thought, and is certainly not, as Hegel says, a production of our thought. We must therefore interpret common sense and ancient philosophy and not make them pronounce absurdities, as Hegel always does.

He claims 'that common sense recognises that we cannot know the true nature of things unless we transform their data and change our thought of them'. This is an equivocation which can be true but never in Hegel's sense. The phrase, 'know the true nature of things', either means the same as 'know the nature of things', in which case the word 'true' is superfluous, or means to know more deeply the inner core of things, in which case the word 'true' is at least equivocal — we may know a thing only slightly but that slight knowledge is true, or we may know more about it and the 'more' is true. The nature of a

⁶⁷ NE, 3: 1040–1377.

thing can certainly be known in varying degree more or less implicitly, but the knowledge is always true. To know the nature of a thing more thoroughly we must work more thoroughly on it and change the data of our thought, as Hegel says. But this does not mean we must acknowledge as false the knowledge we already had of the thing. It simply means that if, through our free will, error had entered our previous knowledge, the error would be rejected; other explicit determinations would then be added to the thing. But all this takes place through the idea of being, from whose depths we draw what was previously virtual, and through new sensible experiences which reveal new forces and real phenomena. Knowledge therefore increases rather than changes, and always increases through both the ideal and real elements granted to but not produced by thought — thought can of course use its action to look for these, just as the eye can look at the colours of a picture but does not create the colours by doing so.⁶⁸

§11. *How the human mind participates in the absolute mind*

827. The German philosophers begin from the sensist prejudice that confuses *reality* with *objectivity*. Apparently, they wish to reduce everything to sensible reality. But unaware, they go to the opposite extreme and, totally forgetting reality, consider only ideal forms.

Hegel says: 'When I say *myself*, I am speaking about *myself* as an individual person. But basically I am not saying anything about *myself* that is particular to me and cannot be said about everyone else. *Myself* is therefore something general, where everything is potentially contained; it is the universal which embraces everything.'⁶⁹ Here however the reality of Hegel's *myself* has entirely escaped his mind; all that remains is the

⁶⁸ The materialism of Hegelian philosophy is clear simply from the fact that for him matter is only a moment of the idea, so that the idea itself changes into matter. Cf. among other places *Encyclopedia* where he speaks about the three forms he distinguishes in objectivity and calls *mechanism*, *chemistry* and *teleological* connection: §§194–195 with their additions.

⁶⁹ *Encyclop.*, §20.

formal, ideal, abstract *myself* which, as the *idea* of *myself*, can indeed be an object of intuition, but not truly the *myself*. The human spirit, having solely this universal *myself* of Hegel, will not affirm the subsistence of a *myself* and therefore will never have the reality. Just as all the qualities of a *myself* conceived in its universal idea are themselves universal, so in the real *myself*, such as my own *myself*, there is nothing universal. Indeed, one of the properties of the real is precisely to make individual the universal that is present to the intuition of the mind. Hegel's illusion is clear: he deceives himself by reducing what is real to the idea, by taking something real, for example, my own *myself*, and saying that the qualities of this real *myself* are universal because they can accord with every other *myself*. He therefore concludes that *myself* is always universal, unaware that by doing so he abandons the real and passes to the ideal (to logical predicates) — he is not converting the real into the ideal, but simply transferring his thought from the former to the latter.

Prior to him, Schelling, together with Bouterweck, Bardilli and others did the same.⁷⁰ All these turned thought into abstractions and, purely arbitrarily, gave reality to thought or to the mind considered abstractly, just as Schelling and Hegel gave it to their abstract, universal *myself*. They simply removed reality from the real *myself*, changed it into an abstract *myself*, and said that this abstract was reality. In this way, according to them, they had shown that the real was contained in the ideal, in the abstract and in the universal. Reality therefore was not as different from the ideal as people thought.

Moreover, although all these philosophers are strong in abstraction, they lack analysis. Hence, they never came to understand the absolute distinction between the object of thought and subjective thought. By calling ideas thought, they subjectivised them and, vice versa, by calling thought idea, they took it as an object and were able to make objectivity and subjectivity appear as two transitory moments of thought. Hence, the strange consequences and outlandish systems.

Phrases such as 'pure thought', 'thought as thought', 'what is absolutely thought', and the mind considered in its universality (that is, considered only in what is essential to it), are all

⁷⁰ NE, 3: 1381–1428.

abstractions and logical forms. They can be very helpful in knowledge, but if they are confused with reality, very serious errors result.

828. The German philosophers also fall into another error when they confuse thought and the *abstract myself* with thought, or with the *absolute myself*. This confusion arises because they did not make the necessary distinction between *undetermined being* and *absolute being*: both are unlimited, but in a different way. These philosophers cannot bring themselves to admit that the human mind has a natural, *fundamental limitation*, because in their eyes a limited reason would no longer be reason (if it is limited, it is certainly not reason). From the moment they are unable to distinguish idea from thought, and the absolute objectivity of idea from the absolute subjectivity of thought, it is not surprising that they find an argument to confirm them in their error. This argument expressed in explicit words can be formulated as: 'Idea is being; thought is idea.' They argue that undetermined being cannot exist because everything that exists is determined, and consequently thought would not exist if being were undetermined. Moreover, we think unlimited being, because being is universal, but unlimited, absolute being is determined; therefore, if we did not think absolute being, thought would not exist, because thought is idea, and idea is being. This is how absolute dianoeticians must reason. But if we prefer fact to the imagination of these thinkers (a preference which is certainly never contrary to true philosophy), we will clearly see that 1. thought is not idea, 2. we naturally think undetermined being in the idea, and 3. this undetermined being itself reveals to our reflection that it *must* have its terms (although they do not appear) precisely because it could not exist otherwise; in fact, being with its terms is not essentially different from the being of intuition which hides its terms. Human intuition and intelligence are therefore limited because they see being in its beginning and not in its completions, which are partly given us afterwards. This limitation does not falsify human knowledge because it is manifested to us in such a way that we are never obliged to call unlimited what is limited or to assent to a false judgment.

829. This explains why the human mind, and the mind of every finite intelligence, is a *participation* in the *absolute mind*,

as I showed in the previous book. I call 'absolute mind' that which through its own nature knows being fully with all its terms; this is the ideal concept on the part of the mind.

Because there is, as we have seen, a concept of *initial being* and a concept of *absolute being*, we form these two concepts of all other things. Indeed, the knowledge of all other things receives the same forms that the knowledge of being has in the human mind: ultimately, all things are variously determined knowledge of being. Thus, just as there is a concept of undetermined being, there is equally the concept of an undetermined mind, a concept that shows the essence of the mind without its terms. And just as undetermined being virtually contains its determinations and its terms, so in the abstract essence of the mind there are virtually the possible determinations and terms it can receive. If some limited terms are added to the essence of the mind, we have the concept of a specifically determined mind, for example, a human mind. But the mind, in essence, is a cognitive principle, and the more knowledge and terms we suppose it has, the more it is a mind. Thus, if we conceived a mind whose term is all that is intelligible, we would have the concept of a mind that is fully and absolutely mind, the concept of an absolute mind. But the intelligible, as intelligible, is essentially one, because intelligibility is one. Hence, because principles do not multiply except through the diversity of their terms, it is clear that just as there can be only one intelligible, there can be only one unlimited, absolute mind.

The first consequence of such teaching is this: if we deny limits to the human mind, psychological pantheism is inevitable, and this was the hazard which shipwrecked the German philosophers.

However, because the limited terms can be many, there can be many minds, and among these the human mind.

The Germans put forward the following difficulty: 'The human mind is unlimited because it can know all the knowable. It is therefore absolute.' I reply. The human mind is as unlimited and universal as undetermined being, but undetermined being is not unlimited and universal in the sense that it manifests an infinite actuality. It is virtually unlimited and universal in so far as it admits unlimited, infinite terms and generally reveals its infinite capacity. But it certainly does not show us all these

terms; on the contrary it keeps a part of them hidden, and does so because human beings cannot become an infinite reality, which they would have to become if they were to embrace being with all its infinite terms.⁷¹ We are therefore limited but nevertheless can know everything given us to know, although we cannot be given knowledge of all things.

830. The human mind therefore is a participation in the absolute mind for the following reasons:

1. Although it has as its natural term undetermined being, being with all its terms is not present to it. Only the first universal act of being is present, but this is identical to the being which enlightens the absolute mind (there cannot be any other being) — in the absolute mind all the terms of its being are present together with the first act of being. There is therefore something common between the term of the absolute mind and the term of the human mind as limited. This common element is the first act of being, predicated equally of God and of creatures.⁷²

2. The first, universal act of ens presents to the mind which intuitively it the pure essence of ens in such a way that with respect to it, the mind knows everything that is or is not ens, everything that is or can be a term of ens. This is precisely what I said earlier: all the terms are virtually contained in the first act we intuit. Consequently, the means of knowledge is in fact potentially infinite. This is the infinity in which every intelligence, in order to be intelligent, must participate. Limitation comes to finite intelligences only in relationship to the terms.

We see then that the pure *essence* of intelligence can certainly be extracted from human intelligence by abstraction. But just as the pure essence of being makes known being together with the rest of being only initially, so the concept of the pure essence of intelligence makes known intelligences only in their beginning, while the determinations of specific intelligences are contained only virtually in that abstract concept.

Thus, human intelligence participates in absolute intelligence, and it is no surprise that it apprehends truth. But reflection can be mistaken by taking as absolute that which, by means of a higher reflection, is known to be limited and relative. Reflection

⁷¹ *TCY*, 396–410.

⁷² *Introduzione alla filosofia*, 7, p. 428 ss. [Crit. Ed., p. 367 ss.].

therefore must distinguish on the one hand the extent to which human intelligence participates in the absolute, and on the other the specific or individual limitations that contain it.

§12. *The problem of additions to being*

831. When a problem presents itself to the mind under diverse aspects and is also expressed in words, it is given different formulations, while remaining fundamentally the same. The philosopher must present it under each of these various guises and teach how it can be recognised and solved.

The first problem of ontology, concerning the relationship between initial being and its terms, which I have already discussed, was always present to the minds of philosophers in antiquity and in the Middle Ages.

The Scholastics conceived it principally as follows. We all experience the mental conception of many diverse and opposite entia. These must add something to being, conceived purely and simply, which is one. Hence, the Scholastics' statement: *accipiuntur ex additione ad ens* [they are received by addition to being]. On the other hand it seems that nothing can be added to being except being itself: if it were not being, it would be nothing, and to add nothing is not to add. But if what is added is itself being, how can being be added to itself — in order to add one thing to another, one of them must in some way be distinct from the other? Addition therefore supposes the existence of two things, but in the present case there is only one, being. And even by adding being to being, being is not increased.

832. The form in which I presented this antinomy also contains the solution. I will recall it but use different words.

Pure, undetermined being manifests to reflection two contrary aspects, as it were. In one, being appears most imperfect because void; it has no content, it lacks its terms. In the other, it appears as if it were everything, infinite, universal, so that nothing can be thought outside it.⁷³

⁷³ We find this antinomy in the history of philosophical systems where it has been expressed in apparently contradictory propositions. An example is Plato's opinion, which later became the foundation of neoplatonist philosophy (*De Republica*, 6). Neoplatonism places *good* above being,

These two aspects of undetermined being produce the antinomy in question. If being is considered under the second aspect, nothing that is not it or in it can be found outside it, because that which is not, cannot be. If being is considered under the first aspect, many things seem outside it; for example, the *differences* which distinguish one being from another. Thus, two entia are equally being and yet distinct. Hence, there is a difference that distinguishes and separates them. In so far as they are beings, they are equal, and in so far as they are not equal, there must be something that is distinguished from pure being.

I said that this antinomy is resolved when we consider that undetermined being certainly contains everything, but does so only virtually; it contains nothing actually. Hence, when the determinations of being are compared with being without determinations, we correctly say that these determinations are outside it, are different from being. On the other hand, we can consider undetermined being as having received these determinations as something completing it. We can also consider that the essence of being, as intuited in undetermined being, has the ability to receive all determinations, which are all present potentially, recognisable as virtually inexistent in being when compared with it. Granted all this, we can understand the sense

making the latter derive from the former. This opinion seems to contradict the other opinion that there is nothing above being because beyond being there is only nothing; hence, good must be. But the antinomy of this proposition disappears when Plato's opinion is interpreted in the following way. The philosopher had spoken about *initial being* that lacks its terms. If initial being is taken as severed from its terms, it cannot be in itself but only in something else. It therefore supposes absolute being, which is essentially good. In this case absolute being is named from its own, essential term and called 'good', just as the name of God in Scripture is *Holy*. Thus the name of God is distinguished from being. But the word 'being', as used in human speech, is equivocal because it can mean both initial being and absolute being; indeed, as used, it means first the former then the latter. That Plato should aim at this (whether he was aware of it or not), we can see from his statement that good gives known things not only intelligibility but being and essence (τό εἶναι τε καὶ τὴν οὐσίαν). Initial being cannot be called anything but being; 'being' and 'ens' are equally appropriate for absolute being, but in the case of finite things, only 'entia' can be used. If the ancients, particularly the Neoplatonists, had grasped these distinctions, they would not have become lost in a labyrinth of confused expressions.

in which everything is in being and nothing can be thought outside being. The mind, in order to understand this, must fix its attention on the following principal point: we do not extract the determinations, terms and differences of beings from the contemplation alone of undetermined being where they show us that they are not comprised in it, they are originally given us with reality, that is, with what is felt. When this felt element is given us, we understand at the same time that it is, and because we think it as united to being (this union is the condition of our thinking it), we cannot think it outside being. It is outside undetermined being but in determined being; it is outside when reflection considers it relative to formal thought, but inside when reflection considers it relative to material thought.

833. The determinations added to being may be many but the same being is in all of them. If we bear this in mind, we will see that the ancients spoke appropriately about these determinations when they considered them as modes of being. They resolved the antinomy precisely by stating that the modes of being are not comprised in being without modes but in being with its modes.

Hence, they sought to solve the question concerning what kind of *addition* is made to ens when entia and also particular and contrary entities are conceived. They began by excluding the various ways our mind can add one thing to another.

1. One portion of matter can be added to another because every portion of matter has a distinct being and the portion added is not comprised in the portion to which it is added. This first kind of addition has no place in being because everything added to being is already included in it.

2. A difference is added to a genus, and thus we have a species. But again, this manner of addition does not take place in being, because the difference is not in the genus — everything added to being is itself already in being, is being.

3. An accident is added to a subject. But here also, being cannot be added to. The subject does not include the added accidental entity — being already includes what is added to it.

Granted the exclusion of these three ways of addition, is there any other kind of addition applicable to being?

St. Thomas distinguishes precisely between *being* and its mode. These two are certainly distinguishable by the mind and

constitute two distinct concepts, although the mode of being is not separate from being. Words are used to indicate the concepts of the mind. Hence, the word 'being' is used to mean the first concept, the concept of being, not the second concept, that of *mode*. In the case of being therefore, we say that something is said to be added to *being* when our mind adds being's own *mode* to it (that is, to pure being without its mode). Although the mode is understood virtually in being, nevertheless the mind distinguishes it.⁷⁴

§13. *The proper and improper terms of being*

834. I have distinguished the *determinations* of being from its *terms* ([cf. 810]). One of these terms is certainly *reality*. The question therefore arises: 'Are all realities proper terms of being, or are some of them improper terms?' By 'proper terms' I mean those necessary to being if it is to be complete; by 'improper' I mean those not necessary for its completion, that is, being can, even without them, have everything necessary for its full determination and realisation.

As regards contingent real things, I said that these, carefully considered, present a kind of antinomy. On the one hand, they are nothing when separated from the first act of being — they cannot even be thought. On the other, they are clearly seen as distinct from the first act of being so that, although this act is the essence of being, these terms are not the essence. This antinomy is only an apparent contradiction. It is not contradictory that one thing depends totally on another yet is not the other. This observation about contingent real things allows us to distinguish the proper and improper terms of being.

If we consider the matter the other way round, we will be able to see clearly the truth of the distinction between the proper and improper terms of being.

⁷⁴ 'Nothing of an external nature can be added to being in the way that difference is added to genus, or accident to subject. Every nature is essentially being (hence, in *Metaphysics* 3, Aristotle shows that being cannot be a genus). But according to this, some things are said to add to being in so far as they express its *MODE* WHICH IS NOT EXPRESSED BY THE WORD 'BEING':* (*De Verit.*, 1: 1).

835. The human mind, in its natural intuition, conceives being absolutely without its relationship to the mind. This relationship is not known with, nor is it the object of, the first intuition, where it already exists, although unknown to intuition. The relationship lies in the objectivity or presence of being to the mind. Hence the very knowability of being is the reason why being is knowable. However, the mind, in its simple intuition, is still unknown to itself: it is not thinking of itself but only of being. With this act therefore it knows that being absolutely is. But subsequent reflection discovers that being has an essential relationship with a mind, that this relationship is essential intelligibility and that the human mind participates in the same essential relationship existing between the absolute mind and being.

Moreover, although intuited being conceals its terms, it nevertheless reveals the essence of being. Consequently, reflection finds another apparent antinomy: on the one hand being appears to intuition as having an absolute mode, on the other it would be contrary to the very essence of being if it were in absolute mode without its terms — ‘in absolute mode’ means ‘*in se*’ and not only as apparent to a mind. There is however no true contradiction, because the two apparently opposite terms are reconciled when we say that the mind definitely sees that being absolutely is, and in order that the mind see this, it only needs undetermined being before it as that which contains the essence of being. But it does not see it as absolutely undetermined being but only as absolutely being. The investigation whether being that absolutely is, is determined or undetermined comes later. Hence, when reflection carries out this investigation, it finds that being that absolutely is must be determined. Nevertheless, because the object of intuition is undetermined being, reflection concludes that the determinations and terms of being are present but hidden to intuition.

The determinations therefore and the terms of being are not intuited but argued to. The light or principle from which this argument draws its force is undetermined being itself, the object of intuition, precisely because this undetermined being contains the pure essence of being. By its means, the mind sees what is appropriate or inappropriate to being, and judges that the

determinations and terms not seen by intuition are necessarily appropriate to being.

Summarising this argument we can say:

Reflection sees that being, naturally intuited, is undetermined being.

It sees that this indetermination does not mean that being excludes determinations or terms but simply that it does not reveal them to intuition and does not exclude them.⁷⁵

It sees that this pure being, separate from its determination, manifests the pure essence of being in such a way that the mind, by means of this vision, knows what being is, although it does not know where it terminates.

Reflection, knowing what being is, sees that being would not be if it were not *in se* and only appeared to a mind. On the contrary, reflection sees that being's appearance involves a contradiction because the mind to which it appeared would already be *in se* and hence there would be a being *in se* and not purely apparent, unless of course we meant that this mind itself was purely apparent to another mind. This of course would bring us to the absurdity of an infinite series. Hence, being must absolutely be, which is as it appears to intuition.

Undetermined being, as it appears to intuition, is not therefore sufficient to make it be absolutely and *in se*, but is sufficient to make us know that being is, absolutely and *in se*. It is also sufficient to make us know that the being which absolutely is, must be fully determined, because nothing undetermined can be *in se*.

Reflection concludes from all this (as something argued to and not intuited) that 'the being which the mind intuits as

⁷⁵ In the rich language of the Scholastics two ways of abstraction are distinguished: 'precisive' and 'negative'. Precisive abstraction abstracted from differences but did not deny them. However, negative abstraction denied differences. For example, genera were considered the product of precise abstraction because they did not deny species, but if 'genus' was understood as the lower species, negative abstraction was involved. Hence the word indicating genus usually had two meanings: genus and lower species. Thus 'animal' was used, and is still used, to indicate the genus and includes man, but it is also used to indicate 'brute animal' which excludes man. For the rest, being is not made undetermined by any abstraction but is naturally given to intuition as undetermined.

having an absolute mode, that is, in itself, is precisely in such mode. And because being could not be like this if it remained undetermined, as it actually is before intuition, reflection further concludes that it absolutely is with its determinations and terms.'

836. What then are these determinations and terms?

We can say:

1. Knowing that they must be, is one thing; knowing what they are is another. The first of these two cognitions can stand without the second. In this case we normally say we have a negative knowledge of the determinations and terms. Negative knowledge does not make us know things in themselves but through relationships to other known things. Thus, knowing generally that being has some terms, although we do not know them, is a kind of negative knowledge by which we know they are, and also know their relationship with ens. This relationship enables us to conceive them as terms of ens.

2. The terms are not given to us by the natural intuition of being; we argue to their existence from intuited being.

3. The determinations and terms, although not intuited themselves, must pertain to intuited being in such a way that they render it capable of subsistence, that is, to be *in se*. They complete intuited being, which without them is incomplete, but with them, complete and determined in every respect.

4. The essence of being is not bound by any limitation whatsoever. Hence, because intuited being is essentially unlimited, the determinations and terms, whatever they may be, cannot limit being or restrict it to some particular being. Consequently, the determinations and terms that complete being do not limit it in any way; on the contrary, they develop and enrich it. The human mind, when it sees the need for them, conceives them in this way and adds them to undetermined being, the object of intuition.

837. When reflection has reasoned thus far, it immediately becomes aware that none of the real entia composing the universe and falling within human perception can be classed among these determinations and terms proper to being. And this for the following reasons:

[836–837]

1. Everything that comes within human perception of the universe is finite, so that it limits being, when in fact being's own determinations must not limit but complete and fulfil it.

2. Because being is necessary, we cannot think it is not. Moreover, because it would not be *in se* if it did not have the determinations that complete it, these also must be necessary and such that we cannot think they are not. On the other hand, all the finite entities of the universe can be thought as not being, without any contradiction. We can also think of others in their place. This shows that they are not necessary but contingent, and therefore cannot be determinations proper to any being [*essere*] whatsoever.

3. The finite entia composing the universe are totally separate from each other and are many. But the determinations proper to being are those that fulfil and complete being, which is one. Thus they cannot remove the unity essential to being. Therefore because being cannot lose its unity, it must have determinations proper to it which do not remove but perfect this essential unity.

4. By reflecting directly on the nature of finite entia we come to know truth, because the *nature* of these entia consists in their reality. Although without being they would not be, being does not constitute their nature. This clearly demonstrates what I said earlier, that the act of being is common to all finite realities. If being constituted the nature of each, they could not be many but only one, just as being is one and equal to itself. Hence, although all finite realities need being (otherwise they would be nothing), they are not being; if they were, they would be neither many nor finite. Being therefore does not constitute the nature of finite realities. This nature consists only in reality, which is not being but a form of being, and this form would not be, unless there were being. This distinction not only results from the activity of the human mind, but is inherent in the nature of the things we are discussing. As we have seen, being and finite realities have such opposite characteristics that they cannot be identified, although finite realities depend on being to the extent that without it they would not be. But this contains no contradiction if one thing that is totally

dependent on another is not the other on which it depends. I call this relationship of absolute dependence *essential relationship* and the connection between them *ontological synthesisism*.

5. The thesis can be confirmed by another argument, drawn from the eleventh characteristic of being, that is, from *intelligibility*. Being is *per se* intelligible, whereas finite realities are not intelligible *per se* except solely through their ideas.⁷⁶ Hence, they are not being; their nature is not constituted by being. The ideas of finite realities are simply the very act of being through which they are, and are known; they are intelligible being in so far as this makes finite realities understood and does so by presenting their essence to the mind. The essence of finite realities is therefore outside them, it is in their ideas and in being, as I will show later in greater depth. Hence, the *nature* of finite realities differs from their *essence*, but this nature would not be intelligible without the essence and, without the *act of being*, would not be. Here again we see that finite realities have an intimate and essential relationship with being, but are not being, nor are they the proper terms of being [App., no. 4].

Being therefore does not need finite realities for its determination and completion; they are not its necessary, *proper terms*. However, finite realities are thought of as terms of being, and cannot be thought otherwise. Indeed, I said that all the different realities have the first act of being equally; if they did not, they would not be. Precisely because they have this first, common act intelligible *per se*, they not only are, but are understood. Hence, if they have being as their first act, they are terms of being. But because, as we have seen, they are not proper terms, we must say they are improper terms.

838. But how can they be improper terms? What do these

⁷⁶ Someone may object that being is known through its idea, but this means that the theory of being has not been understood. Being, in so far as it is intelligible and does not have terms, is the idea, but in so far as it is intelligible and has a term, it is the divine Word, and the vision of this Word pertains solely to the supernatural order which philosophy does not deal with. Hence, when we say that human beings naturally know everything they know by means of the *idea*, we are saying that they know them by means of *being*.

words mean? I cannot, nor do I wish to, deal fully with this difficult question, which I will have to return to later. It will be sufficient if we are certain about the following:

1. Our mind thinks real things as terms of being.
2. Our mind, reflecting on the condition of these terms, sees that they are not necessary to being and do not determine being *in se* and therefore cannot be called proper terms of being.

It follows from this second proposition that 'those terms are understood to be improper which do not determine being in its unity, simplicity and infinitude, and are not necessary to it.'

Hence, the fact that finite realities do not have these characteristics of the proper terms results from what I said earlier.

Moreover, the fact that being can have other terms in addition to those which it determines in its own unity cannot be shown to contain any contradiction. If we investigated the nature of being further (which I cannot do at present), we would find that it is not only *per se* active but essentially active, and includes every possible activity, even the activity whose term is finite things. Consequently, it would seem not only possible but very probable that there are finite things which are terms of the activity of being and in this sense called terms of being. A result of this investigation would be that terms proper to being are those in which being's activity concerning them terminates. These terms, correctly understood, could be called *terms of the activity of being* rather than *terms of being*.

But reflection, when applied directly to the matter, removes all doubt about the quality of term which contingent realities have. If we analyse our thought of these realities, we see it contains two things: 1. the act of being common to all realities; 2. reality itself. As long as the act of being is common, it is undetermined and initial; it does not express one reality rather than another; in fact, it expresses only the indistinct possibility of all realities. But when realities are added to this act, we see that this initial act of being is determined to each of them: each reality determines being and is its term. Hence, realities are terms of initial being but not proper terms; they are therefore improper terms.

§14. *The solution to the ancients' and Scholastics' question concerning universals*

839. What has been said contains the answer to the question concerning universals which occupied the whole of ancient philosophy and the philosophy of the Middle Ages.

Although the question was proposed in very different forms, as shown in Sections 3 and 4 of *A New Essay* [NE, 1: 46–384], it is basically always the same: 'Are universals in things or outside them?' Note: the question concerns finite things, things we experience.

840. The answer, drawn from what has been said, is: 'The universal is in *finite ens* but not in the *finite real*.'

The failure to distinguish between finite ens and the finite real rendered the question insoluble. Those who said that universals were in things were considering only ens; those who said the opposite were considering only the finite real. All of them thought they were discussing the same thing but they had no common understanding. There was no accurate analysis of finite ens: some thought that the real was ens; others saw that there could be no consistency except in the idea because that was where the essence of ens was. But finite ens is neither the essence seen in the idea nor solely the real; it is the individual union of these two things made deep in the mind.

841. For the Scholastics, the universal, as conceived by Plato, was called *ante rem* [prior to the thing]. The universal as conceived by the Peripatetics was called *in re* [in the thing]. It seemed that one of these two universals excluded the other, but they were simply two aspects of the same truth. The word *res* [thing] was used unconsciously in two senses, to mean the *real* and an *ens*. The universal is *ante rem* when this phrase is translated as 'prior to the real' because the universal has a logical precedence over the finite real: the former is eternal, the latter temporary. The universal is *in re* when the phrase is translated as 'in ens' because the universal is certainly in finite ens and constitutes the formal part; through union with the universal the *real* becomes ens.

842. It seems to me that disagreement between the Scotists and Thomists is again resolved. The former maintained that the

[839–842]

universal had an existence *a parte rei* [on the part of the thing]; the latter that it existed only *a parte mentis* [on the part of the mind]. Here also it seems to me that if we set aside some expressions in which the two parties do not perhaps express themselves carefully,⁷⁷ and if we keep solely to the substance of the question, we are not dealing with two contradictory opinions but two diverse aspects of the same truth. When the mind sees being, whether universal or not, it sees it as being absolutely, not as subjective, nor relative solely to the mind. Universal being, intuited by the mind, is therefore intuited *a parte rei* [on the part of the thing], that is, *a parte sui* [on the part of itself]. This made the Scotists say that it had an existence proper to itself. On the other hand, the universal is known *per se*, that is, it has an essential relationship with the mind, as I have said ([cf. 772–778]). Hence it is also true that it could not be, unless it were *a parte mentis* [on the part of the mind], as the Thomists say.

843. Whenever we fail to observe that being, conditioned to a mind, does not in any way remove the absoluteness of being, we fall into the error of believing that being, conditioned to a mind, is a being solely subjective and relative to the mind. This error becomes most serious when we are discussing only the human mind, because in this case universal being is subjective relative to us. I myself have been wrongly accused of this error by Vincenzo Gioberti. He claimed that the principle of my philosophy is solely psychological! In my opinion, none of the ancients was exempt from this double error. When Porphyry outlined the questions under discussion concerning the nature of universals, he proposed the first question as: ‘Are universals subsistences (ὑφίστηκεν) or pure inventions, formations of thought (εἴτε καὶ ἐν μόναις ψυχαῖς ἐπινοίαις κεῖται)?’ We see here how he contrasts subsistence not with *being in the mind* but being as a work or invention of the mind.⁷⁸ It does not enter his

⁷⁷ For example, when the Scotists say that the universal would still be, even if there were no mind to think it, they err. Their error is in the exclusive part of the system. The same can be said about the Thomists when they state that the universal, because *a parte mentis* [on the part of the mind], could not absolutely be.

⁷⁸ V. Cousin noted that when Boethius translated *sive in solis nudis intellectibus posita sint* [whether they were posited solely in intellects

head to ask whether universals could be in the human mind without being the work of the mind.

844. Aristotle, who lived at a time when the question of universals had already been seen under many aspects, showed his perplexity about the matter, and nothing can be more difficult than reconciling all the places in his works where he discusses the topic.⁷⁹

He says that the universal is *in multis* [in many things] and *praeter multa* [outside many things] but notes that the universal is particularised in each of many things. If however each real thing is particular, how can there be the universal? Sometimes he has recourse to a vague expression: he does not say that the universals are in sensible things but concern sensible things. Porphyry repeated this expression (περί τα ὑφεστῶτα). Boethius also says that the universals are things truly understood, and adds: 'They are CONGLUTINATED in all things and JOINED in some way.'⁸⁰ He adds that Aristotle would not have dealt with the matter, 'unless he saw them INTIMATE in things and UNITED TO them in some way.'⁸⁰

These are true admissions, extracted from these philosophers by the force of truth. They could not directly see, nor had the courage to say, that finite ens resulted from a mental union of a particular real with a universal. Nevertheless they said it, just as they say it in the above quotations without attempting to explain the expressions which they felt obliged to use. However this composition of finite ens was convenient to them for abstracting the universal from individual entia. In fact, they could not abstract it if it were not there and they had not posited it. But when they had taken this first step and found the *unicum*

without content], he did not clearly present the thought of the Greek phrase. The Greek contains subjectivity, which is lacking in the Latin. *Ouvrages inédits d'Abélard, Introduction*, 62.

⁷⁹ Cf. Cousin: *De la Métaphysique d'Aristote*, where he collected all the places of Aristotle dealing with the theory of ideas. Boethius (and also the Scholastics) understood Aristotle's opinion about universals in this way: 'Plato thinks that genera and species and the rest are understood not only as universals but also are and subsist outside bodies. Aristotle however thinks universals and incorporeal things, although understood, subsist in sense things'⁸⁰ (Boethius, *opp.*, edit. Bas., 1545, p. 56).

⁸⁰ In the first Commentary in the dialogue with Porphyry's Introduction.

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praeter multa [the one thing outside many things], they could not say they had it in their grasp. Hence, they reduced the universal to a species which the mind formed for itself by abstraction, separating like from unlike.⁸¹ The universal thus remained something mostly subjective; it is the mind that adds the *intentio universalitatis* [the understanding of universality], as the Scholastics later said.

These early philosophers considered it absurd that the universal could stand on its own, precisely because they posited the essential characteristic of the universal in that it was something *common* to many things. But if the universal were reduced solely to something common to many things, it could not absolutely be outside many things. From this characteristic that it was something common, Aristotle deduced the arguments attacking Plato's universal. But his arguments totally collapse as soon as it is denied that the first, essential property of the universal is to be common to many things; on the contrary, the universal, before it is common to many things, simply is. And because it is, it also has the essential property not *to be* but *to be able to be*, common to many things by means of the mind.

845. Let us take Aristotle's two principal arguments, repeated by Boethius, and solve them.

ARGUMENT 1: 'All that is simultaneously common to many things cannot in itself be one; that which is common is common to many things, particularly when the same thing must be simultaneously in many things. Thus, in all species, no matter how many, there is one genus, and the individual species do not have a part of the genus but each has all of it simultaneously. Consequently, the whole genus posited simultaneously in many individual things cannot be one, because it is impossible that what is simultaneously and totally in many is itself one in number. In this case therefore, the genus cannot be some kind of one but will be totally nothing because all that is, is because it is one. The same must be said of species.'⁸²

⁸¹ Boethius says: 'We think universals. Species is to be considered simply as thought taken from a number of unlike individuals with a substantial likeness. Genus however is thought taken from the likeness of species' (Second Commentary on Porphyry).

⁸² Boethius, *opp.*, edit. Bas., 1546, p. 54.

The whole of this argument is founded on the notion of what is *common*, as we can see, but it loses all its force when compared with the teaching I have given, because:

1. The universal, prior to being common to many finite realities, is one (and is in the eternal mind). Strictly speaking it is solely *initial being*, which is essentially one and totally simple, as we have seen.

2. When something is common, it is not common in the way Boethius describes, as if it were totally in individual things and separate, just as individual things are separate; if it were, it would become many. On the contrary, this way is absurd as soon as it is stated. No thing, numerically the same, can be totally in individual things and be separate from itself in the way that individual things are separate from each other: it is manifestly absurd that a thing be separate from itself. Boethius, and Aristotle before him, conceived the problem in this way because they both did not see that the nature alone of the finite *real* constitutes individual things, and that the *universal* has a different nature so that all individual real things are united to the universal, which remains one and undivided. Hence, although the universal is in no way totally in individual real things, all individual real things are certainly united to the universal. Through this union they become ens, but not one ens rather than another. On the other hand, it is certainly not absurd to think that what is one and identical can unite simultaneously with many individual things without itself being divided, because unity is predicated of it, and plurality of the individual things. It is not absurd that finite entia are many because this plurality arises from the many real but improper terms of the same being. Nor is it absurd that one, as a universal, is found in many entia because the universal remains one and identical in the many. What is proper and individual to them does not come from this universal; what comes from the universal is solely what they have in common, which in no way multiplies them.

3. It is also false that when a genus is considered in its virtuality and potentiality, all of it is in each of its species. No individual species exhausts this potentiality of a genus. The only truth here is that the whole genus is initially present in each species, that is, is present as initial being which makes

known the generic essence severed from its terms, but not with the potentiality for these terms.

ARGUMENT II: 'If however there is the genus and the species, but it is many and not numerically one, it will not be the ultimate genus; there will be a genus above it which includes the multiplicity under one name. Just as animals are not necessarily identical, although they have something similar and will therefore require their genera, so the genus that is in the many and hence multiple, even if it has some likeness in so far as a genus, is not one, because it is in the many. We will therefore have to find another genus of that genus and, when found (and repeating the same argument), look for a third genus, and so on to infinity.'⁸³

If we keep in mind what has been said, the reply to this argument is not difficult. I deny outright that the universal, for example, a genus, is many, or that it is divided in and with the species. The universal is always one and totally simple, although it has several terms which are the (non-ultimate) species and has, as ultimate terms, the individual real things of its different species.

§15. *The error of ontological pantheism*

846. At this stage it is fitting to reply to the objections of those who profess ontological pantheism. They argue:

You say that being is the first act of all things whether finite or infinite, so that they are always determinations and terms of being. Hence, being is the subject of such passions. There is therefore only one subject, which is being. Everything else, that is, the universe and all it contains, everything we conceive, is simply passion and attribute of only one subject. Consequently, if there is only one subject, there is only one substance. We pantheists agree with all that; you are with us.

Moreover, the proof that our system (pantheism) is not only true but inevitable is the fact that you fall into it wherever you turn. A little earlier, you taught (in union with St. Thomas Aquinas) that all the genera of things are conceived *ex additione ad ens* [by addition to being] and

⁸³ Boethius, *opp.*, edit. Bas., 1546, p. 54.

that this addition made to being is, when we conceive other things, the concept of the *mode of being*. If all the variety of things can be reduced to the mode of being, only one being, only one subject of its modes, remains.

847. A firm foundation for the reply to both these arguments is the distinction I made earlier.

Relative to the first, two classes of subjects must be distinguished: those I have called *antecedent*, or *antesubjects*, and those I will call *innate subjects*, or simply subjects. The antecedent subject, or antesubject, is the act which necessarily precedes some nature and on which the nature depends. But because this act precedes, it does not constitute the nature — it is a kind of prelude to it, it is its root or indispensable condition. The innate subject, on the other hand, constitutes the nature in question.

This distinction throws into relief the great weakness of the first argument in favour of pantheism. That all things have only one subject is not denied; on the contrary it is admitted precisely because this subject, relative to finite realities, is not an innate subject, as if it were something constituting them, but is an antesubject-ens, which precedes them and does not constitute the real nature; it simply makes this real nature be. This act is given equally to all the diverse finite realities, without determining the nature of any of them. Hence, this antesubject does not cause all things to be one divine nature, nor does it remove the plurality of real, innate subjects, which constitute the diverse natures.

This distinction also offers the solution to the second argument in favour of pantheism and justifies the way Aquinas expresses himself when he calls all finite things and everything predicable of being ‘modes’ of being. The subject to which these modes refer is not a subject innate in things but is their antesubject. This antesubject, although one, does not in any way obstruct the many natural, innate subjects (on the contrary it makes them to be). These innate subjects, relative to themselves, are first acts ([cf. 770]) and not modes — modes pertain to a class of second acts. Consequently, they can be relative to being, which is the prior act that does not constitute their nature but simply makes it be. They are many and differ naturally from the antesubject, of which they are not naturally modes; they are

modes through the nature of being, an act prior to them. For example, the first stones laid as foundation of a house are the foundation of a house, but this does not exclude the fact that under these first stones there is the earth which supports both the foundation and the whole house, but is not the house.⁸⁴

848. As a result of what has been said, Francisco Suarez' opinion that 'being is not naturally distinct from the lower entities in which it is'⁸⁵ cannot be maintained.

In my opinion the consequences of this thesis lead to pantheism.⁸⁶

In fact I have distinguished between the *proper* and *improper determinations* of being.

The proper determinations complete being *in se*, making it absolute being. The improper determinations are all finite determinations; they are not so much determinations of being as finite terms of its action.

But the first of these determinations are not in any way entities that are *lower* than being (Suarez' expression). They are complete, absolute being itself, and as such cannot be separated from being. If the human mind distinguishes them, it does so through its own limitation and afterwards acknowledges that the distinction it posits is not true. Thus, by means of reflection, it corrects the imperfection of its first mental conception.

But the finite determinations, the finite terms of the action of being, as realities composing the universe, differ totally in nature from the nature of being, as I have said. The distinction between them and being is founded in the nature of things, and

⁸⁴ In this sense St. Thomas' teaching is true, namely that 'there is nothing outside the essence of universal being' (*De Verit.*, 21: 1), and that *quaelibet natura essentialiter est ens* [any nature whatsoever is essentially being] (*ibid.*, 1: 1). Also in this sense he considers the ten genera into which Aristotle classified all entia as contractions and restrictions of the same being. He says, 'Substance, quantity, quality and what is contained in them CONstrict BEING by applying it to SOME quiddity or nature'* (*S.T.*, I, q. 5, art. 3, ad 1), that is, by adding to it some limitation and determination.

⁸⁵ The actual words of Suarez' thesis are: 'It must be said that the objective concept of being in so far as it exists in a thing is not of something distinct from the nature of the thing and separate from the lower things in which it exists'* (*Metaphysic. Disputat.*, d. 2, s. 3, 7).

⁸⁶ Cf. above.

being can be separated from them by a direct, absolute abstraction. An indirect abstraction can also be used to separate finite realities from being, but through this abstraction they are not thought without being: in this thought another act of reflection separates them from the being with which they are thought.

This distinction seems to have escaped Suarez (and, we may say, many other Scholastics). According to him, being, as conceived by the mind, is not distinguished from God. He therefore concluded that neither can it be distinguished from creatures. He argued: 'The concept of being is separate not only from creatures but also from God. But in God the concept of being as such is not distinguished by nature from the concept of such being, that is, of uncreated or infinite being. Therefore, it is not distinguished in all other beings.'⁸⁷ This induction is quite false and defective in many ways.

Being, separated from creatures and God, that is, undetermined being, is in my opinion the object of natural intuition. The concept of this being is not God nor his indetermination but simply the means of our knowledge. This undetermined being makes us know God by demonstrating the necessity of his proper determinations that are hidden from our intuition. When we think this undetermined being as having its determinations, it presents to our mind an object which is no longer undetermined but God himself, absolute being. For this reason I normally say that the undetermined being of intuition is an *appurtenance of God* but not God, and if to this undetermined being we add its proper determinations, it has everything it needs to be God. Consequently, when we are speaking about the concept of the being that is in God, we are not talking about undetermined being. Nevertheless, in both these beings there is the *same essence*, and from this point of view there is no distinction. That is why I call undetermined being *divine*, although we cannot call it *God*, except when it is determined. We can demonstrate this identity of essence also in the following way.

Intuition shows us being as absolutely being, but does not show its terms.

Being, as absolutely being, shows us that when its essence is intuited, it could not absolutely be, without its terms. We

⁸⁷ [*Metaphys. Disp.*, d. 2, s. 3, 10.]

conclude therefore that it has these terms, although they are hidden from us.

Being with its terms is absolute being, God.

Hence, although divine being and the being we intuit have the same *essence of being*, intuited being has the incomplete essence of being and therefore cannot merit the name 'God'; divine being has the complete essence and merits this name.

In this sense there is no distinction between the concept of God and the concept of being, when the latter is considered in God, which is precisely himself, completed being.

This argument is not valid for finite realities. They do not make being *in se* complete and therefore do not naturally pertain to it. In them, being is only accidental and contingent such that they can be thought (as possible) even if they are not. If we are talking about undetermined, potential being, it lacks these realities: they do not lack it, but are not it, and are therefore *naturally* distinct from it. Consequently, we cannot argue, as Suarez does, from what the concept of being is, relative to God (that is, realised in God), to what the same concept is relative to finite natures.

849. When John Scotus said that being is not included in the *ultimate differences*⁸⁸ he possibly meant that it is not included in finite realities because *reality* is truly the ultimate difference. All other differences are prior to reality because they are present in the idea, that is, in the ideal form that precedes finite reality. If this were Scotus' mind he was certainly not wrong. But I do not wish to engage in an historical question discussed so much among the Scholastics. I prefer to note that perhaps Suarez' error arose from his confusing real things with their concept.

⁸⁸ In 1, d. 3, q. 3 — d. 8, q. 2 — In 2, d. 3, q. 6. Scotus also says that being is not included in the intrinsic modes by which it is determined in the first ten genera (the Aristotelian categories), nor is it included in the passions proper to it which are interchangeable with it, and by means of it are positive, real properties (In 2, d. 3, q. 1, *ad arg.*). Scotus, who was capable of powerful abstraction, could indeed separate the intrinsic order from being and could consider this separate order as not including being. This would explain the real, formal distinction he made between the persons and the divine nature, because this teaching would be an exaggeration of that principle. By means of the same abstractive separation, he seems to have considered the passions of being as separate from being. In other words, being is not included in them.

Indeed, he indiscriminately uses the words 'being' and 'concept of being', 'thing' and 'concept of thing', so that we do not know whether he is speaking about a thing or its concept.⁸⁹ But if we are talking about the concept of finite realities, they are certainly entia when we conceive and think them, and hence being is contained in their concept. But our question is totally different: it concerns *real things* separate from their concept, that is, real (finite) things purely as real, not as conceived and thought. In this case, I say, we indirectly understand that they are not entia or conceived. Hence, being is not in them, although when our mind adds being to them (and they always have it added if they exist, but not added through their own power but through the power of being), they appear to be entia and *have* that being which they *are* not. These real things, conceived in this way, are truly the ultimate differences observable in finite entia. Any other difference that is not reality can be common to many, but these many must have an ultimate difference to distinguish them and make them many. But when we have come to reality, there is no longer anything common, and no other difference is necessary, because we have come to the individual, in which there is nothing common at all.⁹⁰

§16. *The dialectical antesubject*

850. If we look at the arguments used to prove ontological pantheism, it is not difficult to discover their sole source. I have already discussed this source, which is an imperfect teaching about *subject*. I now return to it.

851. As I have said, 'subject', generally understood, means for me any entity whatsoever to which some other act or passion or mode is attributed, so that the entity is conceived as logically prior to all these other things that, generally speaking, can take the form of a predicate.

⁸⁹ When he says, for example: 'We must therefore say that being, as intrinsic being, is included in every being and in every concept of positive difference or of mode of real being'* (*Metaphy. Disp.*, d. 2, s. 5, 16), he is speaking sometimes about being, sometimes about its concept.

⁹⁰ For reality as the principle of individuation, see *AMS*, 782–788.

Being is the antesubject of every other act and of all its terms, whether these are proper or improper. At the same time, it is a *mere abstract form* ([cf. 805–819]) that by means of mental activity can be added to and placed before anything whatsoever as an antecedent subject, whether the thing is presented to us in its nature or by means of a word used in its place. Although this form is necessary to everything, it is not necessary to what is not included in everything: it is not necessary to nothingness, to a contradiction or even to an abstract accident when this is taken as an ens. Nevertheless nothingness presents itself to the mind as something by virtue of a word and a relationship, which is something. Similarly, what is contradictory is presented by means of several signs or elements, between which the mind, not seeing the opposition, supposes no opposition. Even when the mind expresses the opposition, it does not understand it as the true opposition it is. We can say the same about everything that does not have the condition and nature of subject or of ens. Before the mind applies being to these appearances, it is not obliged to examine whether they are determinations of being, indeed it cannot do this before applying being (which would mean examining them before they are conceived). As a result, it conceives them in whatever way it can, that is, confusedly and symbolically, and then uses reflection to clarify this kind of mental conception.

But because all these things are not acts of being, we can distinguish between a *purely dialectical antesubject* and an *ontological antesubject*. The purely dialectical antesubject is that which the mind posits prior to supposed entities in its act of conceiving them, although they are not entities, like nothingness, absurdities and abstract accidents. The ontological antesubject is that which the mind posits prior to true successive acts or terms of being.

The dialectical antesubject can be defined generally as ‘that antesubject which the mind requires to conceive things’. The mind conceives things through the act of being, which appears to it as absolutely being and at the same time intelligible *per se*. Hence, being constitutes an antesubject which is simultaneously ontological and dialectical.

1. If we apply this teaching to God, clearly the antesubject ceases because being acquires the meaning of subject, which is God himself.

2. If we apply it to finite entities, being is not a subject but an antesubject that is simultaneously ontological and dialectical.

3. If we apply it to entities that the human mind supposes, because of other entities that it considers as their signs (when in fact the supposed entities are not), being has the function of a *dialectical* antesubject purely and simply.

852. Many antesubjects can be distinguished in finite entia, the first of which is being. Below this there is a whole range, which includes generic and specific antesubjects. The final antesubject is the predicated, full, specific essence.

In these real finite entia, the subject, the act of the subject and the essence are distinct, but this is not the case in being ([cf. 768–772]).

When we say that some particular essence is realised, for example, the essence of the human being, we are simply saying that the human being we conceived as possible in his essence, is now real. This way of speaking supposes 1. the mental conception of the human being *in se*, to whom, by means of reflection, the mind has not yet added either an ideal or a real form; 2. this unique human being can be thought with either form, and 3. understood in this way, is the subject of both ideality and reality.

So, this human being, indifferent to both forms, is simultaneously an *ontological* and a *dialectical antesubject* because conceived by reflection, now as an intelligible ens, now as being really *in se*, not being simply *in se* to the mind.

However, this distinction is not found in being, despite the relationship which being has with each of the three forms. In absolute being, which is pure being, there is no antesubject relative to it, but there is the first antesubject of all finite things. This antesubject is found by a much higher reflection that thinks of the conditions of absolute being. Because the human mind has being from the beginning as a definite intelligible form standing on its own, it applies this form to whatever it likes. So, just as it grants being to what has no being, it thinks God in the same form. It thus considers being as a form distinct from the God that it affirms, that is, as an antesubject in respect of God. But this way of conceiving God, although found in the most common expressions, is imperfect. For example, when we say: ‘God

is that being which is endowed with every perfection', we are supposing that 'God is one of the particular beings' and not essentially being. The antesubject, which in expressions of this kind is applied to God, is purely dialectical but with this difference from the antisubjects I discussed above: they were formal being applied to non-being. Hence, the illusion did not consist in the subject, but in the act attributed to the subject, whereas in this last case the illusion does not consist in the act attributed to the subject, because this act is God, but in the formal subject added to the act when the subject does not exist either as purely formal or as separate from the act, that is, from God. Consequently, purely dialectical antesubjects are of two kinds: those *fixed to non-being* and those that are *nothing*.

853. Similar to the distinction between purely dialectical and ontological antesubjects is the distinction we can see between subjects.

The subject, as opposed to the antesubject, is 'an entity in which the (predicated) essence is conceived as a principle which directly controls some act of its own'. Here the word 'act' includes every *passion, mode* and *term* — all these things follow upon some activity of the ens.

Therefore, subjects are as many as the essences that the human mind can conceive. But we can think certain essences that are either absurd (that is, essences supposed such by the mind but which truly are not) or as abstracts or as not having *per se* the form of a subject. Hence, there are also purely *dialectical subjects* and *subjects* which we can call *proper*, reserving the name 'ontological' for antesubjects.

The necessity of these distinctions has always been known. The Scholastics, following Aristotle, distinguished the *subiectum praedicationis* [the subject of predication] from the *subiectum inhaesionis* [the subject of inhesion]. Aquinas often found it necessary to distinguish the *subiectum naturae* [the subject of nature] from the *subiectum locutionis* [the subject of speech].⁹¹ The subject of predication corresponds to the dialectical subject understood most generally; the subject of inhesion or of nature corresponds to what I call proper subject.

If these two subjects are opposites of each other, one excludes

⁹¹ In 3 Dist. 1, q. 2, art. 5, ad 4um; Dist. 6, q. 1, art. 1, ad q. 2.

the other. If they are not opposites, the subject of predication can also be a subject of nature or of inhesion, that is, a proper subject.

§17. *Solution to the Scholastics' question: 'Is being predicated essentially of finite entia?'*

854. This question follows naturally from what we have discussed.

There were three conflicting opinions:

1. Avicenna said that ens is an *accident* common to all existing things; it is the existence that happened to things and could be either given them or taken away. He concluded that being is predicated accidentally of things.⁹²

2. Cajetan maintained that Avicenna must be criticised for calling ens an accidental predicate, when properly speaking being is not an accident but a substantial act. However he must not be criticised for denying that ens is an essential or quidditative predicate.⁹³ According to Cajetan, it is true that ens is outside the quiddity of things, and he confirms this with the authority of St. Thomas who says that being is predicated essentially only of God.⁹⁴

3. Suarez and others distinguished two meanings for 'ens': 1. it can simply be a participle of the verb 'to be', in which case it means that which has the act of being as exercised, and therefore cannot be an essential predicate of finite things but only of God; or 2. it can be taken as a noun with the formal meaning of the essence of the thing, whether it means the thing in act or in potency.⁹⁵ Sometimes even St. Thomas understood the word in this sense.⁹⁶ Hence, according to Suarez, 'ens'

⁹² Cf. St. Thomas in 4 *Metaphy.*, 3, and in 10, 8.

⁹³ Op. *De Ente et essentia*, c. 4.

⁹⁴ *S.T.*, I, q. 3, arts. 4 & 5; *C.G.*, I, 25–26; *Quodlib.*, 2, 3.

⁹⁵ *Metaph.*, dd., d. 2, s. 4.

⁹⁶ St. Thomas, after speaking in *Quodlibeto* 2, art. 3 about ens as a name taken from actual being, adds: 'But it is true that this name "ens", referring to the thing to which being pertains, means therefore the essence of the thing and is divided into ten genera.'*

means that its most common concept [is predicated] quidditatively of all things and is an essential predicate.

855. I agree with Suarez that 'ens' is used to mean finite things, whether they exist or not, and that this meaning differs from 'ens' understood as a pure participle. A pure participle is a kind of adjective united to a subject but it is also used as a noun in which the subject is understood, and this is the meaning of 'ens'. But in our case Suarez fails to note that ens is never predicated absolutely of finite things. For example, we do not say, 'This body is ens' but 'This body is an ens'. Ens is predicated absolutely only of God and we say, 'God is ens' or 'Ens is God', but it is not predicated absolutely of finite things whether in the sense of a participle of the verb 'to be' or of a common noun. When ens seems to be predicated of things, its meaning is limited; it is not pure ens that is predicated. 'Ens', simply understood, is in no way predicated of finite things, whether it is essential or substantial or accidental. When we say, for example, 'this ens', the essence of the thing (the thing itself) is indicated by 'this', not by 'ens'; 'ens' here indicates solely what is. Hence, 'this ens' is the same as 'this which is'. It is therefore incorrect to say that 'ens', no matter how used, always means the essence of the finite thing or the finite thing itself; on the contrary it means the finite thing only in so far as it is, only in so far as it has the act of being.

Granted this, a finite thing can be viewed in two modes: 1. as ens, that is, as having the act of being, or 2. as that in which being terminates, as reality separate from the act of being. Understood in the first mode, *being* is predicated *of ens* because here 'being' indicates the act, and 'ens' indicates what the act indicates — ens is not predicated of the thing, which would be the same as predicating ens of ens. Thus, saying 'This is an ens' is the same as saying this is what being is predicated of, because what being is predicated of is precisely an ens. But that which being is predicated of before this predication, that is, separate from its predicate, is not ens but only a term of ens. Hence, confusion arises due to the intermingling of the meaning of 'ens' and of 'being'. Being, in fact, is an analytical predicate of ens. When we speak about (limited) ens, we are talking about something composite: limited ens is composed of the act of being (which is always the same) and its term (which is not being, and varies). This explains

the diversity of finite entia. If we then ask whether being is an essential or accidental predicate of finite entia, I answer that it is neither of these but is an antecedent predicate or an antepredicate, as I said earlier. In other words, it is a predicate which precedes the essence and reality of the thing. It does not constitute what the thing is but makes it be, whatever it is.

Aristotle also saw this when he said that '*ens* and one are not included in the definition of things'.⁹⁷ This opinion is valid for finite things, which, according to Aristotle, are principally defined by the nearest genus and its difference, but not by the act of being common to all things whatever their genus or species. If however, instead of saying '*ens*', Aristotle had said that '*being*' is not involved in the definition, the opinion would have been a more absolute truth because being can certainly be part of the definition of finite things. For example, we can say: man is an *ens* that etc. Not only is being included in the word '*ens*' but also the essence in which being terminates, that is, the subject. These two parts therefore express first '*that*' and second '*which is*'. But in the word '*being*' only the act of being is meant without any of its terms or its subject, although the subject is understood as present and implicit when being is taken in an absolute sense.

856. Summarising all that has been said, we can say:

1. Being is neither an essential nor substantial nor accidental predicate of finite things; it is an *antepredicate*, that is, a predicate of *essential relationship*.

2. Absolutely speaking, *ens* is not a predicate of any kind. But if we add some limitation, for example, '*this ens*' or '*such and such an ens*', then an *ens* and the union is not a simple predicate but '*the repetition of the universalised subject united with the antepredicate*'. For example, when I say, '*This man is an ens*', I am saying, '*This man is THAT which has the act of being.*' The word '*THAT*' indicates the subject which has the act of being in its universal quality of subject; the words '*which has the act of being*' indicate the antepredicate of the subject. Moreover, although '*THAT*' is universalised because it expresses

⁹⁷ Οὐκ ἔνεστιν ἐν τοῖς ὁρισμοῖς οὔτε τὸ ὄν οὔτε τὸ ἐν (*Metaphy.*, 12, H. p. 1045, Bekkeri edition [Loeb 8: 6b, 3]). Among the Greek authors, even the best, we find many equivocations in the use of the word ὄν.

any subject whatsoever, it is understood by the mind as separate from being, as the (improper) term of being. Used as subject in the statement that contains it, 'THAT' does not determine the kind of subject; it simply informs us that it must be determined by the monosyllable 'AN' added to ens in the statement, 'This man is an ens.' Ens is therefore a predicate when it predicates the subject with the quality of subject and at the same time antepredicates being of this subject. In so far as it predicates the subject with the quality of subject, it is certainly an essential predicate, but it has the same essence as the subject, and this essence can be substantial, accidental, ideal, real, dialectical, etc. In so far as it antepredicates the act of being of this subject, it is an antepredicate.

§18. *The origin of rationalism and supernaturalism*

857. The two different modes in which being is thought, first as undetermined and then as determined, do not affect being: it remains the same. But because the identity is not total, we need to see where it is incomplete.

When our mind thinks undetermined being, it thinks it as absolutely being, and thinks it like this even when it adds the terms of being. This double manner of thinking being does not affect its identity because in both modes what is thought is not something that relatively is, but is being that absolutely is.

Moreover, the terms of being, which are hidden from the human mind, are added later, and the being which receives the terms is the same being as before and, in this respect, is identical.⁹⁸

⁹⁸ Francisco Suarez may not have grasped the distinction between the *proper* and *improper* terms of being. Nevertheless when he came to the question whether ens contracts and, as it were, splits into different genera and the way in which it differs from these genera, he said that genera should not be understood as a composition but as an expression. In other words, ens in these genera was the same as before but determined: 'The fourth opinion, which for me is proved, is that this contraction or determination of the objective concept of ens into lower things must not be understood as a composition but only as an expression of the concept of an ens contained below ens. Consequently every concept of ens and of substance is simple and cannot be broken up into two concepts — they differ solely because ONE IS

Although both undetermined and determined being are unlimited, they differ in this: undetermined being hides its terms, whereas determined being displays them. Nevertheless the terms contained in being but hidden from human intuition perform a useful function: if the terms are given to a sentient-intelligent subject, the subject knows them immediately as pertaining to being (granted that they do pertain to being), and distinguishes what might not be a term of being, for example, nothing, absurdity, etc.

Ontological pantheists err through ignorance of the distinction between the proper and improper terms of being. The proper terms are those that, standing before the mind, complete previously undetermined being and make it absolute. The improper terms are those that appear to the mind as terms of *undetermined* being but not of absolute being. Pantheists take finite realities as terms of absolute being, instead of taking them in the way they appear to the mind, as terms of undetermined being and nothing more. The pantheists do this because they do not accurately distinguish undetermined being from absolute being.

Finite realities *appear* as terms of undetermined being because the mind naturally applies being to them in order to conceive them and, in its act of perception, does not stop to examine their true relationship with being. To conceive them means first to

MORE DETERMINED THAN THE OTHER'* (*Metaphy. Disp.*, d. 2, s. 6–7). From this Suarez deduces: 1. being is present in lower concepts *without composition* because it is not joined with anything foreign to it; it is simply determined (it is true that being is present in lower concepts because concept always supposes ideal being; it is not true however that it is present in the improper terms, that is, in the finite realities cut off from being); 2. the supreme genera are called *conceptus simpliciter simplices* [purely simple concepts], nevertheless being can be abstracted from them *per solam praecisionem intellectus* [solely through division by the intellect]. This does not consist in separating them, that is, separating the formal from the material, or vice versa, as happens in the abstraction of genus from the differences. It consists in considering the object not in a determined mode but according to some similarity or mutual suitability it has with other things, a suitability which relative to being, things have with each other according to their total entities and real modes. Hence, while one level is not cut off from another, the undetermined, confused concept is cut off from the determined concept.

take them as terms of being, and then reflection has the task of determining how they are its terms. In fact, when reflection applies itself to this problem, it finds a blank between initial being and finite realities, and acknowledges that the middle term uniting the two is missing. After long meditation, it learns that the middle term can be only the willed relationship of absolute being. It also learns that being is not the subject of these realities but uniquely the first antesubject. Hence, the realities have their own nature different from this antesubject's nature; united to this antesubject they are known as absolutely being.

858. The two ways of conceiving being, first as undetermined and then as determined, generate two needs and two tendencies in humanity:

1. The need to know every thing by means of undetermined being; in other words, the need to know formally. This gives rise to the tendency to place a total faith in intuited being and its universality. There is also the inclination to believe that just as we know all the things we know by means of intuited being, so everything knowable is included in intuited being and nothing else is needed to attain an absolute knowledge.

2. The need that drives us to go beyond the being that is given us in a total indetermination.

In fact, as real subjects, we are satisfied only by reality. But all the reality given us provides us with nothing more than determinations of intuited being, not determinations which make being absolute. Hence, there is a feeling of poverty and depletion in our knowledge; we need to have something else if being, whole and entire, is to be realised for us or, and this is the same thing, is to acquire its proper terms. This explains the tendency to look everywhere for these terms, the effort to possess them wherever they may be — in short, the tendency to the supernatural.

In every century and in every place, these two needs and tendencies have revealed themselves in humanity in two kinds of philosophy and thought, and produced two classes of philosophical systems: *rationalists* and *supernaturalists*.

Wherever philosophy has been undertaken, rationalism is seen as one of its forms. In India, there was the school of Kapila, perhaps more than 2500 years ago. In our time, we have the

school of Hegel, which sums up the whole of modern rationalism.

The other tendency gave rise to the need, felt everywhere by humanity and throughout the centuries, for a divine revelation, for a manifestation and communication to man of divinity as real being. In Plato this need found a magnificent expression, a language worthy of him.⁹⁹ Humanity naturally desires the manifestation of that absolute being which it knows only negatively, a desire inclining it to faith. This inclination would not exist if, as the realist-ideologists claim, the object of intuition were truly God — indeed, if the human spirit already had this object, it would be satisfied. The tendency itself, however, is a fact which is proof against them and, in my opinion, is the origin of all false religions, all superstitions, oracles and theurgical philosophies.¹⁰⁰

These two tendencies battle against each other and divide the world. In some people the first prevails; hence rationalism and the opposition to admitting any supernatural element. In others the second prevails, giving rise either to superstitious beliefs, or the profession of religion in its truth.

Both tendencies are natural to man: rationalism, because of what is in human nature, and supernaturalism, because of what human nature lacks.

Rationalism seems to make us independent; all knowledge is ours because the means by which we know (which also becomes the object of our knowledge) is naturally in us. This means is also universal so that no knowledge, even supernatural knowledge, can be excluded from it. Everything added by a supernatural authority comes to us from outside, and therefore does not seem to be our own knowledge; only those who are supernaturally disposed can consider it as their own.

The two tendencies can battle against each other but not be totally destroyed. Even when rationalism prevails, man often returns unaware to the supernatural. The very efforts he makes to free himself from rationalism demonstrate that he is urged on

⁹⁹ Cf. *IP*, 1: 70 ss.

¹⁰⁰ Anyone who wishes to see in brief form the testimonies which prove that all peoples acknowledged the existence of an invisible world beyond the human world should read the little work of Signor Giacinto Forni, *Del Mondo degli Spiriti*, Turin, 1851, the first part.

by an invincible need. When the supernatural tendency prevails, the need and force of reasoning accompany him from which he is unable to free himself.

All systems which satisfy only one of the two tendencies are futile. Their reconciliation is also futile if, under the pretext of reconciling them, one of them is sacrificed. Those who, from the Neoplatonists¹⁰¹ to the Giobertians, change the idea into God, reducing everything to the supernatural in words, and everything to the rational in facts, do not assuage either of the two indestructible tendencies.

¹⁰¹ Jamblicus defines the being of the soul as follows: "Therefore, the being of the soul is a certain kind of understanding, that is, understanding god, on whom it depends,"* and adds: "Our being is knowing God because the principal being of the soul is its intellect in which being is the same as understanding divine things through a perpetual act"* (*De' Misteri*).

CHAPTER 4

Recapitulation

859. I will now recapitulate my whole argument; its development could easily have been lost due to the frequent digressions I considered necessary to refute contrary opinions and deal with objections. I had proposed to investigate how the three forms of being are intimately united in the pure object, which is one of the forms.

860. I posited as a fundamental truth that the *object* can be considered in two modes, as an *absolute object*, or as an *ideal object* in that it is present to the human subject in the natural and permanent intuition which constitutes human reason.

The *absolute object* and the *object of human intuition* can be called two objects because they differ entitatively, but this duality is posited by the contemplating mind. If we prescind from the subjective mind, there is only the *absolute object*, subsisting fully in itself, whereas the ideal object does not subsist but depends on the abstracting mind, first on the free, divine mind, and then, for every human being, on subjective intuition. It has the nature of an abstract and is in the absolute object in the way that what is abstract is contained in what is subsistent. The existence of the ideal object is relative to the mind, which is why it is called *ideal object*. Hence, the difference between the two thinkable objects is the difference between the *subsistent* and the *non-subsistent*, between the subsistent and the purely ideal. Their identity is partial, in so far as the ideal object is contained in the absolute object. Hence the ideal object presents an essence which is identically in the absolute object but united to the rest.

Being is present in both the *absolute object* and the *ideal object*; in the *absolute object*, it is absolute and full; in the *ideal object* it manifests itself as only virtual, initial being without terms. Reflection, following later, distinguishes in each of the objects 1. being, seen in both of them, and 2. the form in which being appears, the form called *objectivity*.

Objectivity, considered separately from being, is the product

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of a second abstraction in which being is excluded and is thus left in full virtuality. But this is not the case with the *object*, whether the absolute object or the object of intuition. This is clear from the form of the word 'object' which means *objectivity already predicated* and therefore supposes a *being*. Through reflection therefore we discover that the *object* can be broken down into two abstract elements 1. being, and 2. objectivity.

861. From this I deduced the intimate connection between the object and being. *Being* is always necessarily present in the object such that the object cannot be thought without it and, vice versa, being can always receive the form of *object*.

We humans see being in the object primarily through direct intuition which, although terminating in being, does not apprehend the objectivity of being. This *objectivity* constitutes the relationship of being with the intuiting mind. However, because the relationship is hidden from intuition and found only afterwards by reflection, I concluded that *being* is always intuited *as it is in se* without any relationship with the mind. Therefore, *being*, present to the *intuition of the mind*, and being *in se*, are the same; *being* in fact could not be present to the intuition of the mind except by presenting itself to this intuition *in se* and eliminating from itself the intuiting mind. Hence, to exist to intuition is not an existence purely relative to the intuiting mind, but is first and necessarily an existence *in se*, as if the mind were not. Being therefore appears *in se* to intuition.

After the mind has intuited *being in se*, reflection follows and, discovering that this *being in se* is *object* of the mind, concludes that to be object of the mind and to be *in se* are not contradictory such that one excludes or negates the other. Their properties stand together and are in fact so intimately bound that one produces the other and is its essential condition, that is, *existence in se* produces existence present to *intuition*, and intuition, by its essence, is a faculty for seeing things in themselves. These two things are so united that reflection gives the name 'objective form' to this vision of being *in se*, so that to see objectively and to see *in se* are the same. This totally separates intelligence from sense and, in opposition to all scepticism, intelligence shows itself to be essentially the faculty of truth (*Logica*, 304–306, 1054).

But reflection soon comes up against an antinomy. After

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acknowledging that the mind intuitively being *in se*, it cannot explain how everything the mind intuitively exists *in se*. Indeed it goes further and acknowledges that the *being* of intuition, although intuited as *being in se*, cannot be *in se*: how could it be *in se* if it has no subsistence *in se*, separate from the mind intuiting it? Hence, on the one hand intuition shows to the mind a being *in se*, on the other the mind understands that this being does not have the conditions for existing *in se*, because among these conditions is determination but being *in se* is undetermined. This antinomy is so great that many, having given up in face of the difficulty, have doubted the truth of intuition. But a more robust, persistent reflection can reconcile the apparently contradictory terms, in the following way. On the one hand intuition tells me that being is absolutely *in se*, and I cannot disbelieve this, because if for any reason I do disbelieve it (for example, because of the antinomy I encounter), I am by this very fact making an act of faith in my reason and hence in intuition, the principle of my reason: I would be simultaneously believing and disbelieving intuition. On the other hand, because the *being* which I see by intuition as having being *in se* lacks the conditions necessary to exist *in se*, I can only conclude that these conditions must be present but hidden from my intuition. The antinomy therefore disappears.

Where does this lead me? It makes me aware that *being in se*, intuited by me, must be an appurtenance of *being in se* and not all of being *in se*; it must be something abstracted from all of being. Hence, just as everything in really subsistent *being in se*, is *in se*, so *being seen by intuition* is *in se*, but as a part of complete being, that is, as a part abstracted from complete being which is absolutely *in se*. But *being in se*, seen through intuition, has the form of objectivity; it is object. Hence an *absolute Object* exists, of which intuition sees only the beginning and not the terms, and although these terms are invisible to it, it does not *deny* them. Intuition is therefore truthful because, although it manifests only a part of the *absolute Object*, it does not deny the other part.

862. This demonstration of the existence of an *absolute Object*, which must contain *absolute being*, removes the difficulty of understanding how the other two forms of being are also in this absolute Object, which would not be absolute if it

did not have all its three forms. Furthermore, the Object would not be absolute and subsistent *in se*, if it did not have subjectivity. It is therefore a living and subsistent subject in the objective form, and consequently, as I have said, also with the moral form.

863. But the most important thing to be demonstrated is the intimate connection between our mind and *being*, and because of this intimate connection, I called it *dianoetical* being. As I have shown, the connection is essential to being precisely because being would not be being if it had no relationship to a mind. I said that if being is considered totally abstract from the mind (I called this being *anoetical*), it is considered imperfectly, and to *deny* the connection is to destroy being.

But now a new antinomy presents itself. *To be in se* means to exist independently of the mind that intuits it. But having a *necessary relationship* with a mind seems the opposite of being *in se*. Therefore, if being depends on a mind, it is no longer *in se*. This is the antinomy presented to our thought. Let us see how it can be resolved.

The relationship or connection of *being* with a mind can be considered in two modes, either between being and a mind which simply intuits it, as is the case with the human mind, or, as reflection discovers it, between the *being in se* of intuition and intuition itself, that is, the intuiting mind. The first case concerns anoetical being because the human mind sees being alone, without a relationship with the mind. In this mode, being is not only distinct from the mind but totally separate from it, which explains the first part of the antinomy: 'being *in se* is independent of the mind intuiting it.' In the second case, the connection, as we have seen, does not destroy the property of being, that is, *being in se*, but rather establishes it because it shows that being is the object of intelligence; in other words, being has a connection with intelligence precisely in so far as it is *in se*. Consequently, if being is to be object, it must be *in se*, yet cannot be seen *in se* except in the object. However, if I have shown that being could not be object if it were not *in se*, I need to show the opposite, that it could not be *in se* if it were not object.

I demonstrated this when I proved that if being were neither to itself nor to others, it would not in any way be. If there were no mind, being would be neither to itself nor to anything else: a

being which had no mind and hence no consciousness would not be to itself. Furthermore, if there were no mind outside it, it would not be to others. Consequently, because it would be neither to itself nor to others, it would not be at all. Being, therefore, in its notion involves a mind, and hence is essentially *object* of a mind.

This mind intuitively being and cannot intuit it in any other mode than as having being *in se*. But this mind can be in being, or only outside it as in human intuition. If the mind that knows object-being were solely outside this object-being and not in it, then being would not be to itself but only to others. Being, however, cannot be only to others, for the following reason, which I have already given. If we suppose that a mind sees being, it sees it as having being *in se*. But if this being is not to itself, it cannot be *in se* but only in the mind intuiting it. Such a being therefore cannot exist *in se* if it lacks the necessary conditions. These conditions, which remain hidden from but not denied by intuition, reduce to the one condition of having consciousness of self. Hence, because they reduce to having consciousness of self, being, intuited by the mind without consciousness, must be simply an abstract of complete, absolute being. Therefore, we have absolute Being, which has consciousness of itself, which means that it is Mind that has being (that is, it is subject) and simultaneously is absolute Object of this mind. Thus, being has essentially the two forms of subjectivity and objectivity, one reciprocally in the other, and the same absolute Being is in both of these indivisible forms.

864. Granted therefore that the purely ideal being of human intuition must be considered an abstract of the absolute Object and not a complete, absolute Object, we must see how we know all realities in it.

Abstract things, in so far as abstract, are productions of a mind (I am speaking about the divine mind, not the human mind relative to ideal being) and, because they are productions of the mind, are not connected with concrete things. They are therefore free forms which the mind can apply to anything it wishes.

In ideal being we find two abstract forms, one through intuition, which is the subjective form of being *in se*, the other through reflection, the objective form.

The mind applies these two forms, which are under its control, to anything it wishes.

By means of *perception*, it applies the first form of *being in se* to all feelable realities and thus conceives them as entia-subjects.

It applies the second form of *objectivity* by means of reflection and sees that all these entia-subjects are *objects* of the perceiving mind. It concludes that everything it thinks is thought in the *objective form*, that is, that all realities are contained in the object.

When by means of perception it applies the subjective form of being *in se* to realities, these are either intelligent subjects or not. If intelligent subjects, they are truly *in se* and, to a certain degree, completely so; the mind simply applies the form of subject to what is subject and thus makes this subject knowable. But such subjects are subjects because they themselves intuit being *in se* and, in it, are knowable to themselves. Furthermore, by means of the act through which they are knowable to themselves and are thus true subjects, they unite being to a feeling principle which through the intuition of being becomes intellective and thus makes them true subjects. But how, in intuition, is being applied to the feeling principle? It is applied (in the fundamental perception) *as a form of being in se* and this form constitutes intelligibility. The subjects therefore become, simultaneously and with one act, *knowable* and *knowing*. Reflection then sees that as knowable they are *objects*, and as knowing, *subjects*. Thus, they become *subjects* at the point where they become *objects* (at least in proximate potency or as a natural habit). Hence the finite subject, that is, the complete subject, which is simply that which is intelligent, cannot be such unless it has the two forms of objectivity and *subjectivity* in the same place. Objectivity however is not the subject itself but an essential condition and direct cause of it — the subject is *subject* and only subject. Being therefore is not confused with the finite complete *subject* but is necessarily present to it as its direct cause.

865. Nevertheless, whenever our mind applies the form of being *in se* to a *reality* which is not, or does not itself become *knowing*, and when consequently, through this application, our mind makes the reality only knowable but not knowing, the mind does not make a complete subject. Intuition does not

make the object form a connection with the reality, and as a result the reality does not become *knowing*, which is necessary for the constitution of a complete subject. Hence, the reality receives this objectivity but, even though it has this form, is not a subject and does not receive subjectivity completely. Why then is it seen by the mind as if it were a subject? The answer is similar to the answer I gave to the question, 'In which mode does being, if it is not a complete subject, appear *in se* to the human mind?' I replied: it is an appurtenance of being *in se*, which is a true subject, an appurtenance detached by the abstracting mind of the creator but retaining the form of being *in se*, like the form with which everything present in an absolute subject is endowed. Similarly I reply that non-intelligent reality, which does not exist to itself as such and therefore as such is not a subject, must be an *appurtenance* of some complete subject. How this is so is certainly very difficult to explain, but a step towards the explanation is what I have established: everything concerning extension and the extended has the nature of a *term* of feeling principles (*PSY*, 1: 500–559, 565–567). A second step is the discovery that many feeling principles are unified in the human intellectual principle (*PSY*, 1: 455 ss.). But because there are also many feeling principles that seem not to appertain to a true, complete subject, this is the difficulty still to be solved, which I will deal with, God willing, in cosmology. For the moment, it is sufficient to note that our knowledge of animate principles, although not indicating any connection with an intelligent subject, does not *negate* this connection. Hence the hypothesis that such a subject exists is not an absurd concept, and even if it did not exist, animate principles would always ultimately be a term of the *creative* act that appertains to the divine subject.

SECTION THREE

THE CONJUNCTION OF THE THREE FORMS OF BEING IN THE MORAL

866. In the two previous Sections I investigated the subject and the object in absolute Ens and human ens. I must also investigate these entia in *the moral*. We need to see how, in both these entia, the three forms are joined together in the moral.

However, because we have no experience of absolute Ens, we have to reason about it from what we know happens in us through experience. I did this in the previous discussions, and the conclusions obtained are by no means less solid for the reason that we do not pass from the human to the divine by means of simple likeness or analogy but by an apodictical, deontological reasoning of the following form: 'This is what happens in finite ens. Hence it *must* happen in infinite ens.' The foundation of this reasoning can be formulated as: 'If the conclusion were not true, being would not be infinite, which is contrary to the hypothesis,' or better: 'If the conclusion were not true, being would not be being.' Anything that does not conform to this does not pertain to the discipline under discussion.

Let us see then what happens in the human being.

CHAPTER 1

The conjunction of the forms in the moral in so far as the moral is in the human being

Article 1

The general faculty of inobjectivisation¹⁰²

867. Knowledge is the presence of an entity *in se* to a subject, which is therefore called intelligent. To be present is to be object of thought. An inanimate thing is said to be present only metaphorically to another inanimate thing. When an entity *in se* is present to an intelligent subject, the subject, in the presence of the entity, performs an act of a nature peculiar to the subject. We must pay close attention to this nature, which differs totally from every other generation of acts. The act consists in the subject's mental transportation of itself into the entity present to it. In fact, in this act with which the subject thinks a foreign entity, the subject does not think of itself in any way — its act terminates solely in the entity, which it does not consider as part of itself or having any relationship with itself; the subject, by virtue of its accomplished and completed act, rests in the one pure entity, as if nothing else existed. Only the verb 'is' can be applied to this entity, the verb which grammarians say is in the third person because it is not the person pronouncing the verb nor a person to whom it is addressed; it is a third mode which strictly speaking is impersonal. This is the nature of the pure act of being with which we think things, and which is fully expressed when we say 'being is *in se*', or 'is apprehended *in se*'. This apprehension of being *in se* constitutes the essential, characteristic property of thought, a property that separates and distinguishes thought from all other kinds of acts.

¹⁰² *Inobjectivisation* must not be confused with *objectivisation*. *Objectivisation* means to clothe an entity with the form of object. *Inobjectivisation* means to transport oneself into another, as I will explain in this chapter.

If we mentally separate out all the other powers of the intelligent subject and all the acts of the other powers connected to intelligence, and consider only intelligence and what happens in its act, we find: 1. the act is present only when what is known (the object) is present — note: a disposition or effort to know can be present beforehand but the knowing act is clearly not present in anyone who knows nothing; 2. what is known is so essential to the act of knowledge that the quantity of the knowing act corresponds exactly to the quantity of what is known; 3. the act of knowledge knows only what is known and terminates in it. Hence, the *act of knowledge* exists in what is known, as in its form; it does not exist in what is not known. Although the *act of knowledge*, in so far as act, is in the subject performing it, it does not exist in the subject when the act is considered as purely an act of knowledge, because what is known is not the subject but an *entity in se* which is not personal or subjective (although everything, including the subject, can exist under the form of an entity *in se*). We must say therefore that in the act of knowledge the subject is excluded and, as it were, annihilated; all that remains is being *in se*, object, term and seat of the act.

867a. The fact that the act of knowledge remains united to the subject as its root is not due to the *term* of the act but to its *principle*. The *term* gives *form* to the act and makes it more an act of knowledge than any other act, but the *principle* constitutes the act's *matter* or potentiality, as it were, which is in a different order from the order of knowledge. Here we see the wonderful connection between the subjective and objective forms of being: the subject, with its knowing act, leaves and abandons itself in order to enter something else. The identity of the ens remains but the ens under the subjective form acts for the purpose of entering and constituting itself in another form. The transference to the ens in the form of object lies in this action of the ens in the form of subject. As long as the action is not completed, the act is contained in the subject, but when the action is completed and finalised, the act remains but is contained in the object: the object now contains the subjective act in itself. But even when the act is completed, it continues to be performed (as happens with all permanent acts). Consequently, the act always finds the object in which it is contained. If we consider the act as the act that always finds its new container-object, this act, as

always finding the found object, has the condition of cause. Hence, under this second relationship, the act is itself a container of the object. Granted that the object and subject are united, they are reciprocally containers and content: the subject is a container because, while the knowledge lasts, it continually enters and produces the object for itself; the object is also a container of the subjective act in so far as the object has been found and is known, that is, in so far as the knowing act remains in the object as in its term.

We see then that in inobjectivisation the subject is not merged *absolutely*, but merged *relatively* to the object in which it is posited. The ens therefore exists simultaneously as subject and as inobjectivised, and when it has perfectly [clothed itself] with this second form, it has lost consciousness of the first, although it remains in the first and remains the same ens.

The act of actual intelligence therefore is that in which the wonderful faculty of 'inobjectivisation', as I have called it, first manifests itself. Hence, the nature peculiar to intelligence is the foundation and origin of this faculty.

868. This faculty of inobjectivisation may appear to pertain also to the feeling principle, considered as a principle of either external or internal sense (the imagination), which are the two figurative faculties of the feeling principle (*AMS*, 151 ss., 350 ss.). But the resemblance is caused by the fact that these faculties of external and internal sense are, in the human being, joined with intelligence, which also makes local and *figurative sensations* its *objects*. Hence, the human being as subject is transported into these, not because they are sensations or images but because they have become *objects* of his thought.

Nevertheless something similar happens also in the order of sensibility, but it is in no way *inobjectivisation*, because the form of object is totally absent. We must therefore examine the nature of this similarity to inobjectivisation which takes place in sense life.

The feeling principle continually penetrates and produces with its act the felt element. Seen in this way it is a container, and the felt element is content. But if we consider the act of sense in its term, the *felt element* contains, as such, the act which feels the felt, otherwise this would not be felt. Hence, the felt contains the sense act. Thus, the feeling element and the felt element

have reciprocally the condition of containers and content. In this, they resemble the intelligent subject and the object.

But the feeling element does not apprehend the felt element as a thing which *in se* has being, but solely as a *term* proper to it or as a force acting in its feeling self, a force whose action constitutes the feeling element as feeling. The felt element (pure felt) is solely the form of the feeling element and in itself is nothing. This is explained by the fact that the felt is a received action, and what is received is not being. Only being has the property to apprehend itself *in se* because simply to be is the same as to be *in se*. Thus, when a principle does not apprehend *being* but an *action* without being, it cannot apprehend the action *in se*, but only in a mode relative to the apprehension, as a term of the apprehension. This is the essential difference between *intelligence* and *feeling*. Intelligence apprehends being, and everything it apprehends it apprehends *in se*, without any relationship with the apprehending agent. Feeling however does not apprehend being but an *action* (being remains hidden), which means it cannot apprehend an action *in se* but only relative to the apprehending agent.

This shows that feeling and understanding originate from one and the same law and conform in this that a subjective *principle* apprehends *something*. Nevertheless, they differ immensely because of the different nature of this *something* which constitutes the term of the apprehension: in feeling, the something is not *being* but pure *action* without being, and in intelligence it is being *in se*. This difference of nature of the term is the origin of all the various laws governing feeling and understanding.

It might be objected that an *action* cannot exist without *being*. But the question is not 'whether it can exist' but 'whether it can be apprehended without being'. It can certainly be apprehended without the apprehension of being by a principle which does not intuit being and is not *in se*, such as the feeling principle. This principle certainly cannot exist without being, but it can be apprehended as separate by intelligence. Nevertheless, because it cannot exist *in se*, we have concluded that if there were no intelligence, a feeling principle could not exist. But there are intelligences, and they have being that they can give to the feeling principle, to the feeling principle present in themselves and

to the feeling principle they apprehend as separate from themselves. They give this second principle an existence relative to themselves with the act with which they affirm it.

The sentient element, which does not have for its term being as absolutely object, cannot in the least have the power of inobjectivisation, because this pertains exclusively to the understanding. Nevertheless, because it also apprehends something else as its term, that is, the force operating in it and felt by it, it possesses an analogous power, the power to tend to its term, to actuate itself as much as possible in its term, and thus to *put itself into something else*. In fact, the sentient principle, which *per se* would not have the nature of felt, becomes *felt* in its term.

869. Returning to the power of *inobjectivisation*, we have seen that its principle and first act are in intelligence. We must now consider its extent and how many levels it has.

In my opinion the power of *inobjectivisation* extends on the one hand as far as the *object* extends and on the other in proportion to the subject's intellectual powers. In intellectual powers I include both pure intelligence and the lower powers in so far as these are informed and governed by intelligence.

The *object* of intelligence can contain everything, as we have seen in the previous section; anything sharing in being has the aptitude to be understood (*Logica*, 1050). Hence, the power of inobjectivisation concerns everything known, not directly but solely because contained in *being*. Inobjectivisation, like knowledge, always goes to *being*, but to being as a trebly maximum container. Hence, because it goes to being it also goes to all that is understood as contained in being. Thus, anything intelligent, for example, a human being, can with its *thought* inobjectivise itself in varying degree in everything (because the power of intelligence has different degrees).

But because thought naturally controls, informs and in its action brings with it all the lower powers of the intelligent subject, the subject can, in accord with its perfection and degree of power, inobjectivise itself together with all its powers into all the objects of its thought.

So, pure intelligence is that which has, as its term, being and only being, whether this is initial being or being with its forms which make it absolute.

Intelligence which controls and brings with it the lower powers is that which perceives finite realities through feeling, and governs feeling and its instincts.

870. We can therefore form a fuller concept of this marvellous power by describing its special acts.

I said that the power extends to all the objects of thought. These objects can make known to us entities which are subjects and entities that are not complete subjects. I call the latter 'non-subjects', and among them must be included all entities, even the pure animal entity.

The only inobjectivisation assignable to non-subject entities known in being is the inobjectivisation common to every intellective act that apprehends the thing in itself. This inobjectivisation is made solely by the intellective act and not by the subject's other powers; what is inobjectivised is the intellective act, and nothing else — natural intuition is of this kind of inobjectivisation. Consequently, inobjectivisation is imperfect whenever 1. the act of knowledge does not include all the subject's activity (as is the case in the human being), and 2. the object is itself not a subject, in which case the subject can transport itself into the object in only one mode, that is, into it as object, not as object-subject. These two causes give rise to the imperfection of inobjectivisation.

Hence, for inobjectivisation to be perfect the following three conditions must be fulfilled:

1. The *object* into which a real intelligent subject inobjectivises itself must contain and manifest in itself a complete and really subsistent subject.

2. The inobjectivisation must be carried out by all the intellective powers of the subject inobjectivising itself.

3. Between the real subject inobjectivising itself and the object which contains the real subject and into which the real subject inobjectivises itself, there must be a connection that makes possible the perfect knowledge that the real subject acquires of the object.

871. I will start with the last condition.

Clearly the perfection of the inobjectivisation will be in proportion to the perfection of the knowledge and of the actuality of the knowledge. But the perfection and actuality of the knowledge will be in proportion to how vividly and completely

the complete subject into which the inobjectivisation takes place is present to the thought of the subject seeking to inobjectivise itself. We must however distinguish here two modes and degrees because 1. the degree of vividness with which the subject into which the inobjectivisation takes place is present to the thought of the inobjectivising subject is one thing, but 2. the degree of activity with which this subject freely transports itself into the other is another (*Logica*, 1099–1142). This decisive activity of the subject which transports itself with all its energy into another subject that it thinks in the object imparts the act of final perfection simultaneously to the knowledge and vivid representation of the object and to the inobjectivisation itself.

Indeed, if the subject into which the inobjectivisation is to be made *could* not be fully known, this necessary imperfection of the object (granted that it cannot be overcome by the intellectual activity of the subject desiring to inobjectivise itself) would place an insuperable obstacle to complete inobjectivisation. Consequently, the highest level of inobjectivisation takes place between like and like, or is attained by what is identical which, present in the subjective form, takes the objective form. In the order of natural entia therefore, the greatest inobjectivisation that human beings can carry out is that of a human being into himself or into another human being. This is the inobjectivisation which we must above all else consider in its most perfect acts. It is a psychological fact acknowledged by common sense, as is evident in many expressions, for example, ‘to put oneself in another’s shoes’.

871a. Because we each have human nature and vary only in individuality and some accidents, we can have the closest knowledge of each other, similar to the knowledge of our own selves given by experience. We can use this knowledge to inobjectivise ourselves, that is, put ourselves in another’s state and condition or, as we say, in their shoes.

The imagination certainly helps in this, but does not do everything; it is, as I have said, a purely sense faculty: it has a term but no object, and the term is limited to what is felt and has shape. I am not opposed to giving the name ‘intellective imagination’, in a metaphorical sense, to the faculty with which we can vividly represent the object to ourselves. Used in this sense,

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‘intellective imagination’ means the faculty to see vividly a real subject in the object — a faculty that results from several faculties acting together.

Let us examine this fact, and when we have seen the acts and faculties by which we vividly represent to ourselves a real human subject, we can consider how the intellective subject, with its free activity, transports itself into the represented subject.

This representation consists of the following parts:

1. A human subject (a human being) has the feeling of itself. This comprehensive feeling includes a felt body, a feeling soul that intuits being, and the union of this body and soul in the intellective principle which constitutes the *subject proper* (PSY, 1: 71–80).

2. This proper *subject*-feeling is perceived intellectively in *objective being*, and with that it obtains *consciousness of itself*, which is the inobjectivisation of itself. The identical subject appears under the two forms because the real human subject is identical *as subject* (as subject, it performs the act of inobjectivisation), and as *object*, which is the *subject itself inobjectivised*.

In addition to having consciousness of ourselves (which we have through the intellective act, the first level and foundation of inobjectivisation), we can love ourselves even perfectly and with total actuality. When this happens, the fullest inobjectivisation possible takes place, although it is not the most excellent, as I will explain. All other human inobjectivisations are similar to this. Let us see how through successive acts we arrive at inobjectivising ourselves into other human beings.

3. The intellective perception which we each have of ourselves consists in the *simple apprehension* and the *affirmation* with which we each affirm our own *myself*. Apprehended in this way, MYSELF, together with all its essential and accidental content, can be separated from the *affirmation*, leaving only the simple apprehension. The apprehended subject is now a *possible* MYSELF, a *vague individual*, as I have called it. This possible MYSELF contains everything I have apprehended in myself by means of feeling and consciousness (intellectual life, animal life, individuality, etc.), but everything only as possible.

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No affirmation is made that such a MYSELF subsists or that this MYSELF, which subsists, is making the affirmation, because the real affirming agent is no longer involved; the only thing left united to the MYSELF is the possibility of affirming it. In this way the MYSELF is not only considered *in se*, as object, but is considered separate from the one actually considering it, because the one actually considering it is something real, not something possible. Everything felt in the MYSELF therefore is thought, but this MYSELF is taken as an exemplar that needs to be realised; it is a real MYSELF considered as possible.

871b. 4. Having this kind of real, objective MYSELF present to each one of us, we can immediately think that this possible *myself* subsists, and if it subsists, is either the MYSELF who is thinking in this way, or is another MYSELF, or is another individual similar to the one thinking. It is possible that I who think in this way and have the *possible myself* present to me, find some reasons, whatever they may be, which convince me that a MYSELF exists and that not I but another is this MYSELF who thinks and is convinced. When this happens, I perceive or think another MYSELF. This other MYSELF, although different from the perceiving or thinking *myself*, has everything that is in the perceiving or thinking *myself*. Although in these two *myselfs* everything (except some accidentals) is the same, nevertheless one is not the other; the MYSELF who thinks in this way is not the MYSELF thought; they are two different, real individuals, each shut within itself and incommunicable to the other, specifically equal.

With these four acts I have formed for myself the *representation* of a real MYSELF (of whose subsistence I am persuaded because I have affirmed it), which is not the MYSELF that formed the representation but another MYSELF.¹⁰³

Summing up: all this indicates that we form the representation of a really existing, human *myself*, different from our own MYSELF, by beginning with the objectivised feeling of ourselves and abstracting from the *identity* of this objectivised feeling with the self we are using to form the representation. After the

¹⁰³ Here therefore, *representation* means the 'production of an *object* which contains a *complete real* and could not contain it if the real were not felt by the same intelligent subject that has the *object* present'.

identity has been removed, the *self* remains as an objective type of *myself*. Once this MYSELF is obtained as type, we can identify it with the MYSELF, whichever it is, of whose existence we have proof. We can therefore [identify it] with two things: 1. with the MYSELF that is reasoning and has proof of itself in its own feeling (in this case the objectivised feeling of itself as thinking returns, that is, the inobjectivisation of the identical ens I have spoken about); and 2. with another *myself*, of whose existence I can have proof through perceptible effects and signs. These effects and signs are not my own feeling (*PSY*, 1: 79–80) but modifications of it, produced by a foreign cause, for example, when we see someone or hear them reasoning. In this case we have the representation of another MYSELF, different from ourselves.

872. But because this inobjectivising of a human being into another can receive greater perfection, we must attempt to know this greater perfection, otherwise we will not know what is best and most wonderful in inobjectivisation. It is true of course that in us inobjectivisation, seen in its idea, can never attain that supreme degree of which we understand it must be receptive, and this for two reasons: 1. we do not remain permanently in it, and 2. we cannot make ourselves understood unless our thought uses analysis. Let us consider these two limits.

Inobjectivisation cannot be perfect, according to its idea, unless it is posited in the greatest possible *actuality*. But human beings have the nature of potency, not of pure act (*PSY*, 2: 903–907). Hence, when we perform new acts, we cannot maintain ourselves in this state of effort; we fall back into the state of habit and potency. As a result, the actuality of inobjectivisation is only momentary for us. Also, acts of human intelligence are *synthetical* when they embrace the whole object, and *analytical* when they embrace a part of it. Synthetical acts do not all equally give a clear, vivid representation of the object. We need analytical acts as well, where the energy of our attention (always limited) is concentrated (*PSY*, 2: 1474–1478). Feelings do not present the total external reality as a whole, but as fragmented (*PSY*, 2: 1600–1618). Among internal feelings, only the fundamental feeling is total, but it is vague and lacks the vividness which attracts intellectual attention and curiosity. Hence, the perfection acquired by inobjectivisation through a greater completeness of the object is proportionate to the intensity and

actuality lost by the act of inobjectivisation. Thus if we want to have before us the most advanced and actual inobjectivisation normally achieved by human beings, we must consider it carried out in an object which we consider in some respects, but not all respects, and vividly apprehend.

Let us consider a human being who with his intellectual imagination transports himself into one or many others of his kind, and imagines that he is in them or is them. Let us also accept that this act is at the maximum degree of its actuality and perfection. What then, at this level, will be the state of the inobjectivised subject? In positing all his actuality in the act, he has at that very moment totally forgotten himself, his affections, his feelings, his pains and pleasures, his life; all these things are no longer present to his thought during that act of inobjectivisation — consciousness of himself has ceased. In this change, he lives the life of the other similar to himself, into whom, with his intellectual imagination, he has transported himself: he understands the other's affections, feelings, pains, pleasures; he is surrounded by the same circumstances, by the other's poverty, wealth, weakness and power, the other's friends and enemies, etc. This act is not the simple *representation* of the other's state — this representation has preceded, and with that alone he has not yet transported himself into the other whose state is present to him. To transport himself into the other, he must add another willed act of intelligence, with which he puts himself into the other, that is, the faculty of his own consciousness, clothing his own personhood (or better, the principle of this) with everything that determines the person of the other. Although person, as determined, is proper to each individual and is incommunicable, the principle of person is common and only one, and is undetermined when stripped of everything determining it. Hence the human being who at the moment in question forgets all the determinations of his person, still has the common, identical principle of person. And when in his thought he clothes this principle with the determinations of another person, it becomes another person in his intellectual consciousness. Thus, every human being has within himself a principle which, by means of intellectual imagination, can be determined with the determinations of another. Inobjectivisation becomes possible therefore with the understanding.

873. This act of the transportation of oneself into another is, as I have said, completely an act of the understanding, and I mean the understanding already enriched with all the reality given it by its own feeling, as I explained above. This act of inobjectivisation could stop at this point. If it did, the inobjectivisation contained solely in the understanding would certainly make the human being live mentally in another, but his other powers would not be affected by the other's state: he would inexist speculatively, as it were, in the other's state as in his own, but this inexistence would be the inexistence of only his understanding in the subject of the other and in all the determinations and feelings of that subject — his other lower faculties would not be involved in the inobjectivisation. This inexistence and purely intellectual inobjectivisation is, properly speaking, the site of the essence of inobjectivisation. But when the other powers second this act of intellectual inobjectivisation, their action is an accidental appendix, which in the human being completes the inobjectivisation also on the part of the subject that inobjectivises itself, not simply on the part of the subject into which it inobjectivises itself.

Consequently, when a person has, with his understanding, inobjectivised himself into another person and, with his intellect, has imagined as his own all the other person's affections (for example, the pleasures and pains, the good things and bad things), the lower powers of the inobjectiviser can also be, and easily are, affected.

For example, in bodily pain, the feeling of the person who has inobjectivised himself is moved to experience the same pain. In moral pain, the faculty presiding over this kind of pain is moved and experiences the pain. In the case of physical or moral pleasure, the faculties presiding over these affections are subject to the same experiences. All this proves once again that the subject has not perished but exists, although outside the *objective form*.

This completion of inobjectivisation by means of the powers inferior to and following upon intelligence — in other words, the inobjectivisation itself — must be conceived at a supreme level if we want to explore its most wonderful phenomena. But we must be careful not to confuse it with certain things that have affinity to it but are not it. For example, inobjectivisation resembles in some way *sympathy* but is not *sympathy*.

Sympathy supposes that *two* things suffer the same thing, whereas *inobjectivisation* is an intellectual identification of one subject in another subject objectively present to the first, where the two subjects cease, and one remains under the two forms. Nor must we confuse it with *love*, for which inobjectivisation (and sympathy as well) is a very effective disposition and also an effect, but it is not love and can exist apart from love. As an example, we can take a spectator who is standing below the scaffold of a condemned man. If, at the moment when the condemned is in agony and dies, the spectator inobjectivises himself into him, this inobjectivisation can be so perfect that the spectator himself also suffers the agony and dies at that point, because his animal faculties fully seconded the perfect intellectual inobjectivisation of the sufferer which the spectator carried out in himself. This could have happened without the spectator knowing or loving the sufferer in any way or even feeling any compassion at all for him; he simply transported himself intellectually into the condemned man, feeling and experiencing what the sufferer himself felt and experienced. On the other hand, when a person bent on revenge sees his hated enemy suffering, he tries to inobjectivise himself into his victim to enjoy better the pleasure of revenge, but this inobjectivisation is limited to the understanding. Beasts, lacking understanding, cannot present similar phenomena of inobjectivisation.

873a. When love is associated with inobjectivisation, and the subject into whom the inobjectivisation is made is suffering, *compassion* arises in the inobjectiviser. If the subject is happy, *complaisance* in the happiness is aroused. When the inobjectivisation is perfect and total, both these affections become exceptionally intense.

But because *inobjectivisation* can be restricted to the understanding or involve the lower powers, *compassion* and *complaisance* can also demonstrate a purely intellective characteristic, in which case the lower powers are free of the action. Alternatively, the two affections can so invade the person and his powers that these become exhausted, languid and restricted. Hence some people, in the grip of intense compassion, are incapable of helping anyone who is suffering.

I must add that the *compassion* and *complaisance* which arise when the inobjectivisation is linked to love and the love is of

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many kinds, take on a different characteristic according to the quality of the love from which they derive.

Most perfect love seeks the most perfect inobjectivisation, and rejoices and rests in this inobjectivisation as in its totally perfect, final state.

I said that when the inobjectivisation we make into someone similar to ourselves is more perfect in intensity and actuality, it embraces only a part of the object, not all or not totally. This is precisely the case with *compassion*, where the one who inobjectivises himself into the person who is loved and suffering, represents this person to himself only as suffering; the other parts are represented but with less actuality. The same can be said about *complaisance*. Moreover, in the example of the spectator who with his intellective imagination transported himself into the person of the condemned, he transported himself only into the suffering state of the condemned at the last moments of his life, representing to himself solely the man's pain and death. In fact, no human being can transport himself totally into another, nor even inobjectivise himself fully into himself, because he cannot represent himself actually and vividly in all his parts — his reflection is always directed to those feelings which he experiences more vividly in himself.

874. Someone may object: when a person inobjectivises himself into another, the action does not pass into the other but remains, together with all its effects, in the subject who inobjectivises himself and, through the inobjectivisation, receives a new mode of being. Moreover, the one inobjectivising himself into another can represent the latter to himself in a way that he is not. Hence, strictly speaking, he does not inobjectivise himself into the other, but into a subject whom he has represented to himself by means of his own intellective imagination and whom he believes to be the other. Therefore, inobjectivisation is an illusion which we create for ourselves.

I agree that inobjectivisation can certainly be accompanied by *illusion*, not however on the part of the intellective *representation* but on the part of the affirmation we pronounce to ourselves that *the represented thing* is such and such a person whom we know and perceive. Illusion does not necessarily accompany *inobjectivisation*, which in its concept can be without illusion. In fact, even if there is a part that we can on most

occasions call illusion or deception, there is another part that is true. If I see a sad or happy person, I can be deceived in my imagining the degree or precise quality of the sadness or happiness, but I am not deceived in thinking that he is sad or happy. *Inobjectivisation* is therefore a fact of the human spirit totally different from illusion and should be studied on its own, apart and separate from every other heterogeneous element.

875. It is true that inobjectivisation is a fact that does not pass into the other subject, and its whole effect remains in the subject which inobjectivises itself. Hence, if we did not examine the fact carefully, we would easily conclude that the subject inobjectivising itself into another does not truly transport itself into the other but into the phantasm or representation of the other. Indeed, if we took the imagined representation to be the real subject, we could see it as an illusion. But this difficulty depends on the question I dealt with elsewhere about our knowledge of the external world, or better, of everything different from us: 'When we think external things, do we think only their representations and images, or do we think the things themselves?' I have already shown that no matter how extraordinary the fact may be, we certainly think things themselves and do not stop at their images (*Lezioni filosofiche*, 31–36). Granted therefore that we think things in themselves, it follows that when we transport ourselves into a human being whom we are thinking of, we do truly transport and place ourselves into him, not into his image. But if we place ourselves in him, why does he not know it? Doesn't he experience anything? — This depends on an ontological principle I demonstrated elsewhere: 'one entity can be united to another without the latter being united to the former'. This is one of those paradoxes which occur in ontology and contain a truth of great moment.

The difficulty in accepting the principle is the example of bodies, which philosophers of the whole ens have discussed up till the present. When a body is placed next to another body, the latter is necessarily next to the former. But this is a partial fact, whose explanation the student of ontology finds in this: bodies do not have a subjective existence (this is given them by the mind). Hence, we cannot say that a body is next to another merely because one of the bodies has, in its existence, a relationship of proximity to the other. On the contrary, bodies exist as

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terms without proper relationships. The relationship of proximity and of distance proceeds from a third thing which does not pertain to bodies, that is, from the space between them and which the mind includes with them. Space is certainly the foundation of distance between two bodies but, as a subject, is only a mental subject. None of these three terms therefore (two bodies and the space in between) is in itself a true subject of the relationship; the terms are simply the occasion which allows the mind, embracing all three simultaneously, to find an objective relationship between them, despite the fact that none of them, separately considered, includes this relationship with the others. Thus, when the relationship is purely objective and cannot exist unless the mind has the relationship's diverse terms simultaneously present to it, the relationship appears as reciprocal. However, it does not subsist in any of these terms, but only in them taken together and contemplated in this way by a mind; they exist only in the mind, because outside the mind, each is on its own and finite in itself.

875a. On the contrary, in our case, we are dealing with a relationship that exists in a real subject. In these relationships that have a *real subject*, reciprocity is not necessary. A subject can have in itself the relationship of inexistence in another or of union with another, but the other need not be the subject of a similar relationship, that is, it need not inexist reciprocally in the first or be united with it. And even if it were, they would have two different relationships, not one.

This certainly cannot be understood by people who direct their thoughts only to bodies and cannot pass beyond the nature of these, or are unable to conceive that other things can exist, and exist with other laws. But those who have understood that all finite entia have, in addition to their own relative existence, an absolute, eternal existence, will not be deterred by the suggested difficulty. I said that we cannot inobjectivise ourselves into another unless we first take all our feeling present in the consciousness of ourselves, separate it from the bond of identity it has with our actually thinking self, and take it as a complete, living *type*. This means precisely that our thought must rise to thinking the human individual in his absolute, eternal existence. This individual, fully determined, and now a type, that is, existing with an absolute existence, corresponds

perfectly to our own relative existence. But in that type-individual there is a part identical to all possible, relative individuals, and that part is the *principle of person*. We can mentally strip this type-individual of all determinations and clothe it with other determinations of the same kind differing only in degree. This is possible because clearly anyone acquainted with human nature knows and has the type of all the *kinds of determinations* that a human being can receive, and can easily change the degree when he knows these kinds. Consequently, we can form other types, that is, human individuals in their absolute, eternal existence, and among these individuals is the individual into whom we wish to inobjectivise ourselves. Hence, when we have this individual present in his absolute existence, we can also think and have him present in his relative existence. Having him present in this way, which I called *representation* and ascribed to the faculty I called *intellective imagination*, all we need do is transport ourselves into him, imagining with our understanding that our own person lives in the determinations which constitute him. In this operation therefore a human individual makes present the other real individual into whom he transports himself. And he does so in the following way. He first passes through the *eternal type*, which is the other individual in his absolute existence, and arrives by means of affirmation at the *relatively existing individual*. Then, having this individual present, he transports himself into him by means of his intellective imagination through the identity of the principle of person present in both individuals. The understanding can now clothe this principle with the other's determinations.

875b. The difficulty of understanding this wonderful fact of inobjectivisation arises solely from the difficulty of understanding the following:

1. Every human individual has an *absolute existence* which can be made objectively present to all intelligences that see this existence. Every individual's own existence is simply the relative realisation of this absolute existence.

2. In the *affirmation* by which we move from the absolute to the relative existence, the mind does not stop at any image, but knows the individual relatively existing in himself.

3. The principle of person, the only thing common to all individuals (hence the human being has it really in himself and

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knows it really through experience), can be determined by other real determinations seen in the type, that is, in their absolute existence.

4. Consequently, the human being can think that the principle of his own person is determined by other determinations through which he becomes the person of the other, and can transport himself into that person.

If all this has been understood, we shall also understand why inobjectivisation might not act on another human individual into whom a person inobjectivises himself. This happens because inobjectivisation is carried out not directly but through the human individual in his eternal existence, which contains all the knowability of the individual. In this way the *relative individual* is attained by affirmation, which is not a physical force acting on what has been affirmed but simply gives the affirming person knowledge of the individual, of the real individual, not of his image.

Secondly, we see again how inobjectivisation can vary in perfection and how there can be illusion about the *relative individual*. This depends on the perfection of the operations carried out by the subject to bring about the inobjectivisation.

Thirdly, we see how the only effect of inobjectivisation is to change the mode of being in the ens inobjectivising itself.

876. The faculty of inobjectivisation acts at a varying level of agility and perfection in different people. Inobjectivisation is carried out in parts — I have said that we never inobjectivise ourselves into the totality of another, except weakly, but into certain parts or particular states of the other. The faculty therefore varies in kind, and each kind varies in degree in different people.

One kind of the faculty of inobjectivisation, when at an exceptional level, makes us discerning, prudent, foreseeing, able to deal with others and manage affairs. By it we are able to guess the thoughts and feelings of others.

Another kind has a great influence on the aptitude to practise medicine. As well as being helped by the medical instinct, it perfects this instinct.

The poetic faculty also demands a very high degree of the faculty of inobjectivisation, and the diverse species of the latter contributes to the formation of the diverse kinds of poets.

877. Finally I invite anyone who loves to philosophise to carry out an ontological observation on himself and on his feeling. A person ready to do this should place himself in perfect quiet and perfect recollection, should think of other human beings, individuals like himself, and reason as follows: 'At this moment, I am relaxed in this room, I am experiencing such and such pleasant or painful feelings. I am pondering or thinking about my future destiny, etc. Also, at this moment, millions of other individuals, like me, exist in different parts of the earth. Each has his own incommunicable existence. Some are suffering great pain; others enjoying great pleasure; one is about to be born or has just been born, another is at the point of death. Some are planning wicked things or putting them into action; others are carrying out good works. One is in a particular place on the earth or in a particular house, while another is in another house. They all have different relatives or neighbours. In short, all are in the most different of circumstances. And why am I here in this place and not elsewhere, thinking? Why am I not any of them, or none of them is I? Why am I this *I* and not another *I*? Perhaps another *I* is asking himself the same question. I see no necessary reason why this *I* is not one of all the other *I*'s, who exist separate from me and enclosed within themselves. And I don't see any necessary reason why I do not simultaneously feel or experience or do all that the other *I*'s experience, feel and do. I am not in the very different circumstances in which all these *I*'s are. Whether I am here or elsewhere does not, I note, result from the nature of the *I*.' So, if, with all our powers fully at rest, we meditate and make this observation of our own *I* and ask ourselves these and similar questions, I have no doubt we will find ourselves assailed by a kind of feeling of terror, a fear, as it were, that our own individuality is sliding from our grasp. But this will help us understand better how the principle of human personhood is the same for all human beings (although persons are diverse and incommunicable). We will understand how this one principle can be made complete with all the diverse, substantial and accidental determinations which constitute diverse persons. We will also understand how this one principle so variously completed results in diverse persons in their absolute existence. Finally, we will understand how, when we asked ourselves, 'Why am I this *I*

that is thinking and asking questions rather than another *I*,’ we were asking the question of the *typical I*, that is, we were asking, ‘Why does this *I*, in its absolute existence, have its relative existence here in this room, and in this relative existence why does it ask itself questions, rather than have its relative existence elsewhere and do or experience something entirely different?’ Asked in this way, the question is by no means absurd, because the typical *I* has no reason to be realised and relativised in this or that place, once or many times. The reason why this is factually the case is not revealed to us but remains hidden in the free will of the first cause.

And the reason for the very strong reaction we experience in our meditation as we feel our individuality sliding away from us, arises precisely from our effort to transport ourselves into other *I*’s different from our own and incommunicable to us. In this act, when perfectly carried out, we lose the actuality of our own consciousness. But this feeling does not arise when we inobjectivise ourselves into ourselves.

Article 2

The Moral Faculty

§1. *The notion of the moral faculty*

878. The *moral faculty* proceeds from the faculty of inobjectivisation and is simply the completion of the latter by means of willed love.

We have seen that inobjectivisation can be or not be accompanied by love. By ‘love’, I mean the three modes: willed acknowledgement, practical esteem, and affection, all followed by external action (*PE*, 114–181). If the inobjectivisation concerning the intelligence stops at the intelligence and does not bring with it other volitive faculties, it is not a moral faculty. But when the will is associated with it, it enters the moral order.

Because moral evil is purely a privation, everything positive indicated by the word ‘moral’ pertains to good. For this reason, ‘moral’ is principally used to mean good; an evil action is said

not to be moral. Moreover, when the nature of good is known, its contrary is also known. By 'moral faculty' therefore I mean the faculty of good, and here I will explain its notion.

879. The moral faculty first requires that we *love* (in the above sense) both the object into which we inobjectivise ourselves and what the object contains.

This however is not enough. The second necessary condition for constituting moral good is that the object must be *being* and thus embrace everything, because only being includes everything (*Storia comparativa*, c. 8, §§1, 4, 7). This totality, essentially proper to the moral object, bestows on what is moral that greatness, dignity and sublimity which nothing can conquer or overcome because there cannot be anything more than *all*, including its order, without which it would truly not be all, nor be estimable or lovable or powerful.

Hence, the moral faculty is that by which the intelligent subject, having inobjectivised itself into being, adheres with its will and its total self to this being, which is essentially ordered.

880. This gives us the solution, if only a general solution, to the ontological problem I proposed in this section: 'How is the moral form a maximum container?', that is, 'How are the three forms of being united in moral ens?'

From what has been said, it is clear that *being* acquires the form and name of 'moral' from the moment it is *willed*. *Being* is *virtually moral* in the measure that, with its order and totality, it has essentially the suitability for being willed (I call this suitability *lovability*). And in so far as it is actually willed, that is, *loved*, it is actually moral good. But in order to be loved, it must first be *object*, because the will cannot will anything not seen and not known in the object. Hence, the second form, which contains understood being, is necessary, and this understood being now becomes moral through the will. But it could not become moral if there were no *will*, which is the subjective principle. Thus the moral and objective forms suppose the subjective as their principle. If being is essentially lovable and therefore moral in its form of object, it consequently involves an essential relationship with a subject that makes it such. But when the volitive act of the subject has made it lovable and moral, it has acquired a form it did not previously have. This form, superimposed on object-being, now *contains* object-being which, through that

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form alone, begins to be moral. This then is the first form we think when we want to think the moral, and in this form we think the rest. Because everything is contained in object-being, the subject is also necessarily contained, otherwise total being would not be loved. Moral being therefore includes object-being which includes subject-being. The three forms, one within the other, are thus involved in moral being.

§2. *Two orders of morality: imperfect and perfect*

881. I have distinguished two levels of inobjectivisation: inobjectivisation into ideal or *impersonal being* and inobjectivisation into *absolute being*. To these two levels correspond two orders of morality, one imperfect, the other perfect. The imperfect order consists in the morality natural to human beings, that is, rational morality. The perfect order constitutes, properly speaking, a morality that is seen as possible by simple human reason but is superior to natural morality which it perfects.

Certainly, if moral good is *being* in its totality in so far as lovable and loved, there must be as many moral orders as the modes in which *being*, in its totality, reveals itself to us. We have seen that within the limits of human nature being reveals itself with a comprehension which, although total, is entirely virtual, a kind of capacity, an immense vacuum to be filled, or perhaps better, a deep abyss in which there is everything, but nothing is seen, due to its great darkness. Being, revealed to us in this way, with this infinite virtuality, infinite extension and no comprehension, must be the object and the principle of *natural morality*.

However, human reason is aware that all that being contains deep within itself (a content which must be infinite, like being) necessarily is — if the content were not, the container that is known would not be. But human reason is equally aware that this content can communicate and reveal itself. Consequently, reason sees that if being were to reveal itself with all this wealth essential to and within it, it would be living, and would acquire a subjective existence before our mind. This would make possible not only the second, more perfect degree of inobjectivisation I have described, but another more sublime order of morality.

Christians maintain and believe that they possess this order which perfects the first and is correctly called *supernatural*.

882. In the case of natural morality, we must remember that although it is divided according to diverse objects and includes some duties to all intelligent entia (other entia cannot be considered except as a means to these (*Storia comparativa*, c. 8, §6)), it always finishes its act in being and in the totality of the order of being; if it didn't, it would not be moral. In fact, if natural morality did not embrace all being in its totality and in its order but neglected a part of it, it would find itself in opposition to being and its order and consequently there would no longer be good but evil. Hence intellectual, finite entia receive from the being they intuit a special dignity which makes them an object of moral respect (*PE*, 101–105). The reverence and affection due to them ends in being, as in the formal reason of their excellence. In short, when these entia are morally loved, what is loved in them is being, to which they are united, and by which they are ordered to a greater union. This is so true that the measure and norm of the honour and love due to them is taken from *being* alone. But if they were loved for themselves and not for being, there would be no need of a measure in loving them, nor of any other rule except themselves. This again explains why, as philosophers have noted, even nature makes individuals serve the species. Providence also directs itself to the species, that is, to perfect it in human individuals (*TCY*, 617 ss.), precisely because the species pertains to objective being.

This morality has its formal act therefore in the inobjectivisation of virtual or ideal being, which is totally impersonal. This explains why the raising of ourselves to morality has the concept of an effort to make ourselves *impersonal*. In fact we cannot be moral unless we forget and discard our own personhood and rediscover and regain it in the object (*PE*, 215–227). We see here a clear reason for that characteristic revealed in the whole of the moral order which common sense calls *impartiality*. It is an attribute of justice, and justice is a form to which all virtues are reduced. This *impersonalness* into which we place ourselves is particularly seen when, through love of justice, we lay the blame on ourselves or on those we love most. Every act [of] virtue rests on a first impartial judgment, also called dispassionate, because the personhood of the subject is not involved in

deciding the balance in favour of one side rather than the other. Leaving ourselves, we transport and place ourselves into the object, and whatever the object reveals we say it, as if the object itself spoke through us. At the moment therefore when we make a moral judgment, we are inobjectivised; we make the judgment in so far as we are in the object and no longer in ourselves. This explains the characteristic of *objectivity*, which always accompanies what is moral (*PE*, 69–113; *AMS*, 521–556).

883. The other moral order is supernatural. It comes about when a living, infinite subject, which is being itself, God, actually manifests itself in *being as object*. This manifestation cannot be directly made except in a supernatural mode, because human nature, of itself, cannot perceive absolute Being; this Being must graciously communicate itself to human nature. Christian theology, particularly mystic theology, deals with this.

Nevertheless, as I have said, pure natural reason, with help, can come to know that such Being must also subsist in itself, and thus know that God exists, who is infinite, etc.

But natural reason cannot form any image of this infinite Being. If it takes images from sensible things, it takes them either solely as symbols or as true images of God. In the former case they present only logical determinations; in the latter the concept of God is corrupt and changed into another monstrous concept in which God is no longer thought. Our natural knowledge of God therefore is obtained solely by many logical determinations grouped together. As a result, the only way we can naturally inobjectivise ourselves into God conceived in this way is similar to that by which, with our pure intellect, we inobjectivise ourselves into ideal being, for the simple reason that the object is composed of ideal elements. Indeed, the most perfect knowledge we can have of God, with the natural light of reason alone, is that which is stripped of all sensible images, seeing these as mere signs of another nature to which the images do not in any way pertain. Hence, when we want to think only of God, all our human sense faculties must be silent, as foreign to the matter. This is also true when we are given supernatural information through a direct communication which God makes of himself, because here again it is only the intelligence that receives new light; the other faculties add nothing to the

received information (except possibly mere signs). Hence, mystical theology teaches that a person in a supernatural state and wishing to rise to the purer contemplation of God, must reduce all his other powers to silence, and in this silence contemplate God in the dark night with the new power given to him, which is his intelligence enriched with a new primal light (*IP*, 1: 35–38).

A subject cannot inobjectivise itself into another subject unless it first compose for itself, from the subjective reality which it feels within itself, the other subject into which it inobjectivises itself; I mean the subject must first compose for itself, from its own feelings, the *typical subject* by which it affirms and conceives the very subject that subsists in its own self. But in the case we are discussing, where the subject is God himself, we find nothing in our natural feelings with which we can form for ourselves an objective subject which proximates to the divine subject. Hence, once again, the inobjectivisation of the human being into God as a true subsistent subject is, in the order of nature, impossible; all we can do is inobjectivise ourselves into impersonal being. Our judgment that this being also subsists, although we do not see its subsistence, is not inobjectivisation and does not lead to inobjectivisation, because the subsistent subject is so unknown in its positive nature that no *representation* of any kind can be made of it.

Hence, in the order of human nature, the only inobjectivisation possible is the pure act of intelligence into ideal and impersonal being. We can certainly add to this the reasoned knowledge that being itself must subsist. But this knowledge is knowledge of God's existence not inobjectivisation into God, because we are ignorant of the real nature of this divine subject.

884. This explains rational mysticism and its futility. It is a tendency and effort to inobjectivise oneself into God solely by one's natural powers. This mystical discipline starts from a true principle that if we are to be virtuous and just, we must strive to transport and inobjectivise ourselves into being and thus make ourselves impersonal and impartial. Up to this point the teaching does not exceed the limit of natural reason and is therefore sound. But when we claim to go further and inobjectivise ourselves into God, we attempt the impossible. To do this, we would have to apprehend a being that would be not only

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objective and, as such, impersonal, but simultaneously contain in itself a living subject which was that being itself. We can easily understand that this must be the case, but it remains an impenetrable mystery how it is so. Although the antinomy of an object that is also subject must certainly be solvable, we do not see the solution. Who in fact can ever understand how objective impersonhood can be so reconciled with subjective personhood that the impersonal object is a personal subject? All that reason can do is show that there is no absolute contradiction. If the personal subject is predicated of the impersonal object, the same thing is not simultaneously affirmed and denied about the same dialectical subject in the same respect: the subject is predicated of the ens as content, while the object is predicated as container. Thus the subject is predicated of the object as ens and not as object. However, this does not fully solve the antinomy because it does not reveal a nature in which we can see this kind of inexistence and consequently how the opposite terms are joined together. There are thinkers who do not wish to stop at the decree of moral reason that 'we must make ourselves impersonal by inobjectivising ourselves into being'; they go further and claim that we must inobjectivise ourselves into God. As a result, they either fall into the illusion which represents God by snippets of sensible nature fancifully put together and enlarged, like the mystics of the school of Alexandria (all the superstitions of idolatry, we can say, come from this),¹⁰⁴ or, if they do not

¹⁰⁴ For example, Plotinus seems to say that Pheidias understood the typical image of Jupiter in the way we would see it if Jupiter wished to show himself to us: 'Pheidias did not make his Zeus from any model perceived by the senses, but understood what Zeus would look like if he wanted to make himself visible to our sight'* (*Enn.*, 5: 8, 1). This concept is repeated by many ancient writers. Extracts can be seen in the collection of Hemsterhuis (*ad Luciani Somm.*, 8) and Creuzer (*Plotinus*, vol. 3, pp. 302–303). These authors saw that the ideal beauty of a statue (for example, of Jupiter) could not be found solely by seeing many real human beings. The mind itself had to conceive a model of beauty and with its help could discern all that is beautiful and not beautiful in sensible nature. This model of the mind, they said quite correctly, was not taken from things of sense (*πρὸς οὐδέν αἰσθητὸν*). However, they did not understand that this mental type was purely the sensible in its absolute existence and in the perfect form. The fact that only the mind saw this absolute existence did not mean that the form was the true image of God or, if God wanted to make himself 'visible' (*δι' ὁμμάτων*), the

follow this way, fall into that of Indian contemplation by reducing the vision of God to the abolition of consciousness. A learned, modern author expresses the morality taught by the Indian masters in this way: 'Pride is the cause of evil. Therefore the denial of oneself is a duty imposed on every human being. This denial involves the body as much as the spirit. Relative to the spirit, it means forgetfulness of all individuality, the complete renouncement of the MYSELF. This explains the famous, rational dogma of India¹⁰⁵ about death considered as the transition to true life.' This is the furthest reached by the dictate of natural reason, the inobjectivisation of the human being into impersonal being. But the Indian moralists do not stop there: 'According to them, the highest degree of happiness to which human beings can attain in this life, is that of attaining, by contemplation, the point where they substitute the consciousness of God for the consciousness of self.'¹⁰⁶ This is the impossible element, even when substitution simply means the transportation of oneself into the consciousness of God by inobjectivising oneself into it; it is impossible because the *consciousness of God* cannot be represented by anything. But the very futile means for attaining this end, which they thought they had found, reduces to the abolition of the consciousness of both oneself and the world, by not thinking of anything or doing anything, and by keeping one's thought firmly fixed on this removal of all images and ideas. This is simply an effort to inobjectivise oneself into nothingness, which is the opposite of God.

apparition would be God himself. It would be no more than a sign of him given to our external senses, and the sign would add no positive information to our mind about the divine essence. The *direct vision* of God is something so sublime and proclaimed to humans by Christianity, that these philosophers, who trusted only in their natural intelligence, could never attain it or grasp it firmly in their arguments. Thus the Alexandrian mystics made their intelligences slaves to idolatry, even in the very act, as they thought, of abandoning the sensible and rising above idolatry.

¹⁰⁵ Strab. 15, p, 1039; 713 Casaubon.

¹⁰⁶ Creuzer, *Religions de l'Antiquité etc.*, translated by Guigniaut, bk. 1, 5, p. 281.

Article 3

The effects of pure inobjectivisation

885. Summing up, we see that there are four kinds of inobjectivisation:

1st. Inobjectivisation into the pure object, ideal being. This takes place in the intuition which constitutes human intelligence and in all human intellectual acts accompanied by this intuition, from which they take their form (objective objectivisation). This inobjectivisation is the beginning and foundation of all other inobjectivisations.

2nd. The intelligent subject inobjectivises itself into itself (subjective inobjectivisation of identity).

3rd. The intelligent subject [inobjectivises] itself into another real, individual subject like itself, through identity of species; for example, a human being into another human being (subjective inobjectivisation of difference).

4th. The intelligent subject inobjectivises itself into the subsistent Object. This Object is itself a subject because the subject it has within itself is equal to it and in effect is not distinct from it; any distinction is only virtual. In short, the intelligent subject inobjectivises itself into God (subjective-objective inobjectivisation).

Inobjectivisation into a non-real subject is, as I said, impossible, because intelligence is lacking.

When I discussed the question whether there can be inobjectivisation into God who is known by us with solely the lights of natural reason, I said there can be no subjective inobjectivisation, neither of identity nor of difference, nor subjective-objective, only inobjectivisation of the first level: pure objective inobjectivisation. From this I concluded that to attain inobjectivisation into God an essentially supernatural light is necessary. We then saw the abyss of false mysticism open, into which those fell who without this supernatural light and trusting presumptuously in the pure forces of natural reason, attempted to cross this fixed limit.¹⁰⁷

¹⁰⁷ How then can we be tempted to launch ourselves into the impossible? — Because, intuiting being, we make an effort with our intelligence to fill up the infinite vacuum that is only ideally intuited being, and also because,

But I have said nothing about the other question: 'Is subjective inobjectivisation possible for us into an intelligent subject that differs in species from us but not in genus?' I simply add that we cannot do this solely with our natural faculties, because we cannot make a real *representation* of such a subject. The most we would know would be its existence, determined by means of generic ideas, which are only logical determinations.

Finally, I distinguished pure inobjectivisation from *moral inobjectivisation*. The characteristic of the latter is that it is brought about by practical or willed understanding, not by pure, thinking understanding, and its object is being in its totality.

886. I must now speak about inobjectivisation considered in its effects, that is, about the qualities it adds to the finite subject inobjectivising itself. I say finite subject because I do not intend to discuss the generation of the infinite Object by the Subject. In this generation the opposite happens: the Object receives everything from the Subject that generates it and not vice versa.

In discussing therefore the inobjectivisation of the finite subject into being, I will first consider inobjectivisation as such and then in so far as it has a moral state. And speaking about inobjectivisation as such, I will establish a general principle, namely: 'Inobjectivisation makes the subject participate in the dignity of the nature of the object.'

Absolute dignity consists in the unlimitedness of being, because anything unlimited is superior to the whole universe which is limited. Furthermore, absolute dignity, because not subject to any imperfection of what is limited, nor to any deficiency, produces in the one contemplating it a feeling of total esteem and complete satisfaction. This superiority to everything finite, together with the aptitude of the unlimited to produce an esteem and perfect satisfaction in the intelligent subject gazing at it, is called dignity or excellence of nature or some equivalent name.

887. I begin then with the natural intuition of being, which is the first level of inobjectivisation and the foundation of all the

with our knowledge of subjective inobjectivisation which we experience as possible relative to finite things, we feel the need to accomplish this inobjectivisation in an infinite subject.

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others. *Intuition* gives rise simultaneously to two contrary relationships between the subject and the object. In one relationship, the subject receives or has objective being within itself; in the other, the subject, through the act by which it exists as intelligent (this act is intuition), is in object-being. If we consider the subject as having within itself the object, it is a container and therefore an ens in the subjective form. If we consider it as existing with its act in object-being, it is contained by this object, which in its turn is a container: we have therefore the same ens, but in the objective form; it is the objectivised subject. Hence, Plato and the Platonists correctly said that the ens is simultaneously one and the other, that the one changes, makes itself the other by its own effort, but they failed to explain sufficiently how. I explain it by finding this kind of transition in the nature of the act of intelligence. When this act exists, we cannot correctly say that the ens passes from one form to another, but rather that it is in two forms, and the mind thinking about it passes to considering it now under one form, now under the other. This mind can also be the mind of the subject itself.

Returning to the act of intuition, we should note that by means of this fundamental act the subject can participate in the dignity of the nature of being, its object. We will understand this easily enough if we recall that intellectual intuition, by its very nature, never confuses the subject with the object; if it did, it could not exist because the nature of this intellectual act is precisely to keep the two distinct. Nevertheless, the act unites the subject in the object in such a unique, intimate union that the act of one is in the other. This reciprocal inexistence is necessary for the intelligent subject, as intelligent, and constitutes its nature. Consequently, if there were no inexistence, the intelligent subject would not exist, its concept would perish. This is a pure fact of observation.

This fact means that the intelligent subject must, through its own essence, have in itself the intuited object and exist in this object. The intelligent subject therefore, through the same essence, participates in the dignity and excellence of the nature of the object. Indeed, all the wealth of the subject, everything it possesses, is the object in so far as intuited by the subject. But this wealth pertains so intimately to the subject that it is

essential to it and, without it, the subject does not exist. Hence the wealth is the subject's form because the wealth, as possessed, makes the subject to be what it is. If instead of considering the object *in se*, abstracted from the subject, we consider the *intuited object*, as intuited, we will see that as such it is the terminative form of the subject. The expression 'intuited object' contains the two words 'object' and 'intuited'. The second word indicates the actual union of the object with the subject, and through this union the object adheres directly to the subject so that it not only modifies the subject (in so far as intelligent) but makes it be. Nevertheless when the subject exists by means of this mode, the subject is not the object and, because not the object, is considered as receiving the action of the object.

The closest likeness we can find to help us understand this intimate adherence and union of the subject with being, its object, is the likeness, used by the ancient philosophers, of a seal impressing its form in wax or other soft material. But if this likeness is to have any value for representing the bare fact I am describing, without any additions, we must mentally separate the wax or other material into which the seal is pressed from the imprint left, and consider only the imprint. Similarly, in the seal itself we must mentally separate the material and other parts which compose the seal and mentally retain only the design or pattern engraved into it. If we consider this design or pattern in the act of producing its imprint, the imprint, which is the effect, is a striking representation of the intellectual subject that has being as its object directly present. Hence, the intellectual subject as such can be accurately, and with some truth, called a likeness, an effigy, an imprint, a copy, an ἑκτίπουν [high relief], of being in which the act of the subject's existence, that is, intuition, terminates. Thus, being acquires the relationship of ἀρχέτυπον [archetype] of the subject.

888. But because, in our case, this archetype is *being*, it unites in itself two relationships that depend on the two forms of being: the relationships of content and container. On the one hand, the archetype, as contained by the intelligent subject intuiting it, is an *efficient archetype* because it constitutes and informs the subject which becomes subject by the act of intuition; on the other hand, the archetype, as *containing* the

subject, which exists in being through its intuitive act by which it is, is a *manifestative archetype* and constitutes the *intelligibility* of the intelligent subject informed by being and thus existing.

889. This explains

1. how the apparently unassociated properties of *informing* and *manifesting* can be united in the one archetype. Many philosophers, particularly the Platonists, saw these two properties as separate but never reconciled. Although this applies only to intellective subjects, we must bear in mind that all non-intellective subjects are reduced to and referred to intellective subjects, as I have said and will explain again later.

2. We also see explained how the subject, in so far as intelligent, has its intelligibility. It is made intelligible because by its act it is habitually in being. This intelligibility however means only a potential not an actual knowledge of itself or, as St. Thomas calls it, an habitual knowledge (*NE*, 2: *App.*, no. 14). All that is required for actual knowledge is simply the act of understanding which can observe itself in the being present to itself.

In so far as being is in the intellective soul, we can say that being is the soul's *informing archetype*, but in so far as the intellective soul with its intuitive act is in *being*, the archetype is not undetermined being but being enriched by the soul's essence. This is the *archetype* proper to the soul, its intelligibility, the absolute existence of the soul present to the soul, the *archetype manifesting* the soul to itself. This *archetype* however is not the archetype considered in the divine mind but as communicated to the human soul, *informing* and *manifesting* the soul to itself. In this second respect, the archetype is the *subsistent, objectivised* soul. This explains and verifies St Augustine's (*mens*) *semetipsam per se ipsam novit* [the mind knows itself through itself],¹⁰⁸ that is, the *mind as subject* knows itself through the *objectivised mind* and, as I said, extracts from this mind objectivised to itself the typical concept, which gives knowledge of every other mind or intelligent subject.¹⁰⁹ St.

¹⁰⁸ *De Trin.*, 9: 3.

¹⁰⁹ 'How does the mind know another mind if it does not know itself?''* (St. Augustine, *ibid.*).

Thomas teaches the same about the intellectual soul: 'Its essence is present to our intellect,'* and 'The soul, through its essence, sees itself.'¹¹⁰ Truly, the essence of the soul is simply the *soul* itself *objectivised*, that is, the soul which with the act of its existence, which is intuition, is in being. The essence of the intellectual soul, therefore, although present to the soul, cannot be seen or known unless it carries out an act. This act is the act I call 'perception'. It is twofold because it contains vision and, later, affirmation. With simple vision, the intellectual soul sees the soul in being, as a type or *full idea*, indeed as a totally full idea. With affirmation it acquires the knowledge that that which sees what is seen is identical with that which thinks and which sees, is identical with that which is seeing. The intellectual soul is saying therefore (not explicitly, I agree, but at least implicitly): 'What I see in being is I myself who see it,' because in being 'the soul sees itself seeing, sees its own feeling seeing'; it thus finds the identity of the two forms it has as an ens in the same being.

3. This settles another difficulty which is the following: 'Vision or intuition necessarily requires two entities: that which sees and what is seen. How then can the intelligent soul see itself if it is only one entity? How can it reflect upon itself?' The difficulty clearly does not exist for anyone who has understood that the same ens is twofold relative to form; this duality of form explains intellectual vision. In fact, if the only form the soul had was that of subject, it could not see itself. This is the reason why the *feeling principle* cannot reflect upon itself or know itself, because it has only one form, the subjective; unable to be present to itself as object, it cannot know itself or reflect upon itself. On the other hand the intellectual subject has being present to itself as object, and its essential act of intuition (the act constituting its essence) as such is in the object, in intuited being. Not only is it therefore subject, but also has itself present as object. Hence, it can and does know the soul as object by means of intuition and, as soon as it sees its seeing self in the object, it can reflect upon itself. In this way, it affirms the identity between the seeing entity as seen and the seeing entity as feeling which remains when it abstracts from the condition of *seen*.

¹¹⁰ *De veritate*, 10: 8.

4. As a result of this teaching, the *ideas* of all things, including sensible things, are simply *being* in so far as the ideas exist in being with absolute existence, which is *per se* intelligible. They are distinguished from being through existence relative to themselves or to finite minds — this is the existence proper to them. The *absolute existence* is called *essence*, and in so far as object, it is called *idea*. It is separate from every *affirmation* made by the intelligent subject and considered solely as a term of intuition; in other words, it is considered solely as *intelligible essence*.

890. Returning to *inobjectivisation*, we see from all this that, although *objectivisation* (*Introduzione* [pp. 312–316]) is generally speaking a very different operation from *inobjectivisation*, the two operations, in the case of the intelligent subject, are not two but the same operation. The subject, objectivising itself to itself (this is the act through which it exists) *inobjectivises* itself, that is, transports itself, into the object. On the other hand, when it *objectivises*, that is, makes objects of things different from itself, it does not *inobjectivise* itself solely by this operation, because it does not transport itself into them. On the contrary, every time it objectivises to itself entities lacking the intuition of being and therefore lacking intelligence, it cannot in any way *inobjectivise* itself into them. This is a result of my analysis of *inobjectivisation*.

I said at the start that *inobjectivisation* is the equivalent of existence in one's own object. From this definition I deduced that there are two levels of *inobjectivisation*: one through which the subject exists in its own object as pure object, and one through which it exists and lives in an object which itself is a subject, whether this subject is *per se* object or an objectivised subject. The first level of this *inobjectivisation* can take place only into *pure being* and not into anything else, because the intuiting subject exists only in being, which informs it as its object. The second level of *inobjectivisation* can take place only into other intelligent beings because, as I said, subjective *inobjectivisation* requires the following actions:

1. We intuit in being the *principle of our own person*, abstracted from its determinations.
2. We add to this principle other determinations which, relative to the specific essence, are similar to the deter-

minations the principle has experienced in itself but differ in quantity.¹¹¹

3. When we have obtained a typical, objective representation in this way, we affirm this representation of another human individual whom we know through external relationships.

4. With the presence to us of both this individual with his internal feelings and the principle of his person (this is identical to our own), we who wish to inobjectivise ourselves think ourselves to be the other individual. In this way we live spiritually in him together with all his feelings whose truth and actuation vary according to the perfection of the inobjectivisation.

This analysis shows us that every subjective inobjectivisation requires the principle of person to be identical in both the one performing the operation of inobjectivising himself and in the one into whom the inobjectivisation is made. We also see that, because other things lack the principle of person, this transmission of existence is possible only when made by one intellective subject into another. Hence, finite things, lacking intelligence, can be *objectivised* but we cannot *inobjectivise ourselves into them*. In the case of pure being, it cannot be objectivised because pure being is, of itself, object; nevertheless the act of intuition by which the subject *objectivises* itself in pure being is at the same time an act of *inobjectivisation*.

891. The effect therefore of inobjectivisation is the *likeness* between the subject which inobjectivises itself and the object into which it inobjectivises itself.

Now, just as the *inobjectivisations* are two: the *objective* and the *subjective*, so the likeness has two *forms*: the *objective* and the *subjective*.

The *first form of likeness* is that in which the object's categorical form or mode of being is assumed. We have seen that the intelligent subject, in so far as in being by means of its

¹¹¹ For example, a person experiencing a particular pleasure, pain, etc. can think the pleasure, pain greater or less, or varying as a result of many pleasures and pains joined together in various ways, etc., and attribute these imagined pleasures and pains to another person, etc., according to certain accidental modifications.

intuitive act, assumes the *objective form* and becomes an object of perception and, later, an idea.

The *second form of likeness* is that in which an intelligent, personal subject acquires the feeling of the other's personhood and, through this feeling, lives in another intelligent, personal subject. However, there is no reciprocity, that is, the second subject neither lives in nor is affected by the first.

892. This spiritual transportation into another subject, which an intelligent subject makes of itself, cannot (in finite subjects) be carried out directly. It must be done by means of the subject in its *absolute existence* which is a direct term of the creative act. Hence, it would not be impossible to conceive a communication between two intellective subjects between which, considered in their relative existence, inobjectivisation takes place, but this communication would be a communication of intelligibility, not of real effectiveness. It would take place by means of that *eternal subject* to which the subject that inobjectivises itself must ascend before descending into the *relative subject*. The *relative subject* into which the other inobjectivises itself, also depends on this eternal subject as its root and foundation. Such a communication however could not take place unless God co-operated in some way, in whose creative act the subject is in its absolute existence in the absolute Object, although this kind of mediated communication could be decreed by fixed laws.

893. Moreover, the subjective *likeness* which a subject assumes with the other subject when it inobjectivises itself into the other subject varies according to the perfection of the inobjectivisation. The inobjectivisation is, as I said, either partial or total, and each of these can have different degrees of perfection. Let us suppose an inobjectivisation of this nature to be maximum and totally perfect. The consequent likeness will be of the same degree. The subject inobjectivising itself into the other will feel all that the other feels, live with the same life and, although transported into the other, remain itself; the unity of the principle of person will be maintained but the subject will feel a duality in itself, will feel itself one in two.¹¹²

¹¹² That we can feel ourselves as two is possible in another way, without inobjectivisation. If an ens more powerful than us could produce in us feelings different from our own, and these feelings were so bound together

I have also said that inobjectivisation can err relative to the affirmative judgment which it contains and by which it is carried out — the judgment says: 'The individual into which I transport myself is such and such.' We must note that this judgment varies in proportion to the 'aptitude a person has to draw from external clues someone else's internal feelings.' This aptitude to pass from external sense clues to imagining the internal feelings of a person can vary greatly. Also, the truth and certainty of the inobjectivising judgment varies in accord with the level of the judgment's force. It would take too long and be too involved to discuss the nature of this *aptitude* and how much it varies in different human beings and from which special faculties it results. I will limit myself to the phenomena of animal life. We can say that certain men and women have a wonderful power of empathy such that they reproduce in themselves the feelings of another from the slightest external clues. They do this through the extraordinary mobility of the vital and sensuous instincts and their various functions (*PSY*, 3: 1787–1812). Granted therefore this mobility, the phenomenon arises as follows. Let us suppose that someone is affected by a particular pain which produces certain lines or contractions, shades of colour, etc. on his face. Someone else, who has the extraordinary mobility I have mentioned, on seeing the lines and colours, reproduces in himself, at least initially, the same effects. This reproduction of the external signs through a synthetic force (*AMS*, 430–494) arouses all the internal feelings of pain which are its natural cause and are identical in full species with those that the other person experiences.

To this animal phenomenon we can add its connection to intellectual feelings, *pneumatic sensitivity* (*PSY*, 2: 991–993) and

and constant that they corresponded to that complex of feelings which determines a person, then clearly we would appear to ourselves as two. No inobjectivisation would be involved because inobjectivisation results solely from a willed act of our mind and of the powers directed and governed by it. The difference in the effect would be this: in existence in another through inobjectivisation, we know who the other is through the external knowledge we have of him; in the other case, we would feel ourselves as another in ourselves, without knowing who this other is. In inobjectivisation, we feel ourselves inexistent in another, but by the action of another spiritual ens we would feel ourselves as another inexistent in ourselves.

rational passions (PSY, 2: 1073–1089). We can also consider the unity of the intellectual and feeling human subject with his action (PSY, 1: 288–428). Consequently, if the person we are talking about has empathetically reproduced in himself the external signs of the other's internal affections and, through these and a natural integration, reproduced in himself the same internal sense affections, then we will understand that he can use all these to reproduce the rational affections naturally joined to them or intermingled as cause. From these in turn he can reproduce the same thoughts which are their first cause. These dynamic connections, which constitute the unity of the human subject, can help explain some of the phenomena of hypnosis (*Apologet.*, p. 454 ss.).

The perfection of this *empathetic faculty* therefore directs the *judgment* which accomplishes the *inobjectivisation*. As a result, the degree of truth of this judgment depends in effect on how much energy and accuracy the faculty has which directs it.

Hence, if the intelligent subject, in its *subjective inobjectivisation*, adapts and conforms to the other subject into which it inobjectivises itself, then the completeness of the *likeness* it assumes in this act with the other subject will be proportionate to the perfection of the inobjectivisation itself. This objective likeness takes place only while the act of inobjectivisation endures. But if the inobjectivisation is replicated, it produces a stable effect in the intelligent subject. This is one of the reasons why a person assumes much or little of the form and feelings of those among whom he lives for a long time.

Article 4

Effects of moral inobjectivisation

894. What has been said shows that moral inobjectivisation is of three kinds: *objective*, *subjective*, *objective-subjective*. This last exceeds our natural power, although it does not exceed our power to conceive mentally, because even naturally we can form a concept of it through logical determinations.

In objective moral inobjectivisation we judge and operate by placing ourselves in object-being, and judge and act in so far as

we live in this object-being. As I said, this gives us *impartiality* in our judgments and the *rectitude* of our will, which conforms to the judgments. This being in which we live and will and judge and act is initial being which accompanies, and is the form of, all other cognitions. Thus, this objectivity of the practical, willed understanding, where morality begins, accompanies and is always the principle of all other moral acts.

895. In subjective moral inobjectivisation we transport ourselves into a moral subject, a subject endowed with virtue, and we assume not only the virtuous feelings of this subject with our pure intellect but desire them with our practical understanding. We liken and conform ourselves freely to the moral subject into which we put ourselves. This power of human beings is the subject of the precept frequently given by moral philosophers: 'When you must deliberate and act, think how a very virtuous person would deliberate and act if he were in your place, then deliberate and act in the same way,' or: 'When you must deliberate and act, think how some particular virtuous person would deliberate and act if he were in your place and do what he would do.'

The first of these two formulas does not determine any particular virtuous person but makes an appeal to the example of very virtuous persons in general. It counsels us to transport ourselves into the type of the virtuous person whose absolute existence is in the divine mind. At the sight of this type the human mind ascends higher with greater or less power and therefore not perfectly, but nevertheless attains the type with a higher or lower degree of truth. This inobjectivisation does not descend to the subject in its relative existence, where it is purely subject, but remains in the subject which is always in the eternal, possible object (or at most, considers the subject as hypothetically subsistent in itself). This inobjectivisation can be called *subjective-objective* inobjectivisation.

The second formula counsels us to inobjectivise ourselves into some particular virtuous person who exists in reality with relative existence. Thus, our mind, after representing this person to itself in his absolute type, descends from this type and inobjectivises itself into the person. This is a purely *subjective* inobjectivisation because it finishes in an ens which is like a pure subject.

This inobjectivisation is clearly partial because the person who transports himself into a human being whom he knows to be endowed with great virtue so that he can appropriate his virtuous feelings, does not assume everything that is and can be in this human being, but only what concerns his moral part. It is also clear that this virtuous human being into which the other inobjectivises himself is not simply a *model* that is copied, because a *model* presents everything that is copied from it, as happens when a young artist strives to draw on paper the forms of the figure before him. On the contrary, in our case, the one who inobjectivises himself guesses and imagines what the virtuous person would do if he were in his situation. Hence a person creates, as it were, by himself the model by intellectually imagining himself to be and live in the model.

Finally, it is clear that anyone who inobjectivises himself into someone else will practise greater virtue in proportion to the excellent virtue of the person into whom he inobjectivises himself. But the more perfect and sublime the virtue is, the more difficult it is to form a typical concept of the virtuous person (a concept through which we must always pass in order to attain subjective inobjectivisation). Among human beings, the ability to form this concept varies, depending on the soul's degree of nobility and sublimity obtained through uprightness of will, and depending also on the level of the habit of virtue already formed. Hence not everyone can do the same in this order of things.

Here greater consideration must be given to what I have demonstrated. Objective inobjectivisation precedes all the others, accompanies them and is their foundation. In fact, subjective inobjectivisation presupposes objective inobjectivisation. We have seen that subjective inobjectivisation takes place only by our ascending first to the *typical concept* and then descending from this to the really existing, known *subject*. Because the typical concept is in being-*per-se*-object, the mind of the person inobjectivising himself into this subject must first intuit being, find there the typical concept, and judge this concept to be excellent in itself and thus love it. After this, he can descend to find the concept in its living realisation in a subjective mode. Thus, the judgment is made by the mind which inobjectivises itself into being. Nevertheless, even though objective

inobjectivisation always precedes and accompanies every inobjectivisation, inobjectivisation into a real subject that exists with relative existence can still be called *subjective* because it terminates in the pure subject.

896. We come now to *objective-subjective* inobjectivisation. This is conceived by pure, natural reason using logical determinations but is not conceived positively, nor can it be, without God's help to human nature. I will also take something from the teaching of Christianity, something which natural light could not give, so that this important matter is not left totally undecided.

Taken in its entirety, this sublime inobjectivisation is trine just as subsistent, absolute being is trine.

Objective inobjectivisation, natural to the human mind, always precedes and is the beginning of this inobjectivisation. In *being* therefore, present to the human mind, the mind feels, through grace, a real, infinite subject absolutely existing. The mind feels this subject in being which is object (although only through reflection does it acknowledge being's objectivity). If it wishes to inobjectivise itself morally into this subject (which is susceptible solely of moral inobjectivisation because every inobjectivisation into the subject is either moral or not inobjectivisation), it must first judge that the subject embraces all essence, all conceivable perfection and all lovable-ness. But in making this judgment, it has judged impartially, that is, it could not make the judgment without putting itself into and taking the form of the object. The sense of the judgment is: 'Everything virtually contained in being is here in act.' The infinite real subject manifested from deep within being is precisely the subject which being first virtually showed. The object therefore essentially contained this subject which it now reveals. Hence it is the same object as before that now shows itself subject. This subject is not objectivised like subjects that have a relative existence, but is the object itself that has revealed itself more actually. As an ens, it is identical, an absolute object in which the subject is seen. If thought is therefore to find the subject, it does not need to leave the object and descend to the subject, as in the case of relative subjects. On the contrary, the *subject* is seen simply through a more perfect view of the object. Thus, for the subject to be a knowable object, thought does not need to

transport it into the object; it is already in the object and clearly visible.

If human beings can and wish to inobjectivise themselves into a subject of this nature, they inobjectivise themselves into a subject which is essentially the object of their intelligence, and at the same time as they inobjectivise themselves into this subject, they accomplish the objective inobjectivisation they first had by nature.

896a. This is the difference between judgments made about the excellence of relative subjects and the excellence of the infinite, absolute subject. When excellence is predicated of relative subjects, the concept of excellence is taken from being and applied to them, which are not being. Hence the subject and the predicate (before the addition of the latter) are not identical. Consequently, these judgments are subject to error. But when excellence and perfection are predicated of the infinite, absolute subject, the objective concept of excellence and perfection is taken from being and applied to being. The subject and predicate are identical, and the judgment, as essentially identical, cannot err. In short, objective being is predicated of subjective being or vice versa. Being is therefore simultaneously objective and subjective: the object cannot be apprehended without the apprehension of subject-being; the subject cannot be apprehended without our knowing and bearing in mind that this subject is the direct, essential object of the mind, without the intervention of any other judgment.

When *objective inobjectivisation* is carried out by natural reason, it stands on its own, separate from *subjective inobjectivisation*. But when it is carried out through a supernatural light, it can be accomplished only when it is simultaneously *subjective*. The object, opening up its depths, so to speak, allows us to see an infinite, eternal subject subsisting essentially and absolutely in it. This inobjectivisation must appropriately be called *objective-subjective*.

We can see clearly how much this inobjectivisation differs from the inobjectivisation I have called *subjective-objective*: in the latter, the finite subject is considered in its absolute existence, that is, in its typical being. The difference therefore between these three inobjectivisations is the following. In *subjective inobjectivisation* thought *descends* from the *typical* being

of the finite subject to the *subject existing relatively in se*. In *subjective-objective inobjectivisation* thought *ascends* from the finite, relatively existing subject to its typical being. In *objective-subjective inobjectivisation* thought neither ascends nor descends, but directly finds being which is simultaneously object-subject.

In this sublime inobjectivisation therefore, we transport ourselves into the subject and object simultaneously which have an indivisible unity in being. The inobjectivisation is naturally moral and involves the speculative and practical judgment about the excellence and infinite perfection of the subject and object. This involves an infinite morality or subsistent love between the subject and the object, both of which subsist, as I will explain later. Hence, we cannot inobjectivise ourselves into them without transporting ourselves into that infinite love in which they eternally rejoice together. This supernatural inobjectivisation of ourselves is therefore trine, just as the ens in which it terminates is trine.

897. Here a question arises: 'How is this possible? You have said that subjective inobjectivisation supposes identity of species between two intelligent subjects. Hence, if they were the same only in genus, it would be impossible to conceive an inobjectivisation, because the person inobjectivising himself must experience and perceive in himself feelings specifically equal to the subject into which he transports himself. You also said that inobjectivisation into separate intelligences differing in species from the human species would be impossible, and much more impossible into God as known naturally through analogy alone. But if a philosopher cannot conceive inobjectivisation into God in a positive way, as Christianity teaches, he must at least be able to show that this involves no absurdity. This is the only title that gives him the right to reason about it.'

The reply to this difficulty must be sought primarily in the immense difference between *being* and *finite real subjects*. Objective inobjectivisation applies only to *being*, not because being is similar in nature to the subject which inobjectivises itself, but because it informs the subject's intellect and is *per se* object, *per se* light. The finite, intelligent subject is not *per se* object, not directly known, and inobjectivisation cannot be carried out in a subject that is not known. This finite subject must

therefore first be made known before inobjectivisation can take place in it, and the only way this can be done is by objectivising it, that is, by considering it as object. But we cannot objectivise what we do not have. How then do we have the subject to be objectivised? By feeling, because the subject is essentially feeling, and we have this subject that is essential feeling precisely because we ourselves are the subject; we are the feeling, and can have or be only one subject-feeling. Hence, to form a *typical concept* of feeling, we must use our own feeling as an example, objectivising and separating it. This typical concept is positive and full because it is the felt element objectivised and separated. The only subjects corresponding to this positive concept are those of the full species, because the genus does not manifest real feeling *in se*. Consequently, the only intellective subjects into which a human being can inobjectivise himself are those belonging to the human species.

This whole argument cannot however be applied to being, which is known by a direct vision. If this object-being manifests subsistence within itself, this subsistence, that is, the subject, is the object of the intellect and known *per se*. There is no contradiction therefore in saying that we can inobjectivise ourselves into it.

In regard to the love that issues from subject-being and is borne into object-being, not only can we see it in the subsistent object containing the loving subject but it can also be communicated to us in a supernatural mode under the form of love. In this way it makes us experience something of that divine subject that is in the moral form, that is, is subsistent love. Because we are still dealing here with a moral inobjectivisation, the human being in this state and act that are superior to his nature, not only sees, but acknowledges and loves. This supernatural love is itself a derivation from and participation in divine love from which, as from a first cause, all supernatural love of God proceeds. Hence, because through a gracious communication we experience something of eternal love, we experientially understand this divine subject through a subjective and intellective feeling. St. Paul seems to mean this when he says, 'He who adheres to God is one spirit with him.'¹¹³

¹¹³ 1 Cor 6: 17.

898. If we consider the effects of inobjectivisation in God, we see that we are made deiform.

We naturally inobjectivise ourselves into virtual being when we place ourselves in impersonal being and then judge and act. When this impersonal being makes us feel a subsistence, we begin to see it as a person contained in the object and, in so far as we know this person, we can inobjectivise ourselves into him. In doing so, we increase our own personhood through this objective-subjective inobjectivisation. But because we cannot do this except by simultaneously loving, and because we cannot fully understand the divine subject unless we conceive him in the object in the act of love, we also assume this last form by inobjectivising ourselves into that act. We transport ourselves into the first two forms as into something else, but when we transport ourselves into the third form we find ourselves still within ourselves because this third form penetrates us and lives in us, subjectivising itself as it were in us. Although we feel here no distinction of subject, our reflection clearly sees that the effect emanates from the divine subject, refers us to this subject and continuously remoulds us in it.

899. Christian wisdom adds that the Word of God, the subsistent person-Object, assumed humanity and as man was called JESUS Christ. Human beings, like members joined to the head, become bound to Christ by very powerful and mysterious sacramental bonds. To these intimate unions, resulting from the Sacraments, they can and must unite the union of a willed inobjectivisation into Christ. By inobjectivising themselves into Christ as man, as one of their species, they are, by this very fact, united to the Word, because Christ, as a most holy human being, is indivisibly and personally united to God as second person who reveals the Father in himself and, together with the Father, breathes the Holy Spirit.

This moral inobjectivisation into Jesus Christ is the shortest formula of Christian perfection and the origin of the meaningful expression: 'In Christ'. The Christian must feel, think, do, suffer, have and be everything *in Christ*. Here again the precept of the Apostle applies: 'Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ JESUS.'¹¹⁴

¹¹⁴ Phil 2: 5 [Douai].

Article 5

Conclusion

900. From all that has been said we see that the three forms of being are united in the *moral* in so far as the moral is in the human being.

Natural intuition objectivises the human being. This first objectivisation is also an inobjectivisation. It makes the human being a moral ens when his understanding, constituted by intuition, is considered in relationship with the willed activity with which he is endowed.

The moral human being is the human being who judges and operates in so far as he is in being, as a third person, not in so far as in himself, as first person.

The intuiting human being embraces all being, which informs him and communicates its own dignity to him as if he were stamped by a seal impressing itself on him and repeating itself in him. Hence, any moral act (which would not be moral if we did not inobjectivise ourselves into being) involves all being and its order, even when the act is done to an individual finite ens. The moral judgment about the individual ens consists in evaluating it, according to the quantity of reality or being it has. The measure and the rule for such a judgment is therefore the totality of being.

The moral act therefore embraces, at least virtually, all being in all its three forms, because the essential condition for a moral act is that everything must be judged in relationship to the totality of being.

901. The supernatural moral act however is much more, because its measure and rule is not virtual being that contains the three forms only virtually, but actual being that contains them actually. This is always the ultimate purpose of the act, just as in natural morality the ultimate purpose was the acknowledgement of virtually known being. The term therefore of the supernatural moral act is being that is subsistent in the three forms revealed with varying clarity and given to human apprehension.

We have here therefore, relative to the *term* of the act, which is the reason for the act, both the measure and rule of moral

judgment. But relative to the *principle* of the act, that is, the subject performing it, the supernatural moral act has always the form of Love, and is a communication of and participation in the love which God bears to himself. God alone knows himself positively *per se* and therefore only he can love himself as positively known. Hence, he loves himself in himself, and loves himself in all who love him in this mode. Sacred Scripture constantly says that God performs supernatural works in us. For example, St. Paul writes, 'We do not know how to pray as we ought, but the Spirit himself intercedes for us with sighs too deep for words.'¹¹⁵ Because God does all this in our hearts, St. Paul adds, 'And he who searches the hearts of men knows what is the mind of the Spirit, because the Spirit intercedes for the saints according to the will of God.'¹¹⁶ This supernatural act therefore cannot be done solely by us nor by God separated from us. God performs it by intermingling himself, as it were, with us (without confusing himself in any way with us, nor we with him) and becoming as it were one sole subject with us or rather we with him. Here God works morally, and this ineffable union is such that in the moral act God takes the place of form, so to speak, and we the place of matter and subject. This explains St. Paul's *non ego sed gratia Dei mecum* [not I but the grace of God with me].¹¹⁷ If then a divine act is revealed in us to which our act is indivisibly united and unified, this divine act certainly embraces all being in all three forms as its term because this is fitting to the moral act of God himself.

¹¹⁵ Rom 8: 26.

¹¹⁶ *Ibid.* [8: 27].

¹¹⁷ 'By the grace of God, I am what I am, and his grace toward me was not in vain. On the contrary, I have worked harder than any of them, though it was not I, but the grace of God which is with me' (1 Cor 15: 10).

CHAPTER 2

The conjunction of the three forms in the moral in God

902. God's moral act is the act of a loving will through which he loves himself infinitely. The act is done by the divine subject which loves itself infinitely, knowing itself in itself as object. But the object is contained in the subject seen and loved in the object, because the subject would not be perfect if it did not contain the object, the term of the intelligent subject. The subject therefore, loving itself infinitely, must love itself also as object generated by itself. Moreover, the subject would still not be complete unless it were in the act of love. Hence, the subject, loving itself in the object, must see and love itself as intelligent and loving in the object, and thus see and love its object and its loving act in the term, otherwise it would not totally love itself. Consequently, the moral act of God necessarily embraces the three forms in which being is. And the term of this act, which is the *beloved*, must itself also embrace the three forms, because the *beloved* is the subject generating its object-self and loving itself.

Furthermore, just as there is not only the thought of the divine subject that generates itself as object, but also the free thought which in the absolute object thinks and creates the finite, so this finite, seen in the object as part of the object, is also part of the loved object, because the absolute object is essentially loved. The moral act of God therefore embraces all things, not only infinite being, but simultaneously the whole of creation.

SECTION FOUR

RELATIONSHIPS AND THEIR PRIMAL ORIGIN

CHAPTER 1

Universal definition of relationship

903. When the mind compares two entities and sees an entity that could not be seen in either of them when considered totally apart from the other, that entity is called a ‘relationship’.

This definition is universal and includes every kind of relationship.

From it we see that the concept of relationship excludes the condition that the relationship between two entities is a middle entity between and different from the two. Relationship is simply ‘an entity that cannot be thought without the two entities of the relationship being simultaneously thought and compared with each other’, even though the relationship is one of the entities or a constituent of its essence. In fact, wherever there is synthesism (*PSY*, 1: 34–43; 3: 1337–1339, 1431–1434), one of the two entities has such an essential relationship to the other that without the relationship one or both of them would not exist or be conceivable, even though, when conceived together, one is not the other. Unable therefore to be thought separately, they have the concept of relationship, according to the general definition I have given.

This synthesism is not solely between abstract concepts, like the concepts of father and son, cause and effect, relative and absolute, etc. It exists also between real subsistent things. For example, *that which feels* is indivisible from *what is felt* and vice versa. We cannot think a real *feeling principle* without

simultaneously thinking the *fundamental felt element*, which constitutes and informs the principle as a feeling principle. Similarly, we cannot think *that which understands* without *what is understood*. Again, person is defined as ‘a substantial individual in so far as containing an active, supreme, incommunicable principle’ (AMS, 832–837). Thus, person is a *subsistent relationship*.

Subsistent relationships exist therefore whenever:

1. at least one of the two entities compared by the mind subsists, and
2. the entity cannot be conceived as subsistent without thought of the other entity to which the mind compares it.

Whenever our mind cannot think that an entity subsists *in se* without the mind having recourse to another entity and comparing it with the first, then the subsistent entity must have an essential connection with this second entity. Hence, these *relationships* are not abstracts, but true, constitutive connections of that which subsists with its own essence and subsistence.

CHAPTER 2

As a maximum container, the objective form of being is the principle and source of all relationships

904. 'Relationship' means 'the entity seen by the mind when the mind compares two other entities but cannot see that entity in either of these two when they are considered totally separate from each other'.

Ideology demonstrates that two entities cannot be compared unless the mind can include one in the other. To do this the mind must have recourse to being as object, in which all entities inexist and are measured against each other (*NE*, 1: 182–185). Precisely because all things are contained in the object-being of our mind, they can be compared, and in this comparison our mind finds their relationships. Hence the principle and source of all relationships is the inexistence that all things have in objective being; in other words, 'the objective form of being as maximum container is the principle and source of relationships'.

Let us suppose that the mind has diverse entities and no container in which to see them. These entities, because not contained one in another or both in a third, would be totally isolated. As a result, the mind that saw one of them could not simultaneously see the other — if it saw them all, it would, by that fact alone, be their common container, and hence we would have a common container, which is contrary to the hypothesis. However we cannot stop here, as if the mind could of itself, subjectively considered, be the container of several concepts. We must investigate further and ask, 'On what condition can the mind be the common container of several entities, when it sees them all at the same time?' An act of the mind that directly sees a particular entity bears itself into and terminates in the entity. In this term it knows, and in so far as in the term, knows only that term of its vision (*NE*, 2: 515–525). If the mind now bears itself with its acts into several, totally isolated entities, it would, with each of these acts, exist in each of its terms and could not leave any of them; only in each of them would it

know. And because each known entity would be totally isolated and separate from the others, each knowing act would also be totally separate and isolated from the other acts. Consequently, there would not be just one mind knowing all the entities, but as many minds as knowing acts, and in the absence of one mind only, there would be no mind that could serve as the common container of the diverse entities. A mind cannot be a common container of diverse known entities unless there is only one object capable of containing them all. Granted this object is one only, the mind can be only one, and through the act with which it sees the one object, it can also see all that is contained in that one object, even when the content is many, because the multiple content receives unity from the container held totally by the mind's act. This property of the mind to be *container* of its diverse cognitions proceeds from the property of its essential object which is objective being, the *maximum container*. The mind, once it has seen this object, also shares with it the same property of being a container because it has an act that terminates in the container and thus itself becomes a container, as the ectype of its archetype ([887]).

905. We must make no mistake about this, which we would if we thought that the above demonstration could be proved wrong by the following argument:

‘Although the mind, with its direct acts, sees several, totally isolated entities, it can still be their container by means of reflection. In fact, by reflecting upon itself, the mind could know that all those various, direct acts, each of which terminates in an isolated entity, are acts done only by itself. Hence, it would become aware that it is the one mind that possesses all those items of knowledge and would be their container.’

This objection is founded upon the false supposition that the mind, lacking an object as container of the diverse entities it sees, can reflect upon itself and know that by means of its subjective unity it knows them. This in fact is impossible. First of all, the reflection which the objection considers necessary for the mind, and also the awareness resulting from the reflection, imply and require the mind to know itself, in other words, the mind objectivises itself; in order therefore to reflect upon itself, it must make itself object. Secondly, the objection implies that the mind must know itself as knowing and thus containing all

the entities. It claims that after the mind has become an object to itself, it must definitely see all the entities in this object, as in a container. We can reply however that if this were so, the mind would need a containing object, and this would be contrary to the hypothesis that the mind is a container *per se* without having a containing object. Nevertheless, if the argument ended here, the objector could still retort: 'I grant that the mind must have a containing object from which it could acquire the quality of container, but I deny that this containing object must be being. It is sufficient that the mind has become an object to itself.' So let us continue the discussion. Granted the supposition that the mind sees only entities totally isolated from each other and not contained by any other object, and that it therefore reflects upon itself, the only thing that this reflection can give the mind is what the mind already has in itself; reflection as such adds nothing; it simply sees the object and reflects on it as it is in itself (*Logica*, 1064–1065). But if the seen entities are totally isolated, the individual final acts of vision are also totally isolated because the final act or vision is totally in the seen object and not outside it — there is no knowledge outside the object. The acts therefore are like separate minds. Hence, if a mind exists which reflects on these acts, the object of the reflection will be separate acts, each of which will exist in its own object separate from the other acts. Such a reflection would never find a common act uniting all the objects, because such an act does not exist, and the mind, through reflection, would never find its own unity, because this unity does not exist, and it does not exist because the mind would be divided into the various objects. Moreover, this act of reflection would remain an act isolated from all the other acts because it would have no common containing object; in fact it would constitute a new mind.

In this hypothesis therefore it would be very possible to imagine another mind which thought all those isolated acts (here again it would require an object which contained them all), but such a mind could never think that the acts it sees were its own acts or the acts of one mind; it would see them as acts and minds on their own. In fact, when we say: 'A mind knows that it is the subject of many knowing acts', we mean that it has become an object to itself, and not just itself without acts, but with all its acts, and consequently with all the objects of these

acts, because distinct acts without distinct objects cannot be conceived. Hence, for the mind to know that it is the subject of its various acts, it must have before it an object that contains both it and its acts together with all the objects of these acts. If the mind does not intuit this container of its various particular acts, it cannot be their container. Indeed, it does not share in the nature of container if it does not intuit an object that is a container, because this container-object informs the mind in the likeness of itself, as I have said.

If several entities were intuited, but not intuited in an object containing them all, they would remain isolated and multiple; nothing would unite them, and the mind would no longer be one, nor capable of being aware of its own intuitions. On the contrary, there would be many minds, each with a single act and a single object, each lacking awareness. Consequently, there would no longer be a mind capable of comparing several entities and finding their relationships, as I wished to demonstrate.

906. This demonstration, presented without recourse to the idea of being as the light of reason, confirms the theory of knowledge. But if we begin with this theory, we have proof of the demonstration. Ideology tells us that ideal being is the light of reason and is *per se* a maximum container. Consequently, unless the mind thinks a relationship in a maximum container, it cannot see relationships between entities or think even a single relationship. As I have shown in the previous book, 'We need the whole of being to think the smallest entity'. If our mind did not have the whole of being present to it, every thought, no matter how small its object, would be impossible.

The mind thinks because it intuits the object (the object simply and absolutely, from which all other things receive the form of object, that is, pure being). It thinks because, by means of intuition, the mind is in the maximum container-object and, in so far as in the maximum container by virtue of its essential act of intelligence, it [can] transfer its thought from one entity to another and compare and understand their relationships without ever leaving either its own container or theirs. Our minds can fittingly be likened to ships. Ships can move from one part of the sea to another, even the most distant, because the immense sea offers them all the paths they may want to follow and the various points they wish to reach; without the wide sea,

they could not sail. In the same way, our minds are continuously in an infinite sea of being, which allows them to move and direct themselves where they will. Being opens for them a path in all directions, and by it they reach the entities they desire, which are in being. In this way they see and measure the distances from one to another; in other words, they discover their relationships. Without being, there would be no intellectual movement, indeed there would be no intellect. This fact is generally not taken into account. When we compare two entities, we direct our attention to these two alone and think that there is no other besides these in our thought. We fail to reflect that, if the two were the only entities, they could never be compared: there must be a third to connect them, a kind of communicating path between them. Thought must have a common foundation from which the entities, as it were, emerge and are distinguished; in other words, the entities must have, as I have said, only one container in which both are grasped by the mind.

907. Here an objection arises, which could cast doubt on my definition of relationship: 'You said that relationship is the entity which cannot be seen by the mind without its comparing two entities. This would imply that no relationship could exist unless known by a mind. But if the mind knows the relationship through that comparison, the relationship exists before it is known, and this is sufficient to define it; there is no need to introduce into the definition knowledge of the relationship and the mind that knows the relationship. Furthermore, you yourself have divided relationships into two classes: 1. those that do not subsist in themselves because they have only a mental existence, and 2. those that are subsistent relationships. Because the latter have a subsistence of their own, they do not need to be in a mind and are independent of a mind. If therefore at least some relationships exist but are not known, it is not true that "the objective form of being as maximum container is the principle and source of all relationships"; the objective form will be simply the principle of the knowledge which a mind can have of relationships.'

This objection is certainly specious, but not sound, and therefore merits a reply.

First, the doctrine of dianoetical being that I put forward earlier anticipates and answers the objection. It is of the essence of

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being that being is known. Hence it is no surprise that a condition for relationships is that they must be known. Even if some relationships subsist *in se*, we need to see whether they could subsist *in se* if they were not known, that is, whether their subsistence *in se* and knowledge of them go together, whether these are two reciprocal conditions of each other. It is true that thought can consider them *anoetically*, but this consideration, which is posterior, demonstrates abstract subsistence, not subsistence *in se* with all its conditions, one of which is *knowledge* of the subsistence. If we think some relationships, for example those of activity and passivity, but do not think at the same time that they are known, it does not follow that they subsist or can subsist without their being known. This simply proves that the form of subsistence is a form different from that of intelligibility and objectivity although, because of their *synthesisism*, one needs the other. Thus, thinking these relationships as subsistent without thinking that they are known does not prove that ‘as subsistent they need not be known’, but it was thought that removed from them an essential property that pertained to them, the property of their being known. We have therefore an interesting conclusion: ‘Making the knowableness of relationships part of the definition is far from introducing, with our thought, an element foreign to their essence. On the contrary, not introducing it means we are removing one of their essential elements.’ Thus, considering them an abstraction created by our thought of them means counterfeiting them and diminishing their being, which is what abstraction always does, whereas at first sight it would seem the contrary, because clothing them with thought would seem to counterfeit them.

908. To clarify this reply further, I will use teachings we already know.

As long as being remains perfectly one, it has no relationships at all, whereas every relationship supposes at least two of something. The first duality to appear in being is that of the two forms, the subjective and objective. But this first relationship supposes the mind because we cannot conceive identical being as subject and object unless the subject is precisely the mind that makes itself object. Furthermore there is no relationship without a subject. The absolutely first relationship is therefore the inexistence of the subject with the object. Hence, relationship

appears for the first time with the object. This verifies the fact that 'the objective form of being as container is the principle of relationship'. If we wish to define this first relationship, the best definition must be 'it is that entity which the intelligent subject understands between itself in the object and itself as object.' The relationship is simultaneously posited and known by the mind-subject when it posits itself as object. This is a subsistent relationship, because here to know is to do: to be known is to subsist. If therefore intelligence is necessary in the definition of the *first relationship*, it is also necessary for an unequivocal definition common to all relationships, because a common definition must be valid for every relationship. All other relationships come from this first, most perfect relationship. But let our consideration descend to subsistent finite entia.

909. Considered anœtically, these entia reduce to three classes: 1. subjects without feeling, 2. feeling subjects, and 3. intellectual subjects. Relationships between or within the last are obviously in intelligence, not outside it. Any doubt about relationships therefore must apply solely to the first two kinds of subject. Someone might say, 'We can see two bodies acting on each other with their forces, or on a feeling ens, and see a feeling ens acting on matter or on another feeling ens. Here, there are relationships of forces, actions, passions, etc., which subsist even if no mind thinks of them. We can see that an ens inexists with its action in another without the need for any object. You yourself admit that subjective being is a maximum container, just as much as objective being. If subjective being is a container, it will also have its relationships. Furthermore, the supreme subject must, with the creative act, contain all lower real subjects, even if these are without feeling or have only feeling.'

This argument is full of illusions and paralogisms. We have seen that inanimate things and those animated by only a feeling soul do not *per se* have the nature of subject but that they receive this from the human mind and the divine mind. If they were not subjects, they would be absurdities and could not subsist, just as what is second cannot exist without what is first. Hence, to consider them as subsistent of themselves, totally separate from a mind, is to consider them imperfectly and involves an absurdity. When the objection states that 'they have relationships between them', the supposition is that they are, or that there is in them, a

subject to which these relationships refer. But this subject is present solely because the mind is present which, knowing them, makes them to be. The objection also says that the infinite subject contains them. This is certainly true, but this infinite subject creates and contains them as objects, because the infinite subject is a mind that has the object and, gazing into this object, freely creates by abstraction. In an analogous way human beings think them as subjective entia because the human mind has before it the object in which it sees them as such entia. Our mind could not see them as subjective entia if they were not such, but they could not be such, that is, subjects, if they were not seen as objects by the creative gaze of God. Hence, together with all their actions and passions, they depend on the mind. It is because of this that their actions and passions are called 'relationships', seen by the mind. But, as I said, we can think them after abstracting from their knowableness, not because the form of subsistence is so independent of the form of objectivity that it can be without it, but simply because the form of subsistence differs from that of objectivity. Although human reason abstracts from the latter, a subsequent reflection acknowledges that the separation is not a true separation but a simple hypothetical abstraction.

909a. But to what can we refer an *action* if the thing to which we refer it does not exist? To what can we refer a *passion*, if what experiences the passion does not exist? That which understands nothing does not exist to itself but only relative to what understands. Hence, that which experiences and that which suffers is something because it is absolutely understood by the divine mind — it exists, suffers and experiences because and in so far as understood. We could know nothing of this if some actions were not done on us. We know these actions in the object, and we add to them some subjects that we find also in the object. We attribute the actions and passions to these subjects. Strictly speaking, they are not true subjects but *vicarious subjects*. The fact that we do not positively know the true *subject* makes us posit the abstract subject in its place and determine it by referring the passions and actions to it. In this way, actions and passions acquire the nature of *relationships*, because the mind has formed the subjects to which they refer.

910. We can conclude therefore that relationships require a

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mind that knows them. The only differences between *subsistent* and *mental relationships* are 1. the first have the practical mind as their cause, the others, the *speculative mind*; 2. subsistent relationships exist between two entities of which one inexists in the other; mental relationships [exist], or at least can exist, between two entities inexisting in a third (ideal object). Hence, because all relationships depend on and are included in the object, their definition must include their intelligibility.

CHAPTER 3

The meaning of *absolute* and *relative*, of *absolute mode* and *relative mode*

Article 1

Definitions of absolute and relative

911. This principle throws greater light on the notions of absolute and relative, and of absolute mode and relative mode. They can be universally defined as follows.

Absolute is what in itself is one, simple and without any multiplicity.

Relative is what one thing is to something else. It involves a duality and, generally speaking, some plurality.

A thing cannot be to another unless there is first something which in itself is. Thus, what is relative supposes something absolute present to it. This gives us the *principle of the absolute* (*Logica*, 362).

That which in itself is one, simple and, when thought, does not refer to another, is being. Therefore only being can be what is absolute. But if, after considering being as it is in itself in its concept, we refer it to something else, we have what is relative. In this case what is relative can only be a *mode* of being and not pure being only, as it is in its simple concept.

Article 2

Definition of mode: absolute mode and relative mode

912. We can now see the meaning of 'mode'. Mode is always a *relative* applied to the absolute, or to something taken as absolute. The relative, according to the definition above, is present whenever there is multiplicity and constitutes the *mode* of the absolute. To see what *mode* is therefore, we must see simply what kind of multiplicity and hence what kind of relationships

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can occur in being. Now any multiplicity observable in being arises from the *determinations* of being (NE, 2: 435): 'the *mode* of being is therefore simply the determinations of being.'

But *mode* has the nature of a predicate, which supposes a subject, and acquires a different meaning from the subject of which it is predicated. If it is predicated of *being*, each of being's determinations is understood as a *mode of being* because any act whatsoever of being is understood in the word 'being'. If on the other hand it is predicated of *ens*, the *mode of ens* is not one of *ens*' determinations understood individually but the complex of determinations that leave nothing undetermined in *ens*, so that *ens* can exist *in se*. An individual determination is an element of this mode, but not the total *mode of ens*.

We must also bear in mind that, although every *mode* of being always results from a relative, not every relative is a mode of being. The determinations of being are many and divide into two kinds of relationships and relatives: 1. being in relationship with its determinations; 2. the determinations in relationship with each other. In the first case, we are dealing with a *relative* which constitutes the *mode* of being; in the second, each determination is a *relative* which does not constitute the mode of being but, in the logical order, results from this mode. Because this kind of *relative* is the determination itself, it is both a concept and a true entity in itself.

If however a determination of being is a relative that, in regard to the other determinations, is something in itself (because in effect it is different from the others), then we can consider it in an *absolute mode*. Here, *absolute mode* means a mode opposite to the *relative mode*. The relative mode consists in the determinations of being, and being is said to be in a relative mode when our mind refers it to its determinations. Similarly, the *absolute mode* consists in the being which each of the determinations [has] in regard to another determination from which it is in effect distinguished. Each of these determinations, which is a relative in regard to being, is an entity in regard to another determination; in other words, each determination, considered individually and distinguished from the others, is referred to being.

In this way the absolute, that is, being, is conceived as having being in a *relative mode*, while the relative, that is, the determination of being, is conceived as having being in an absolute

mode. As a result of the intimate union between being and its determinations, the determinations are conceived in their totality as the *relative mode* of being, and being is conceived as the *absolute mode* of each determination understood individually.

Article 3

Relationship and relative; internal relative and external relative

913. Relationship is the disposition of one entity to another. But when the entity that has the relationship is considered, it is called, in so far as it has the relationship, a relative.

A relative (and consequently a relationship) can be internal to ens, or external in so far as we think an ens or the entity of an ens in relationship to another ens or to the entity of another ens.

The supreme classes of *internal relatives* are the subject, the object and the beloved. These can be considered either as *subsistent persons* (as they are in God), or as *forms of being* (as they appear in ideal being), or as *categories*, that is, as foundation of the supreme classes of all relatives.

Internal relatives arise from the internal multiplicity of ens. External relatives arise from external multiplicity, that is, from the multiplicity of finite entia.

Article 4

The absolute mode of being and the absolute mode of thought. How the absolute mode of thought precedes the relative mode

914. We have seen that the predicate 'absolute' pertains solely to being because only being is *in se* one and simple. But we think being in two ways, as *ideal* and as *subsistent*. *Ideal being* constitutes the *notion of being*; *subsistent being* is being subsisting *in se*. This gives us the distinction between the *absolute notion* and the *absolute* itself, as used in philosophy (*PE*, 4 [3]: 7). Everything the mind knows is known by means of *ideal being* and therefore by means of the *absolute notion*. Whatever we think,

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we first think it in an *absolute mode* because we think it with the *absolute notion*; only later can we think it in a *mode relative* to something else. This shows that 'the principle of the absolute' is not only ontological but ideological and logical. It is a law of being and of thought that can be expressed as: 'Nothing relative is thought unless it is first thought in an absolute mode.'

Hence 'mode of being' is one thing, 'mode of thought' another. There is an absolute and a relative of being, and there is an absolute mode and a relative mode of being. Moreover, there is an absolute mode and a relative mode of thought, and from these we extract an absolute in so far as absolutely thought, and a relative in so far as relatively thought. To think something *absolutely* means to think it in an absolute mode, that is, as an entity which is one and simple in itself, like being. To think something *relatively* means to think it in reference to something else, that is, to think it with a duality, not like being but as a mode of being.

The relative therefore, or a relative mode of being, can be thought in an absolute mode by means of the absolute notion of being. We thus give it a *cogitative*, not an entitative *absolute mode*. For example, *principle* and *term* are relatives of being because one cannot stand without the other. This duality (the same can be said about every other multiplicity) can be thought as one or, as the Scholastics said, *per modum unius* [in the manner of one]. We can think it like this in two ways: by synthesis and by abstraction. It is thought by means of synthesis when the principle and the term are considered connected and forming a single ens (for example, an animal), and by means of abstraction when either the principle is considered by abstracting from the term, or the term by abstracting from the principle. Here, principle or term or animal are said to be relatives considered by a mode of absolute thought, that is, they are thought *absolutely*, as being.

Hence, thought in absolute mode is the first mode essential to the mind because the mind always directly conceives and thinks as being all that it conceives and thinks. The object of the first thought, which is an intuitive thought, is being, which is absolute and gives the absolute mode to thought. Precisely because of this, we can make the abstraction through which we think the terms of relationships individually in an absolute mode. The

terms would not be thinkable in an absolute mode if such a mode were not proper to the mind, and indeed essential to it.

Article 5

How thought constitutes all relationships and relatives,
whether relatives of being or of thought

915. A difficulty now arises. I said that the source of all relationships is the objective form of being, that is, being in its objective form is the first relative principle of all relative principles. The objective form supposes subjective thought. Hence, thought must be involved in all relatives. But I have just distinguished the relatives of being from those of thought. Consequently, it seems that thought constitutes only this second class of relatives, which I have called *relatives of thought*.

The same difficulty is also suggested by the distinction between internal relatives in ens and external relatives among many entia. Relatives requiring many entia are understood as needing a mental *object* in which they are united or compared. But relatives in ens do not apparently require this mental object in which they are thought, because they are in ens *in se*, and thought has made an abstraction.

All difficulty disappears however when we reflect that there is on the one hand a thought that is or constitutes ens, and on the other an ens which is thought. And in addition to the thought constituting ens, there is another thought that does not constitute ens. Divine thought constitutes ens because divine being is itself complete intellection, but human thought does not constitute ens because it is incomplete, finite thought. Internal relatives, called *relatives of being*, require and are constituted by divine thought, but *relatives of thought* originate from human thought.

915a. The relative therefore in which the absolute is innate is precisely and solely the three supreme personal forms of absolute Being. These certainly originate from an act of thought that is definitely not human but is being itself, as well as totally perfect thought. Because this thought, this intellection, is being itself, then absolute, identical being is in its relative terms; this is

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practical and totally perfect intellection. Hence, the relatives produced are called *relative modes of absolute being*. They are modes constituted such, because they are thought.

We must note here how the *relatives* become a *mode*. We say simply 'relative' when this is considered on its own. But when we consider it joined with absolute being so that this absolute being is in the relative as in its natural complement, 'relative' acquires the concept of *mode*, because this concept of mode indicates and refers to that of which it is mode. The relative itself therefore, conceived in absolute mode, is simply called the relative, but when conceived in a mode relative to that of which it is relative, it is called *relative mode*. Hence, these two kinds of relative and relative mode again originate from the absolute way or relative way of thinking them.

Finally, because the first three relative modes are modes and complements of the absolute, the order of thought becomes identical with the order of being — absolute being would not be absolute if it did not subsist in the modes necessary for perfect, intellectual nature. This explains the origin of the dianoeticity of being, about which I have spoken and whose principle I will later discuss at greater length.

Article 6

The first origin of the absolute and of the relative
is in God

916. We also see how in first being we find the first ontological origins of 1. the concept of the *absolute*, 2. the concept of the *relative*, and 3. the concept of the *relative mode*, which is the relative considered in intellectual, absolute being and not by itself, separated by the mind from the absolute. The *absolute mode* exists only through abstraction, because in the absolute the *absolute* cannot be distinguished from the *absolute mode*; the absolute is one and simple and therefore is its own mode or, rather, has no mode. On the other hand, it is the abstracting mind which, by abstracting the totally simple *one* from the absolute, uses this abstract object as an abstract form of thought, and vests the relative or the relative mode, or whatever

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multiplicity it is thinking, with this form. This is called *absolute mode* and is distinguished from the absolute when the mind takes the absolute as an abstract form with which it vests the *relative*. As I said, *mode* refers to the thing of which it is a mode. Consequently, because the absolute cannot be form or mode of itself, it acquires the concept of mode or form when the mind applies it to the *relative*.

Article 7

The relative mode of human thinking

917. The *relatives* in absolute being, that is, the *relative modes of the absolute*, originate from divine, essential thought, not in human thought. But there is a *relative mode* that comes from human thought. Hence both the *absolute* (I call this *absolute of being*) and what is thought *absolutely*, although still relative (I call this *absolute of mode*), can be thought by the human mind in a relative mode.

But we must not think that human thought is arbitrary. It has its fixed laws, which derive mostly from the absolute perfect nature of thought as it is in God.

The *relative mode* of any entity whatsoever is therefore ‘the relative predicated of an absolute of being or of an absolute of mode’. In other words, an entity which in itself and by itself is absolute whether of being or of mode is said to have a relative mode when considered in one of its relationships with other entities.

The mind can predicate a relative of any entity whatsoever in two ways:

1. By simply seeing the relationship without exercising any abstraction on the absolute of being or of mode. This is the *relative mode of human thought through simple predication*.

2. By exercising an abstraction on the absolute entity and predicating the abstract concept of the absolute. This gives rise to a relationship between the absolute and the abstract concept. Here we have the *relative mode of human thought through abstraction and predication*.

When the mind predicates the relative of the absolute in the

first way, the absolute is the true subject of the relationship, and the *relative mode* pertains to the absolute thing in itself.

When the mind predicates the relative of the absolute in the second way, it understands that it has mentally dismantled the absolute. This is a *relative mode of mere concept*.

Entities therefore can have a *relative mode in themselves* and a *relative mode of concept*. The first is considered a *relative mode* pertaining to the order of being, that is, of being as thought *in se*; the second is a relative mode that pertains to the *order of concepts*. For example, if I think of 8 as a multiple of 2, this relationship has been seen solely by my intellect; I have considered 8 in a relative mode, and this mode pertains to the order of being *in se*. On the other hand, if I consider that every ens must be *one*, I have considered *ens* in a mode relative to *one*. But in order to give this relative mode to ens, I had to abstract from the concept of ens the concept of one, which is indivisible from ens. Hence the relative mode of ens considered as one is a *relative mode of concept* not pertaining to being *in se*. These are relationships produced by the abstracting mind; it is not a relative mode of thought of simple predication but a relative mode of thought of abstraction and predication.

We cannot assign a quantity to these relationships that derive from abstract concepts. They accumulate. Each relationship, clothed with an abstract mode, provides abstraction with the matter for producing others. Also, the absolute of being and the absolute of mode can always have new relationships. The word 'absolute' itself, which indicates an exclusion of relationships, can accept this meaning of relationship, provided we consider the *mode* of indicating the thing and not *the thing indicated* by the word, that is, we conceive the thing by means of excluding relationships. This exclusion, understood abstractly, can be given a relationship with the meaning of absolute, and the absolute can now be considered in a *mode relative* to the relative. This power of abstraction is inexhaustible but not arbitrary because founded 'in the order which objective being has with respect to the mind'. And from its inexhaustibility we can draw a fine argument for proving that 'the objective, intellectual order has within it an infinite multiplicity'.

Article 8

The union of the relative and the absolute

918. The absolute and the relative can be joined together but their concepts remain distinct. In this case, the one subsists in the many, and the many are in the one. This happens perfectly only in supreme Being where the total essence is perfectly one and admits no plurality, but subsists identical in the three persons who are three subsistent relatives present in the one of the essence. Here, none of the three relatives is more or less than the others because each is total, identical, absolute being, with the one relationship of total *communication* of this being. The communication, whether made or not, or made in one mode or another, neither adds nor removes any quality because every quality is in absolute being, although these relationships are necessary to absolute being for it to be absolute.

Because of this intimate union between the absolute and the relative in the very nature of being, the only way to conceive the *absolute* without the *relative* and the *relative* without the *absolute* is by abstraction, by which thought freely restricts itself to one and neglects the other. This is the ontological reason why the word 'absolute' contains a difference between the *thing indicated* and the *mode of indicating it*. As I said, the thing indicated is 'that which is truly free of plurality' and therefore of relationships, conditions and limits (these are three sources of plurality), whereas the mode of indicating the thing involves a relationship, because the word and the concept of absolute is a word and a concept relative to the relative it excludes.

Consequently, 'that which is absolute' is one thing, 'the notion or concept of absolute' is another. I call the latter 'absoluteness'. That which is absolute has no plurality or relationships, but the concept 'absoluteness' is itself relative to the concept 'relativeness'.

919. Our thought therefore that 'a thing is absolute' comes about by a notion which involves a relative, a relative of *opposition* and exclusion. The reason for this are the supreme forms of being. By means of these, what we think is always thought in an object. The object, as I have said, is the first relative, source of all the other relationships we think.

In fact every object has a duality: it has the *container* which, strictly speaking, I call object or objective form or idea, and the *content*, which I call *essence* or intelligible entity. Container and content is already a relationship. Therefore everything we think, everything thinkable, even when we think the absolute, we think them all with a relationship. We found the ontological explanation for this in the intimate constitution of the being that subsists absolute in three relatives. But it is a fact that also results simply from analysis of knowledge.

In fact, the object, that is, the objectivity, constitutes the *mode* by which the essence is to the intellect that intuits it, constitutes the thinkability of the essence. But the statement, 'The essence is to the intellect', expresses a *relative mode* of existence of the essence to something else, that is, to the intellect. This mode of the essence is so necessary to it that it would not be essence if it did not have the mode, because it would no longer be intelligible. The essence is therefore absolute in so far as one and lacking plurality, or is thought as such, but at the same time it has a *mode relative* to the intellect. This mode of intelligibility is not given to the essence by the finite mind: the finite mind intuits the essence because the essence is intuitable and not vice versa, that is, the essence is intuitable because the mind intuits it. The essence therefore has a *mode of being relative* to the intellect, contemporaneous with the mode's absolute being. This is the origin of the *dianoeticity* of being, which I have already discussed. This mode supposes a higher intelligence which is being itself (because essence is being); it supposes that being (which is essence) or that from which essence comes by means of limits has always had both a being that is in itself absolute and a form or an objective form of that being by which it is to the intellect, that is, to itself. This is precisely what ontology and theology demonstrate to be necessarily the case.

920. But the human mind can think the essence by itself, without thinking about the mode by which it is thinkable. It can see the essence either as an absolute, if it is the divine essence, or in an absolute mode, if it thinks it as one — although there is some plurality and therefore some relative element. Hence it understands that the essence is thinkable without the relationship with the mind entering into the object of the thought. This is the origin of the *anoetical* mode of thought. We must note however

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that this *anoetical* thinking, by which all things are thought in an absolute mode independently of their essential relationship with the mind, that is, their objectivity, is carried out not only through abstraction but through nature, that is, through the primal intuition by which the essence is contemplated without its relationship to thought.

Nevertheless this relationship is, as I said, essential to the essence, although hidden from our intuition. But precisely because it is in the essence that is before us, without our initially paying any attention to it, we say that the relationship is in the essence in a *virtual mode*, which then becomes actual through reflection. If however we later want to abstract from it so as to concentrate solely on the absolute mode of the essence, the relationship is again hidden from our gaze.

921. We can consider the *essence itself* in another relationship, also essential to it: the relationship with the practical, affective mind. Here it reveals another of its equally essential relationships, another of its relative modes, by which it is called *good*.

Only by raising our thought to the supreme Being do we arrive at a mind which is still being in another relative mode, that is, we arrive at Being as principle.

922. Finally I said that the three supreme, subsistent relatives are essential to being for it to be absolute. Only the absolute of being, not of mode, is purely one, and must be both perfectly *one* and, in this unity, *infinite*. Indeed, if it were not infinite in all respects, it would not be perfectly *one* because that which has limits has plurality — an entity is one thing, its limit another. But for being to have no limit of any kind it must subsist in the three modes. These three relatives are therefore necessary to constitute absolute being.

But let us return to the discussion of this teaching about being and its relatives, a teaching that is the foundation of all ontological doctrines.

CHAPTER 4

Relationship between being and its forms

923. We now know the nature of relationships, through their definition; we know their supreme principle and source, and we know the first of all relationships. We can therefore apply ourselves to the task of gathering them into a summary classification, which will become evident after we have dealt with the individual classes.

The first relationships to be discussed are those which the mind sees between *being* and its *forms*. At first sight, this class would seem not to be included in the principle from which, as I said, all possible relationships originate as from their source. If being is considered in relationship with the forms, of which one is the objective form, then these relationships are apparently neither in nor originate from the objective form. But this in fact is not the case. On the contrary, every time we think being, it is the object of our mind. But, as we have seen, our mind thinks its objects in two ways. Sometimes it thinks the entity in the object, paying no attention to its essential objectivity. Here the objectivity is the mind's *means* of knowledge, not the ultimate *term* of knowledge (this is the way intuition acts). At other times the mind thinks the *object* also as a *term* of knowledge, and does so by reflecting on the means of knowledge.

Thus, when the mind thinks about the possible relationships between *being* and its *forms*, it thinks being as term and its objectivity as a *means* of knowledge. It pays no attention to the objectivity, although objectivity is necessarily the form of being as thought. Both being and its forms, together with the relationships between them, are always contained in the object in which the mind sees all these things, even if it neglects or abstracts from this enclosure by the object.

Article 1

Relationships between being and the forms
individually considered

924. I said that being is thought on its own, without its forms, perfectly one. This needs to be explained. In fact, what does it mean that *being, intuited* in all its simple unity, no longer seems thinkable on its own when scrutinised by *reflection*? Reflection truly show that being cannot be without its forms; if so, how can it be thought without them?

This antinomy between *intuition* and *reflection* led me to deduce that, although the being of intuition does not show its three forms, it contains them virtually; in other words, the object of intuition is *virtual being*, being with the virtuality of the three forms. Indeed *reflection*, when applied, could not notice that being must have its forms in order to be, because reflection adds nothing; all it does is investigate the nature of *being* as given it by intuition. It is the being of intuition that presents the necessity of the forms to reflection; the forms are virtually comprehended in the very nature of intuited being. But because this antinomy between two different ways of knowing (the *direct* and the *reflective*) is frequently encountered, we must keep in mind the general opinion always given for solving the antinomy: 'On the one hand, direct knowledge apprehends the object in its unity without paying attention to the multiplicity present to but not noticed in the object. On the other hand, reflective knowledge finds multiplicity in the object when it directs its attention to the multiplicity.' To know a thing in this synthetical way, as intuition and every thought do, means that everything that reflection later discerns and distinguishes in the object is known *virtually*.

But because we have these two modes of thinking, the *virtual* and the *actual*, and because, in the former, being appears simple and one, and therefore lacking all negation, then the object of the first way of knowing is given a name and appears as an entity different from the object of the second way. Consequently, *being* and the *forms* are distinguished by the human mind as different entities.

As long as being is thought in the first way, no relationship is

seen, but as soon as being is thought in the second way (with its forms), *relationship* appears, and we see relationships that are between being and its forms, and between being in each form and being in the other two forms.

I will discuss these two kinds of primal relationships separately, beginning with the relationships thought by our mind between *being and its forms*, which is the subject of this article, followed by the relationships between being in one of the three forms and being in the other two.

In the relationships which we mentally conceive between being and its forms, our mind first sees five most universal relationships and then others less universal that determine the first. The five most universal relationships are *unity*, *union*, *diversity*, *disunion* and *duality* or more generally *plurality*. I will discuss each.

§1. *Most universal relationships*

925. 1. The *relationship of unity*. When being is thought in its forms, whether in one or more of them, they and it united together are thought as *one*. This *unity* between being and its forms, when being is united to them, is the first *relationship* in the order of thoughts of the human mind.

To think being in its forms as *one* is to think it as an *ens* without making any distinction in the *ens*. But if all distinction, and therefore all plurality, are removed from the *ens*, the *relationship* is abolished. Hence, if *unity* is to be conceived as a relationship between two things, it must be conceived as a term of the union of the two. Thus, the relationship is not conceived by a single thought only but by a series of thoughts simultaneously present in their order: we must first think the one-*ens*, then the two entities in this one-*ens*, and finally, the union between these as cause of the one. If the one is thought without the two entities and their union, the *relationship of unity* would not be thought; only the *one* would be thought, as in the intuition of being. In this intuition, the one is thought only virtually because we think being without our distinctly thinking that it is one, although it is truly one — not everything that the object is, is always thought actually and distinctly, as we have seen.

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One is therefore thought as a relationship when compared with the two or many from which it results through union.

We must also note that this *relationship of unity* between being and its forms united to it is triple because the forms are three. This triplicity determines the *unity* in three modes. Hence, in the order of abstract concepts it is inferior to the most universal relationship of unity. Moreover, the triplicity pertains to the relationships of the forms with each other, which I will discuss later.

2. The *relationship of union*. But what is union? If union has not been attained, there is only its possibility and potency. After union has been established, one is considered its effect. Union is therefore the act by which two elements unite. In our case it is the human mind that unites them. This act of the mind, with which it produces the one for itself, is the union of the two elements, and is simply our mind seeing the two elements as *one* because they truly are one. Hence the mind can see them one, provided it regards them in this way. The mind, after considering them two, considers them one: there is no other transition. In fact, we are not dealing with a transition but with the mind emitting one act after the other. The two elements must not be thought therefore to exist first in themselves and then united by means of a reciprocal action. This would be an illusion, the perpetual illusion of Hegel. In the case of finite entia, we do indeed think of the two elements, that is, of *being* as prior to the other element or at least independently of the other. But this other element, the finite real, is not thought prior to the ens; the ens is thought first because in intellective perception (the first function of reason) the ens is thought, not the real element alone, and in the ens, by abstraction, are found the two elements with their relationship of unity. The *union* therefore is not brought about but is already there; it does not precede the *ens* but is in the ens. The unity of the two elements is called *union* only by the reflection of the mind when the *unity* is considered with respect to each of the elements. We say, 'This element is *united* to this other element' and vice versa. The *union* therefore which is thought is in fact the relationship of unity, in so far as the union is considered in each of the two elements. *Unity* is a relationship that has the ens as *subject* and exists between the ens and the

duality of the elements. *Union* is a relationship of which the subject is each element and exists between one element and the other considered in the one-ens.

3. The *relationship of diversity*. If instead of considering the two elements as forming one, we consider that one is not the other, they are said to have the relationship of *diversity*. This diversity does not destroy their *unity*; rather these two are opposite relationships, one of which points to the other.

4. The *relationship of disunion* — 5. The *relationship of duality*. Whenever unity is denied, the two elements remain separate before the mind. The mind would now consider them with the *relationship of disunion*, which is the *negative relationship of union*, and with the *relationship of absolute duality* or plurality, which is the negative relationship of *unity*.

§2. *Less universal relationships*

926. The mind that thinks being in its form sees it as one.

Considering that two are in this one, it conceives the one as a *relationship of unity* to the two constituting the one. This is the very first relationship of the one to the many; it is universal, and if the mind were to forget the entities from which it was extracted, it would still be before the mind in this state of universality. But if we think it was extracted from the two entities of being and the forms, it contains in itself, despite its universality, something virtual that must be brought into act. In fact, if reflection takes place afterwards (its task is to draw the information into act from its virtuality), it reasons as follows: these two entities, being and the forms considered in the *one* they constitute, have the relationship of *unity*. But the one can be constituted in many ways, that is, the relationship of unity is universal and can have genera and species. How then do the two elements form *one*, and do they play an equal role in its formation? Let us compare them and see how each, when uniting with the other, becomes a cause of the one. We see that being is thought without the forms, but not the forms without being. Being is therefore anterior in the order of concepts, the forms posterior. From the order of these concepts we obtain both the *relationship of anteriority*, which pertains to being compared with the forms,

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and the *relationship of posteriority*, which pertains to the forms compared to being.

But if in the one, being is anterior and the forms posterior, being acts as the *initiation* of the one-ens which they form, and the forms act as the *term* or completion of the ens. This gives us two other opposite relationships: *initiation* and *term*, where being is the subject of the initiation, and the forms the subject of the term.

One of the two entities, in order to be known or exist, needs the other, but not vice versa. Moreover, one of the entities can be virtually understood in the other, but the other can be known only if it is actually, not virtually, understood in the first. The entity that needs the other and can be understood virtually in it is called *content*; the entity which does not need the other and must be actually known if the other is to be known, is called *container*. We have therefore another pair of opposite relationships: *being* has the *relationship of container* compared to the forms, and the forms, the *relationship of content* compared to being.

We have then three relationships proper to being: *anteriority*, *initiation* and *container*, and three proper to the forms: *posteriority*, *term* and *content*.

The first of these three pairs of relationships concerns the *order of conceivability* and *intelligibility* of the two elements considered in the one-ens they form. One of the elements is conceivable first and independently of the other.

The second concerns the *order of metaphysical generation* because the form of being exists through being and not vice versa. Being is the reason for the existence of the form, which we cannot think otherwise.

The third concerns the *order of completed existence*, because the two elements form *one*, provided that the second is thought existing in the first.

If *being* is considered in relationship with its forms, we are dealing with *ideal being*, a divine abstract, as I said, and not with *subsistent being* which is not distinguished from the forms. These relationships are the foundation of the *system of dialectical unity*, discussed in the previous book.

All these relationships are, through universality and abstractness, inferior to and determine the first relationship of *unity*.

Unity, considered as a relationship, is the relationship ‘through which many elements are one’, and can be of many kinds; the one can result from the many in many ways. Thus, to determine how *being* and its *forms* have unity, that is, concur into one, we take the three relationships and say that *being* concurs as *anterior*, as *initiation* and as *container*, while the form concurs as *posterior*, as *term*, and as *content*. In this way the two elements unite, and once united acquire the predication of unity. But these three relationships determine this unity made by the two elements, and do so by acting as causes of the *union* which produces the *unity*.

Unity is predicated of the two unified elements and indicates *what results* from their union.

Union is predicated equally of both elements, and indicates what they have in *common*.

The relationships I have listed last here are predicated of one of the elements in opposition to the other and indicate the *difference* between them.

§3. *The order of relationships in the human mind, and order in itself*

927. The human mind acknowledges in all the things it thinks a double order: an order of anteriority and posteriority relative to its *intuition* and an order of anteriority and posteriority of things in themselves, which it acknowledges through its *reflection* and through judgment. This double order was acknowledged by the ancients, and the greatest of our philosophers says with them, ‘Things posterior in nature are mostly the first known to us.’¹¹⁸

In the order of intuition, we find that concepts are anterior because of their universality or extension — this is the order of concepts.

In the order of things in themselves, the opposite is true: those

¹¹⁸ St.Th., QQ *de Verit.*, q. 14, 1. — Gioberti, after confusing once again these two orders and following the example of Benedict Spinoza, has impaired the accuracy and clarity of his ideas. His ideas go around inexhaustibly in circles, and although they are advanced with his marvellous oratory, he cannot extricate himself. Cf. *Lezioni* 90.

entities precede which are more complete and perfect. Hence the *entities* thought with more comprehensive concepts precede the others — this is the order of things.

These two orders have an intimate union because the *entity* is seen in the *concept*. Hence the same concept has one order if considered as a concept, that is, as a container (this pertains to the objective form) and another order if the consideration concerns the entity that is seen contained in the concept (this pertains to the subjective form).

But because *abstracts* always show some entities that are ultimately separate from the subsistent thing, the word ‘abstract’, which refers to the real operation of abstraction, also means that the entity seen in the abstracts is posterior to the subsistent thing.

If we examined all possible abstracts, they could be distributed in the following two series:

1. We could begin from the most universal and continue to the less universal. This would be the order of intuition.
2. We could begin with the subsistent things from which the abstracts are separated, deal first with those abstracts that are closer to the subsistent things and retain more of their elements, and then gradually add those that are more distant from their source, that is, from the subsistent things and are therefore more extensive and universal.¹¹⁹

Distinguishing these two orders of abstracts will be of great help later. Here I simply wish to observe in what respect the more universal or less universal relationships that I have indicated between being and its forms are present between the two orders.

All these relationships are abstract. On the one hand we have the three less universal relationships of anteriority, initiation and container, which pertain to *being*, and on the other the three opposite relationships which pertain to *form*. All these less

¹¹⁹ Note: in the order of things in themselves, what is subsistent is anterior to what is abstract. But this does not mean that a less extensive abstract must be anterior to a more extensive one. The mind, with a subsistent thing present to it, can certainly first abstract a more universal concept and then a less universal concept, and this is in fact what happens. But it remains valid that in the order of *intuition* anteriority must be considered in relation to the greatest extension.

universal relationships, precisely because they are *proper* to each element, are clearly closer to the entity from which they are taken than are the relationship of *union*, common to both elements, and the relationship of *unity* that is the effect of the union.

928. If I show these two orders in a table, we will see them more clearly:

Any ens whatsoever, indicated by A, can be divided by thought into two abstract elements:

a. Being		b. Form
The relationships of being to its form in ens A give the following relationships:		The relationships of form to its being in ensA give the following relationships:
1. <i>anteriority</i> 2. <i>initiation</i> 3. <i>container</i>	} the opposite of	{ 1. <i>posteriority</i> 2. <i>term</i> 3. <i>content</i>

These opposite relationships considered in the two elements *a* and *b* of the ens which are their subject, give the concept of:

1. a *determined union*, that is, a *relationship proper* to each element, because the *determined union* predicated of one of the two elements *a* and *b* differs from the union predicated of the other. From this determined union proper to the elements abstraction separates, and

2. a *union* without determination, that is, a *relationship common* to the two elements.

The determined *union*, considered in its completion, gives the *determined unity*, from which the *undetermined unity* is abstracted. But with this relationship of unity, thought has returned to ens A from which it began and which it sees as one resulting from the two elements first divided by thought and then rejoined. The *unity* is thus predicated of the *ens* and has the nature of relationship when it is considered predicated of an ens resulting from the two elements *a* and *b*.

Article 2

Relationships between being and the three forms considered together

929. So far I have spoken about the relationships between being, as a divine abstract, and the forms considered generally which terminate or complete being. And when speaking about the relationship of the *unity* predicated of being united with form, I said that this unity of ens can be triple because form is triple, although being is one.

If being is not considered in relationship with the individual forms but with all three, it acquires the *relationship of initiation-being of a triple term*. This relationship is a determination of the relationship of *initiation* I have discussed.

Also understood here, through abstraction, are the relationship of *one to three* and the relationships virtually contained in this relationship, namely, the relationships of *one to two* and *two to three*, and the three opposite relationships of *three to one*, *two to one* and *three to two*. Moreover, because the human mind can always replicate its intellectual acts as extensively as the *possibility* it intuit, it has as it were, in these numerical abstractions, attained the knowledge of all numbers and of their reciprocal relationships. In short, it virtually has the whole of arithmetic.

The relationship of *initiation of the forms*, in addition to being determined by the forms, is predominantly determined by the order which the forms have between them, because being is the initiation of the three forms in the order they have between them and not otherwise.

Article 3

Relationship between being and the individual forms proper to it

930. If in place of the abstract forms, that is, the *categorical forms*, we speak about the forms proper to being, then the *unity* formed by being and by each form becomes *identity* and is

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called the relationship of identity. This is due to the way of thinking proper to human dialectics which distinguishes the understanding of *being* from the understanding of *form*.

But because the forms remain distinct, the *relationship of diversity* between them, as a categorical diversity, is the greatest of all diversities.

This *relationship of identity* between the forms and being applies solely to infinite Being, to which only the forms understood absolutely are proper.

Consequently, this thought of subsistent Being in its three forms eliminates every effective distinction between being and each form, that is, every distinction *in se*. All that remains is a distinction relative to the mind, contained virtually in the *identity*.

Identity would not be spoken about nor have the nature of relationship if the mind did not contain two elements which were in themselves identical. This identity *in se*, compared to mental duality, constitutes the relationship called identity.

The mind has two kinds of knowledge: 1. it knows what a thing is in itself, and 2. knows the thing in the mode the mind has made for itself by analysing and dividing the thing into parts. This is true no matter how the analysis is made, even if by the simple replication of acts of reflection. Without these two kinds of knowledge there could be no 'relationship of identity' before our minds. This relationship is 'the *indistinct entity in se* which the mind sees in two mentally *distinct entities*'.

But this *relationship of identity* cannot be perfect unless the two elements distinguished purely by thought and contemplated in the one that they form, lose all distinction so that both can be predicated of the resulting whole.

This is precisely the case with subsistent being in its forms. The whole of subsistent being in the subjective form is, we can say, purely being and at the same time totally subject. The same can be said about being in the other two forms. Hence the following propositions are valid: 1. 'The whole of being subsistent in the objective form is being', 2. 'The whole of being subsistent in the objective form is object', 3. 'The whole of being subsistent in the moral form is being', and 4. 'The whole of being subsistent in the moral form is moral'. We thus see that being subsistent in each one of the three forms has no duality at

all, and that only the human mind can consider it under two aspects, that is, apply two abstract ideas to it. But these two abstract ideas predicated of the same whole change their nature because each is predicated of both aspects. This is a most perfect identification.

Article 4

Relationship between being and the improper forms,
that is, finite forms

931. This *relationship of identity*, however, is not seen between being and its improper forms, that is, finite forms, because there is no identity between being and form in finite entia, as I showed at length in the previous book.

We must first bear in mind that all three *forms of being* cannot be limited in the same way. Only the *real form* can be found with limitation in the act of subsistence. If the other two are found in the act of subsistence, they are essentially unlimited. Hence the limitation of the objective and moral forms is due solely to the fact that they are not always in the act of subsistence; they can have a *virtual existence*. But *virtual existence* is present only when one thing exists in another *by participation*.

The existence of one thing in another by participation is a concept resulting from two conditions:

1. The participated thing must not constitute the subjective existence of what is participating, but be joined to it by the copulative 'has', not the copulative 'is' (*Logica*, 429).

2. [The participating thing] must not totally possess the participated thing in the mode that the participating thing is *in se*.

This is precisely what happens in finite entia relative to the *object* and *the moral*: these two infinite forms *are* not finite ens itself but are possessed (although not totally) by finite ens. This ens is said therefore to possess them by participation. In fact, because the two forms *in se* are considered infinite, the participation must be in their essence of infinity. But because this essence cannot be participated in together with the act of their subsistence, they are participated in *virtually*. Hence, *virtuality*

is the only possible limitation the two forms can receive. Moreover, they do not receive it absolutely but relative to the finite subject participating in them, and their virtuality originates precisely from the nature of the participation. Consequently, the whole of each form is said to be participated in but not totally.

On the other hand, the form of *reality* is the only form that can have the act of subsistence and be limited in this act. In fact, if reality could not be limited in the *act of subsistence*, finite entia could not exist because reality constitutes the subject, which is what is *first* in finite entia. But finite entia do subsist. Therefore the form must be able to admit limitation and at the same time be actual.

932. But here we come up against a serious difficulty. The forms of objectivity and morality are by their essence infinite. Why then does the form of subjectivity not also have the same infinite nature?

There is certainly an infinite subjectivity which by its essence inexists in object-being, but when the mind considers subjectivity on its own, it thinks a concept to which *infinity* is not essential. Hence, the difference between the *subjective* and *objective* forms is that the subjective form is thought infinite only in the objective, whereas the *objective* is thought infinite through the very nature of objectivity, even when the mind separates it from the subjective.

Consequently, the concept of *infinity* is always given to thought by the *object*, which is the universal, supreme *measure* of all thinkable things. Thus the first concept we can have of infinity is the concept we find in *virtual being*, the object of our intuition, and what fills this concept is *infinite*, what does not fill it is *finite*. The object, given us in a virtual mode, is given as an *infinite capacity*. This capacity measures everything thought in the capacity, in the way that content is measured by its container, and if the container is to be the measure of all things, it must be infinite — if it were finite, it could not simultaneously contain and measure things that exceeded its capacity. Objective being therefore, although void of reality, must be infinite. But because the *subject* is not a measure for the mind but is measured, it is not a concept that necessarily involves the infinite. The concept of the infinite is given later to the subject by the

mind when the mind sees that the subject is such that it can fill all the void of the object in which it is thought. Hence, the concept of *subject* does not include the concept of infinity. It is a *concept common* to both finite and infinite subjects, whereas the concept of object always implies some infinity.

Someone may retort that there are finite objects as well. Ideology replies by demonstrating that what is pure object is always unlimited being and that finite objects are not purely objects but the object in so far as it contains something finite. Therefore the finiteness is not in the object but in the thing contained in the object (*NE*, 2: 416, 481–482; 3: 1075, 1080, 1158). This is why I said that the whole of *objective being* must be used if we want to know the smallest part of reality or ens.

933. It is true that everything we think is thought in the object but not always in such a way that we distinguish the objectivity in the thing thought. The *intuitive faculty* of thought stops at the *essence* without paying any attention to the objectivity of the essence. I have distinguished this faculty from the reflection with which we see that the *essence* we are *thinking* is *object*. In intuition the object is present, and through and in this object we think the essence (*principium quo*), but when we reflect, the object becomes the ultimate term of our thought (*principium quod*). In the first case the object is virtually thought as undivided from the essence we are thinking; in the second case, the object is actually thought. Hence the distinction between what is thought *absolutely* and what is *absolute*.

Everything seen contained in the object *absolutely* is, and is absolutely thought. But this does not mean that everything *absolutely thought* is *absolute*: the mode of thought can be *absolute* but the thing thought is not necessarily absolute. The *mode of thought* is made absolute by the absoluteness and infinity of the *means* by which we think, and this means is the object. It is objectivity that makes thought absolute. The thing thought is absolute when the *essence* thought in the object is infinite or, as I said, corresponds to the whole extent of the object. The thing thought is always what is contained in the object. In every object there is always the duality I have pointed out: *container* and *content*. The container constitutes the *absolute mode*, and the nature of the content is that in which the *absolute* as thought is found.

As we have seen, the object, as thinkable, is infinite. But because its essence is precisely to be thinkable, it is always and through its essence infinite. The *subject*, through its essence, has subsistence but not *thinkability*; it receives thinkability from the object in which it dwells. A subject could, through its essence, reside in the object in such a way that it could not be thought as existing outside the object without losing its identity. This kind of *subject* is infinite. On the other hand, if a subject, through its essence, does not exist solely in the object but is conceived existing also outside the object, it is a finite subject.

All subjects, even finite subjects, have a mode of existence in the object. Hence, their *mode of existence is absolute*. But subjects also exist *in se* outside the object, in which case they are relative, finite subjects. When these finite subjects are seen in the object, their mode is seen as absolute, as long as they are in the object, but in the object itself they are seen as existing *in se* outside the object in a subjective mode relative to themselves. Only subjectivity therefore is the form capable of *relativising itself*, and as relativised is finite. In fact if we take man as an example of finite subjects and contemplate and analyse this subject, we certainly observe that 1. the human subject is first of all constituted by a feeling which is not object; 2. this human subject, that is, this feeling-principle, sees objective being and exists in it as in the term of its intuition; 3. the feeling-principle and the object-being in which the feeling-principle exists are separate, inconfusable natures; therefore 4. the nature of this feeling-principle does not have the object in its own essence, that is, it exists outside the object. If it exists in the object, this is not because the feeling-principle is essentially object but because it is *objectivised* and is therefore in the object but not object *per se* — *per se* it is separate from the object, which is precisely and solely the meaning of ‘to be outside the object’.

934. Hence, the existence of this feeling-principle, that is, man, is relative. As I explained in the previous book this relative existence ‘is what is attributed to a principle which is not being and is essentially outside the object, not in it’. In fact, when the feeling-principle, man, becomes aware of his existence (which is, at least implicitly, an affirmation of his own existence), he attributes the existence solely to his feeling-principle. This existence is *relative to this principle* in such a way that it pertains

to no other; it is not therefore *absolute existence*. Absolute existence cannot be the exclusive existence of a principle that is not being — absolute existence is purely existence. This is precisely the existence of being, because existence and being are the same, that is, being is existence with all that is essential and concomitant to existence. Existence is an abstract of being.

Thus, only the *subjective form* can receive relative existence, and therefore in the order of relativity can exist in act as limited. This mode of existence explains the possibility of *finite entia*.

The *objective* and the *moral* forms cannot subsist in act in a limited mode. The only limitation proper to them is that which consists in *virtuality*. But they become virtual by means of the *participation* that an ens, that is, a finite subject, assumes in them. As simple and indivisible they communicate themselves *whole and entire* to this subject, but partly conceal their actuality. Thus the actuality remains virtual in them with respect to the subject participating in them. For this reason they are said to communicate all of themselves but not totally: the *mode* of participation in them is limited, the *thing* itself is not limited. It is a *limitation relative* to the subject and corresponds to the *relative existence* of the subject.

935. These observations indicate the kind of relationship between being and the finite forms.

Being (abstracted from its forms) has not only the *relationships* of *anteriority*, *initiation* and *container* but, in the case of the finite form of *reality* or subjectivity, has also the relationships of *effective diversity*, *union of presence* and *formal cause of existence and duration*.

The *finite form* of reality has, in addition to the *relationships* of *posteriority*, *term* and *content*, those of *effective diversity*, *union with the being present* to it, and *receiver of the form of existence and duration*.

By *effective diversity* I mean diversity *in se*, and not purely such through a hypothetical analysis of the mind. On the other hand, we have seen that between being and its forms there is no effective diversity but only a diversity relative to mental analysis. Note therefore: when we ask the undetermined question: 'What are the relationships between being and its forms?' and do not determine whether we are speaking about being's proper or improper forms, and whether among the relationships we

include *diversity*, this relationship of diversity is so generic that it abstracts from the differences of *effective diversity* and *dialectical diversity*. But these differences are those that they make one *diversity* differ from another not partly but in everything, or, as the Scholastics say, *ex toto*. Thus, when we make a genus by abstracting differences of this nature, the genus does not include true species but things that differ totally in nature, one of which is, while the other is not. Consequently, generic essence, which serves as a foundation, is a purely formal, remote genus. I call these genera *equivocal genera*.

Finally, relationships between the finite real form and being in its three forms are something else. I dealt with them in the previous book where I presented the philosophical teaching on creation, but I will discuss them again later.

CHAPTER 5

Relationships between the categorical forms of being

936. The forms of being are either thought in abstraction from being-as-one, and called *categories*, or each is thought identified with being, and these are the three *divine hypostases*.

These hypostases are *per se* undoubtedly anterior because anything abstract is *in se* posterior to anything subsistent, like the operation of the divine and human minds. But because the order of anteriority and posteriority is not *in se* always the order proper to the human mind (*Logica*, 440–444), we who are human beings must, when explaining knowledge, follow the order proper to the human mind and let ourselves be guided by it to knowledge of the order *in se*. The *first thing known* to the human mind is a *divine abstract*, therefore whatever is closer to this abstract must, in accord with human dialectics, be anterior. Consequently I must begin by discussing the relationship of the forms as forms of ideally considered being; in other words, I must first discuss the categories, and then the relationships of being in its three proper forms.

Article 1

In human thought there is an observable mediatory form between the thinker and what is thought. How this form pertains to the three categorical forms

§1. *With our mind we apply objective being to itself*

937. I said that the objective form of being is the principle and source of relationships. This gives rise to the following difficulty: ‘How can this form which is the principle and source of all relationships be the subject or term of particular relationships with the other two forms?’ We must solve this antinomy before we proceed.

The difficulty is easily solved if we recall the two functions

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that objective being provides for the human mind: the functions of the *means* and *term* of knowledge. Objective being, as the *means of knowledge*, is truly the principle, the source, the *universal foundation* and the container of all relationships. As the *term* of knowledge it can certainly be, and is simultaneously, either subject, or term of relationship with the other forms.

But objective being is *means* rather than *term* of knowledge because in *objective being* there are, as is clear from the phrase itself, two things distinguishable by the human mind: 1. *container-being*, and 2. *content-being*. Although being is identical, it is in our case *object* only in so far as container; in so far as content, it pertains to the subjective form (*Logica*, 92, 337). Intuition terminates in being as content, and pays no attention to being as container, although intuition could not see the content if the container were not present to it with the quality of container. This quality or form therefore remains unobserved by the intuiting subject and because it does not form the final term of the act, remains *virtually* but not actually known through the psychological law that ‘only that is known actually and luminously on which the attention falls as final term of thought’. This is clear from the singular fact of hidden intellectual life or no apparent arguments, which I dealt with in *Psychology* (2: 1666–1725). The same happens in the presence of the portrait of somebody we love: we can look at the portrait and think solely of the person: in our spirit we can think about the person’s virtues and misfortunes without the image itself engaging our attention for a single moment. Similarly, and more so, the insensible objectivity of being does not engage our attention; instead, we naturally fix our intuitive gaze on being itself.

However, everything we think must be the *object* of our thought, otherwise we cannot think it. Hence objectivity is the form which constitutes the *means* of knowing all we think.

But later we can reflect on this universal means of knowledge and, after thinking being, think that this being is thought by us, and thus understand that this *thought being* is an object of our *thought*, and we are now thinking the object directly as a term of thought.

938. The first difference therefore between the *means-object* and the *term-object* of thought is that the former is known only *virtually* when being is intuited. Then later, when we reflect on

the thought being, we know it actually as object, as term-object. Hence the object is *per se* an essential, subsistent relationship.

In the second difference, objective being as the universal *means* of knowledge is known virtually united to being, because being is thought objectively, in such a way that the objectivity is the form, that is, the mode by which being is apprehended. On the other hand, when the *object* has become the *term* of thought, it can be abstracted and separated from being and from every entity and be conceived as the pure form of every entity, of everything thought; thus it remains a pure form present to thought. This object, virtually united to the thought entity (even if this entity were objectivity itself) is the principle and source of all relationships. All relationships without exception are thought virtually united to objective being that contains them; they are thought objectively, that is, in the objective mode, in themselves. Relationships, conceived in this way, are the term of thought; their *means* is the object as universal form, because they are thought in it. The container (the object) and the content (the thought relationships) are neither divisible nor separate things because the virtual element in them can be separated only when it is actually known beforehand through reflection. But it is through reflection that the container (the object) is actually known, and when known, is separated from the content by abstractive analysis. The container, the objective form, divided by abstraction from what it contains, can be compared with the latter and in this way relationships between them can be discovered. *Objectivity* thus becomes the subject or term of particular relationships. This now allows us to investigate 'what relationships exist between the categorical forms of being'.

939. All this explains how the objective form is applied to itself, that is, how the objective form, united to thought as *means* and its own form, makes itself known as the *term* of thought. Moreover, because the objective form is essentially in being, from which it can be separated only through a hypothetical abstraction, we also understand how being as means and form makes being known as the term of thought (*Logica*, 702–705).

This movement of thought from being to *being* could not take place if the being from which it begins and the being at

which it arrives had no difference, not in itself but relative to thought.

There must also be two modes in which being is joined to human thought as *form* and *term*. Thinking objective being therefore, or even just thinking the object or, abstractly, the objective form, makes these things become the *term* of thought. The *term of thought* requires them to be object, that is, everything is thought objectively. But the object itself can be thought objectively, that is, the *object* is thought by means of the *object*, and objective being by means of objective being. Objective being has therefore two relationships to thought, one of term, the other of means.

940. We will now see how and why this distinction I make between the means and the term of knowledge occurs only in the human mind, not in the divine mind.

The human mind is able to intuit *virtual being*, that is, *being* separated from its forms in that its form are included only virtually not manifestly.

This virtuality is twofold because it can be understood as 1. the virtuality of the abstract forms, which is common to all three forms, and 2. the virtuality of being in the forms, which is proper to the objective form and consists in its being the form of thought. Thought therefore apprehends objectively all that it apprehends. Thus the forms in human thought remain hidden (in this double mode) in virtuality.

But the actuality of all three forms is essential to being as subsistent *in se*, so that even if only one were to become virtual, the concept of this being would cease; it would no longer be itself but something else. Hence, the objective form must also always be actual in Being subsistent *in se*. But because this form and the object of a mind are the same thing, Being subsistent *in se* must essentially and always be the actual object of a mind; it is therefore, by its very essence, dianoiological. If being subsistent *in se* is essentially *object*, it must also essentially be *mind* and consequently object to itself. To be object *per se* means to be *understood per se*, and to be understood *per se* means that it can never be not understood, even when considered on its own. If therefore subsistent being considered on its own is understood *per se*, it must also be intelligent; if it were not intelligent, it would not be understood, considered on its own, which is

contrary to the supposition. It is therefore a mind, that is, an *intelligent subject per se* and also *per se object*.

We have seen that the subjective form, as opposed to the other two forms, can exist in a limited act. The other forms cannot be limited in act; they can only conceal a part of their actuality and appear with that lack of brilliance that constitutes *virtuality*. Hence, intelligent subjects, although they can exist limited in act, cannot be *per se* objects to themselves, precisely because of their actual limitation, which contradicts the essence of the object. To finite minds therefore the *object* is something else, something in effect different from them. This explains why on the one hand they can intuit virtual being and why on the other there is no need for them to see it in all its actual light. The difference is this. Subsistence is always being in act. This act, whether more or less explicit, is always an act — the greater or less explicitness pertains in fact to the accidental part of the subject; the subject itself, as subsistent, is simple act because either it is or it is not, without any gradation. It is therefore proper to subsistence to be, as such, an act without potentiality or virtuality, in so far as, I say, it is subsistence. Thus, if there is a subsistent subject (and hence a subject in act) which is itself object, this object is also in act. Consequently, in subsistent being, that is, in God, who as subsistent is in act and *per se* object, this object is necessarily in act and cannot have any virtuality whatsoever; it must have the actuality of the subject, an actuality that in our case is maximum and totally free of any addition. The finite mind however is not *per se* object which, like any other object, is intuited by the mind. Consequently, it is in no way contradictory that this object is more or less seen, depending on the vision of the person gazing at it. In other words, this object reveals itself to finite minds with a certain virtuality.

Furthermore, we must note that human thought naturally apprehends finite real things, which are not *per se* objects, and because they are not *per se* objects, their objectivity is something else and truly distinct from them. Nevertheless they could not be thought except as objects. Hence they must be thought in the object but thought as in something else (which means they are objectivised). But because the object does not constitute their nature and is necessary only for their knowability,

their nature must be the term of thought, and the object must accompany this term purely as a *means* of knowledge, as their knowability, as the form of thought, which is all the same. But the thing that thought actually knows is its term. Hence objectivity remains in thought as a means or middle term, in an obscure state, of virtuality. Reflection then takes place and sees 1. that the finite nature it knows is not *per se* object; 2. that this nature had to receive the form of object in order to be known, and finally, 3. that by separating this form, it (reflection) makes the form a term of reflective thought.

From all this we see that solely in the finite mind, not in God, the *object* appears now as the means of knowledge, now as the term of knowledge. In God, in whom the quality of *means* is lacking (it is not necessary), there is only the subsisting, ever actual object which itself is a knowing subject, whose knowledge is not through any means but always is, just as the subject is.

§2. *In the logical order of generation, the subjective form has a relationship of precedence to the other two forms*

941. Because all relationships are contained in object-being, the relationships between the forms of being must also be contained in this being. This is a result of what I have already said: the three forms are seen in object-being as container, and the object-being-container can itself be seen there as contained, because *object-being*, as the *term* of knowledge, is contained in object-being as the *means* of knowledge. These are two different relationships which *object-being* has with our mind. Being *informs* the mind, constituting it as mind, and in so far as it informs the mind, it is the mind's direct *object*. The mind, informed in this way, is in act, an act terminating in being. Although the mind, with this first act, does not think that this being is the object of its thought, it is nevertheless the object of its thought, and because the mind does not yet think of itself, it does not think of this relationship between itself and the object. It knows being and everything in being, because being is the *object* of its act; if *being* is not the *object* of its act, the mind cannot think being. For this reason, it does not need to know the

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relationship between itself and being, which is the condition of knowledge. All that is necessary is that the relationship exists. This relationship of being with the mind arises from the very nature of being. Being is such that it can be visible to minds, can be their object; the relationship, which is essential to being, is the form of *objectivity*. This form constitutes the order of intelligible things because nothing can be intelligible unless it is an *object* of the mind. Thus, the *objective form* of being originates through the act of intelligence, and without this act the form does not yet exist. Hence, in the logical order of generation, the objective form is posterior to the act of intelligence — being or any entity whatsoever is object of a mind for no other reason than the mind thinks it. In the objective form therefore, being is posterior to and consequent upon the act of intelligence. If it were anteriorly object to the act of intelligence, it could be known as object through the first act of intelligence. But it becomes object as a result of this act, that is, in the order of logical generation, it supposes prior to itself this act which makes it object. Consequently, the first known thing is *being*, and when *being is known*, we can know that it is known and is object; before it is known, we cannot know that it is known and is object. This explains why in human intuition *being* is known, and because known, *becomes object*, and having become object, can be known as object.

The fact that being, after it is thought, can be known as object, that is, as thought *ens*, means it is known by a reflection. But when known as thought, that is, as object, it has another relationship with the mind: we think it as we first thought it, without thinking it was present to the mind, that it was object. Thus, we think *thought being* or being as object without simultaneously thinking we are thinking it; we think the object as object without thinking that it is present to our thought or is object of the actual thought we have of it; we think it as object of another thought or of all possible thoughts but not our actual thought. The *objectivity* therefore, relative to all other real thoughts (except the thought we actually have), and relative to all possible thoughts, can be thought, but the *objectivity* of the thought with which we actually think the objectivity cannot itself be actually thought. This shows that *objectivity*, as the form of thought, is the mind's relationship with the actually

thought entity, and that this objectivity informing the real actual thought is never thought while it maintains this act of union with the actually, really thought entity. Hence, if this objectivity is, but is never thought, it is in the order of existence, in the order of subjectivity, not in the order of what is understood nor the order of actual objects. We thus see how *objectivity* acquires the subjective form in so far as it is actually produced by the subject by means of the act of a thought, and is not object of this thought; it first is, and afterwards is known, like all other entities. Thus, when we say that *objectivity* is not known, we are by this very fact giving it an act of being, and 'every act of being in so far as not known pertains to the subjective form'. Hence, in the logical order of generation, everything, including the forms of being and the objective form itself, exists first in the subjective form and then in the objective form.

The subjective form therefore, in the logical order of generation, has a relationship of precedence to the other two.

§3. *In human thought there is a mediatory form which is objective but existing in the subjective form*

942. We have seen that the objective form of being exists as a result of a subjective act by which the mind, which is subject, thinks being, and thinking being makes it object to itself. But there is an infinite difference between the act of the divine mind which makes itself object and the act of the human mind. In the first, being is completed, is posited in its forms.

The act of the human mind must be considered either relative to being or relative to finite entities.

In the case of being, the act of the human mind is the first act through which the mind exists: object-being is given to it; it does not produce it for itself. But we can say in a certain way that with this act (an act of intuition), being, which is already *per se* object, becomes *object to the subject*; it reveals itself to the subject and in so doing imparts form to it, and by imparting form, produces the subject. Precisely because this object-being imparts form to the human being-subject, the human being, in so far as intellectual, apprehends everything *objectively*. With intuition therefore, the human mind apprehends *being in se*

(being cannot be apprehended in any other mode), and hence apprehends being as object. In this apprehension, only the *abstract form of objectivity*, not the object, is virtual, because being, as I said, is apprehended as object.

In the case of finite entities directly apprehended by human beings, both the *abstract form* of objectivity and the quality of *object* of the finite entities remain virtual. Hence the double virtuality mentioned earlier is present.

In fact in the act with which a finite entity is directly thought, the mind does not think the abstract form of objectivity. Nor does it consider the finite entity either an absolute object (because it is not an absolute object) or an object relative to itself, because the mind does not yet reflect upon itself.

Nonetheless finite entities are formed as object to the mind by the mind's subjective act. This explains why this subjective act by which a finite entity is object to the mind, must itself become object of another thought so that the objective form imposed on the finite entity by the mind can be object of actual thought.

Clearly then, the objective form imparted by the human mind to finite entities exists first subjectively, in a subjective form. This illustrates better how the forms of being reciprocally involve each other.

943. When the objective form, which exists subjectively, is imparted to a finite entity, the form is the quality that the thought thing has of being able to be thought: the thing is thought but the quality of its possibility to be thought (which is the objectivity imparted to it) is not thought, is not yet object of any thought. Hence, this objective form, imparted by the mind on a finite entity, still remains in the subjective form. The subjectivity of the objective form has the property of being a *mediator* between the subject and the object, because this subjectivity, in so far as it is imparted objectivity, inheres in the finite entity, and in so far as it is in subjective form, inheres in the subject as subjective form of the knowing act. Indeed, a thought entity is simply an entity that has become an object of thought. Hence, although objectivity is inherent in an entity and can be predicated of it, this objectivity is not the thing thought but the subjective form of the thought. When the thought is completed, the thing is thought as long as the thought endures. 'Has been thought' means

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simply that the subjective act is completed and united with the object.

The objectivity imparted therefore to finite entities in human thought exists first of all in subjective form. This *objectivity in subjective form* is the point of union between the act of thought and the finite thought entity. It is that mediate form which Aristotle missed when he confused the subject with the object, saying that 'in things which lack matter, what understands and what is understood are the same'.^{*120} However, when we say 'objectivity in subjective form', the two forms, although united, remain distinct, but when we say that what understands and what is understood are the same, they are fused into one.

Furthermore, Aristotle states his opinion absolutely, whereas I maintain that 'objectivity in subjective form' is solely in human thought and limited to finite entities, which *per se* are not objects; it is not in divine thought nor concerns being. This demonstrates that the human intellect is *per se* purely subject, not object like the divine intellect. But when our thought is directed to entities which *per se* are not objects, the human intelligent principle, which is purely subjective and has undetermined being as its object, must produce a mediate form which constitutes the union between the entities and the intellect. Whenever an ens must unite with another ens different from itself, or unite with a form of this other ens which the first does not have *per se*, the point of their union presents a third entity to thought. This third entity possesses something of each of the two that unite, and does not pertain purely to one or the other. Thus the objective form of a finite entity pertains on the one hand to the thing thought, and on the other hand, existing as subjective form, to the thinking subject. I repeat therefore: both forms are not fused into one, but one is in the other.

Consequently, the object with which finite entities are endowed is not present to the human mind as object in the simple, direct thought of the entities. It becomes present by replicating itself, and this happens when the mind sees that *the object which is the container of all entities in general* is contained in the thought of the individual finite entity.

¹²⁰ *De Anima* 3: 4.

§4. *Human thought does not form the absolute object but only
the object relative to itself*

944. The human mind makes everything object to itself by knowing it. Hence, because what is known is object, there must be as many objects as there are things known. But ideology demonstrates that the mind cannot make things objects if the things lack a quality which makes them susceptible of being thought, that is, of actually being objects of the mind. Ideology further demonstrates that every finite reality (considered *per se*) lacks this aptitude, which is only in pure being. Hence, finite real things are thought in so far as they have being; being gives them their intelligibility, the quality through which they can become objects of the mind. They are objectivised but not objects *per se* — only being is object *per se*. All finite things therefore are known in and through this object. If our mind abstracts this aptitude that being has to be thought by the mind, or rather, abstracts the essential quality being has to be thought, we have the abstract concept of objectivity. Abstracted in this way, the objectivity has itself become an object of thought.

Every finite entity is therefore object because it has being united with it. But thought terminates in the entity. Therefore when an entity is objectivised in this way, it seems to be a finite object because the person thinking it pays no attention to being, the true object of thought. However, when we distinguish the finite real from the being which makes it intelligible, we see that being is a limitless object. The pure object has therefore the nature of the unlimited. Hence, when we say that all things are contained in the object, we do not mean in limited objects, like those that have become objects through objectivisation, but in unlimited object-being. Nevertheless, because all finite real things pertain to the subjective real form, the being which is seen in them when they are directly apprehended is in the subjective form, and because seen and thought in them, it becomes a special object of human thought. But it could not become a special object if it did not have the aptitude. The *aptitude* which being has to become object to the human mind pertains to the objective form. In fact it could not have the aptitude to become

object to the human mind if it were not independently object *per se*. This *aptitude* to become object to the human mind applies only to finite objects, which the human mind forms for itself by objectivising them, that is, by adding the object to them, as ideology demonstrates. Being is therefore *per se* object before the human mind when the mind exists. This explains why our mind has the aptitude to think finite real things and make them objects to itself. Thus, subjective being is *per se* object, which means that subjective being is clothed with the form of object, and in this form there is objective being. If subjective being is *per se* object, it is the entity thought in this object. Hence, subjective being is essentially contained in objective being.

Article 2

The relationships between the categorical forms are the
supreme relationships

945. We have cleared the way by demonstrating that the mediatory form in the human mind which seemed to have, as it were, a double ability and could make us think it a fourth form, also reduces to the three forms. We can therefore now consider the reciprocal relationships of these forms.

If the categorical forms are the foundation of the supreme, most universal classes, to which all thinkable entities are reduced, we must infer that the *relationships* between them are the most universal, *supreme relationships*, and that these contain the minor relationships divided into genera and species.

946. However, this inference seems to be contradicted by what I said about the relationships between being and the forms. I said that *being*, considered abstractly and separate from its forms, appears to our thought as anterior to the forms because it is the initiation of all forms. It is also anterior because it is the term of what is naturally intuited and therefore is the first thing known.

The reply to this is that everything we think is thought as clothed with a categorical form, and this is a necessary condition for thought. This is so necessary that when we prescind

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from the forms through abstraction or in any other way, the forms are still used to make this abstraction.

In fact, *being*, the term of what is intuited, is pure being without any forms, a thought entity. But it does not exclude or deny the forms. On the contrary it virtually contains all three.

Moreover, although *being*, as an entity which we think, does not reveal but conceals the forms (*Logica*, 334), it has the objective form as a means of knowledge and has it virtually. Indeed, it has this form not only virtually (like the other two) but also in a mode proper to the objective form, because the objective form inheres in being in a subjective form, as a *mediatory form*.

947. Someone may continue to object that the faculty of abstraction allows us to prescind from the forms without denying them and comprehend them virtually, as happens in intuition. Furthermore, we can *prescind* from them by expressly denying them to being or to the entity we are thinking, and then limit our thought to this entity we have separated out.

I agree, but this mental separation simply removes the forms from our consideration, in which case the entity we are thinking is without forms actually thought. The very fact that we are thinking it, however, clothes it with the objective form, which is the universal means of thought and the indispensable mediator between all that is thought and the act of thought. Indeed, the very act of separating the forms of being is carried out with the objective form. This form is always inherent both in the entity thought and in the act of thought, although not as an actual term of attention but as the form of attention. I also grant we can think that some unknown entities exist without our knowing which one of the three forms they have. In this case everything (the entities and their form) is unknown. Nevertheless they are thought in some way, and purely by thinking them they are objects of thought. The objective form therefore inheres in them, although it remains unknown.

But can the objective form remain unknown? Yes, relative to human beings, for whom the knowledge of many things is accidental, not essential.

But you have said that what is unknown does not exist for anyone; it is nothing, because it does not exist either to itself (in which case it would already be known) or to any intelligent subject.

I agree, but this does not mean that *to exist* and *to be known* are the same thing; it means simply that one of these states cannot be without the other, both are necessary, and this is precisely the reason why we can think one of them while prescinding from the other. The fact that both are reciprocally necessary means that one cannot exist without the other.

Do they therefore depend on each other? To answer this question we must first determine what is meant by 'depend'. If 'depend' means what I am saying, namely, that existence cannot be without it being known, and vice versa, we can say that these two properties are reciprocally dependent. This however is not the ordinary meaning of 'depend'. In the ordinary sense of the word, the dependence of one thing on another is never reciprocal in the same respect: the thing on which the other depends has a greater excellence or dignity, and the other has less excellence and dignity, otherwise one dependence would destroy the other. If two things have a reciprocal necessity to exist side by side, this necessity is a relationship 'of pure synthesisism, not of dependence'. On the other hand, independence is present in synthesisism when one of the two synthesising things cannot be destroyed by the other. One of the things is therefore not in the power of the other but is what it is *per se*. Hence it does not depend on the other but is solely correlative to the other: both are therefore independent. Finally, pure synthesisism, in contrast to dependence, pertains to the dignity of the synthesising things because the nature of a thing can be endowed in such a way that it includes the other thing with which it synthesises. Each is increased and ennobled by the other, which becomes its possession. This happens through the very rich essence of each, in the way that a nature is ennobled by its own perfections. For example, if we ask, 'Does human nature depend on intelligence?', the answer should be, 'Human nature cannot be without intelligence; without intelligence it would not be human nature. This is not dependence but an intrinsic perfection of human nature.' Similarly, a thing can have a relationship with another such that the relationship would be a perfection of the thing, a constitutive of its nature. Correctly speaking, this could not be called a dependence on the other, because the necessity in question comes from its nature and is one of its perfections. Thus, being cannot subsist without its being known, and being

cannot be known without existing. This relationship is a perfection of the nature of existence and a perfection of the nature of known being.

Returning to the objection, we must note that when we think ‘existence in itself’, which is an abstraction from ‘being known’, we think being in the *subjective form* (whether as perfect subject or as abstract subject). But when we think existence as known, we think being in the *objective form*. The subjective form is precisely the *act* of existence; the objective form is ‘the intelligibility of this act or its being understood by a mind or subject’. Hence, we can never think being divided from its forms, although we can prescind from these by a hypothetical abstraction and partial thought. However, the form remains virtually united to being. And precisely because the subjective form and the objective form always remain virtually united to being, we can later actually think the forms through a reflection and find them in being. But this could not be done if they were not truly contained in a virtual mode and not actually thought. Consequently, they are in a *subjective mode* because to this mode pertains the existence of everything we suppose as existing but not thought.

948. Clearly then, the supreme relationships are always those between the forms. Even the relationships between *being* and *its forms* pertain to the relationships between the forms because they are simply ‘the relationships between being in abstract subjective form and the three forms’.

Article 3

Three supreme classes of relationships drawn from the triple variety of the terms between which the relationships exist

949. Because the faculty of abstraction ceaselessly multiplies entities, our mind can conceive innumerable relationships. The task of the student of ontology is to examine this great number of relationships and find in it an order, a principle and a classification. The ancients, it seems to me, did not make this examination in depth.

I found the principle and source of all possible relationships

[948–949]

in the objective form of being. I must now tackle the problem of their summary classification.

Each of the three forms of being can be considered as 1. subsistent, 2. a most universal, abstract or categorical form, and 3. an inexhaustible foundation of partial abstracts.

Note, partial abstracts extracted from one of the three forms retain the form from which they are taken and to which they reduce.

The philosopher is thus presented with three summary questions concerning relationships:

1. What are the relationships between subsistent forms?
2. What are the relationships of the forms in so far as they are categorical or most universal, abstract forms?
3. What are the relationships of the abstracts formed from each of the three forms and retaining the nature of the form?

These three questions will enable us to find all possible relationships, and they constitute the most extensive classification. All possible relationships are thus divided into the following three classes:

- 1st. class: relationships of subsistent forms.
- 2nd. class: relationships of categorical forms.
- 3rd. class: relationships of partial abstracts extracted from each of the categorical forms.

Clearly, the foundation of this classification is the variety of the *terms* between which the relationship exists. It is therefore an extrinsic classification, not drawn from the nature of the *connection* existing between the terms and called relationship.

Article 4

The relationship of container and content expresses the nature or condition of all relationships. Relationships, considered in their nature, divide into three classes

950. To know the nature of a relationship therefore, we must consider the relationship as it is in the act where it begins. Relationship begins with the second form of being, and afterwards with the third, so that there are relationships only because there are the forms of being essentially co-relative with each other.

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In fact relationships that unite entities organise the entities in such a way that the organism is simply a complex of relationships. Relationships are therefore found in the organism. If we concentrate on the necessary, absolute organism of being, to which all organisms are reduced, the first necessary, absolute relationships become clear, and are repeated wherever being appears in whatever modes. Now, the organism of being has fundamentally three forms. Therefore in these three forms will be found the original relationships typical of all other relationships, and in these original relationships the nature and essence of relationship will be clearly seen. And because essence is the first thing seen in any object whatsoever (*NE*, 2: 613; 3: fn. 141), and because there are no other relationships prior to these original relationships (they are the first), they will manifest the essence of relationship.

If we consider how being is organised in the forms, we see that the whole organisation is, most generally speaking, constituted by the relationship of container and content. In each form there is being, and the form makes being a maximum container in such a way that it is a maximum container in three modes. In each mode it contains itself and the other modes in two modes, that is, under the other two forms.

If this is the organisation of being, the same organisation must also be present wherever there is being and in so far as there is being. Hence, the relationship of container and content, which forms that organism, must also be present everywhere.

It must be present in the first of the three above-mentioned classes of relationships, that is, between the subsistent forms, because these are being or bestow being. It must be present in the second class (relationships between the abstract forms), because it begins from the forms and not from pure being, and the forms are supposed held before the mind which alone pre-scinds from being. Finally, it must be present in the third class, which is that of relationships between entities drawn by abstraction from each form. The reason here is that each of these abstract entities retains the form from which it was extracted and simply breaks up the being present in the form and considers, as it were, only a fragment of it. In fact, as I have said, the mind can never think anything at all without the form adhering at least virtually to the thing thought.

951. In the case solely of pure being, the forms are simple and infinite. Hence, the only relationships possible in each form considered separately are virtual relationships (and these through analogy), because there are no relationships where there is only one form. However, in the case of finite entia, 1. the subjective form is limited and divided up, 2. the objective form acquires a relationship with finite entia (this relationship gives rise, in the human mind, to the concept of a *mediatory form*), and 3. a similar relationship arises relative to the moral form.

In this order of finite things therefore a new series of relationships is first of all manifested. They are the relationships between each finite form and its corresponding infinite form, and they all have the nature of container and content.

Next come the relationships between the diverse finite entities pertaining to each of the three categories. These, considered strictly in themselves, do not all reduce to the *typical form of container and content*, but result from the other two classes to which this typical form is proper.

If all relationships are therefore classified according to their intrinsic nature, we have the following three classes:

1st. class: the relationships which exist between the forms of being, considered in themselves — relationships of *reciprocal containership*.

2nd. class: relationships between the infinite forms and each form in its finite actuation — relationships of, on the one hand, container, and on the other, content, without equal reciprocity.

3rd. class: the relationship between the finite things of each category — relationships resulting from other relationships of containership pertaining to the two previous classes. In this class the two terms of the relationship always suppose a third entity prior to them which contains both of them. This third entity can be called the *conditional cause* of the relationship.

Article 5

Actual and virtual relationships

952. I made intelligibility part of my definition of relationship. This conforms to the opinion that ‘the principle and source of relationships is in the objective form of being’.

My solution to the difficulties raised by this opinion naturally leads to the distinction between *actual* and *virtual relationships*.

Actual relationships are those actually known by any mind.

Virtual relationships are those that pertain to known entities in such a way that the mind knows the relationships by means of a new reflection without having to turn to something that is not in the mind.

What has previously been said explains the origin of these virtual relationships inherent in a known entity but not actually known. They originate by suppression of the forms of being, that is, the forms from which they come. By ‘suppression of the forms’ I mean that these remain only virtually before human thought, as I have explained. The matter may seem rather subtle, so I will give another explanation.

Let us suppose that the human mind thinks an entity, for example, a body. If this body subsists, the mind thinks it in the subjective form precisely because it thinks it subsistent. If next, through reflection, the mind considers that *subsistence* is a universal form, which includes not only the thought body but many other entia, it sees that the subsistent body it is thinking is contained in the category of subsistent things. It therefore sees a relationship of content and container, which existed even before the mind saw it. But because the mind, by means of pure reflective thought, found the relationship without going out of itself, it was a *virtual relationship*, a relationship virtually contained in the previous thought.

If with another reflection the mind reasons, ‘The body I am thinking is an object of my mind’, it discovers another relationship which was virtual before the discovery, and as long as it was virtual, was a mediatory form. When this mediatory form is actually considered, it appears as a container of the subsistent body, because it is the *full species* in which the body is seen.

If with a further reflection the mind considers this *full species*

of the body as a direct object of its thought, another relationship is actually revealed, a relationship that previously was present only virtually. This is a relationship of content which the species has with the real subject thinking it, and the subject acts as container.

Similar examples can be given *ad infinitum*. It will be sufficient therefore if I explain generally how we know these relationships, and clarify the definition.

953. I said that 'relationships are virtual whenever we do not actually see them, but become visible when we reflect on the entities in our mind independently of anything outside our mind'. The relationships are *virtually* understood in the entities that the mind already possesses.

I say 'in the entities the mind already possesses', instead of 'in the entities already known by the mind' because the mind can possess entities in three ways:

1. When it actually knows them.
2. When the entity is the form proper to the mind, that is, the entity constitutes the *mind*. This form is objective being, the means of knowledge, as we have seen.

This objective being certainly appears as the object of intuition because it is known *in se* by intuition (although the abstract, objective form remains virtual), but it is not yet an object of *reflection*. Hence, relative to future acts of reflection, the object of intuition is a purely virtual object, and the perception of finite things is not sufficient to make it actual. These perceptions terminate with the mind's attention to reality, while the object (the species) is hidden in shadow, that is, in virtuality. Thus, the object-being of what is intuited is possessed virtually by a mind which has not yet reflected upon this object-being; in other words, it is possessed virtually in the perceptions of finite things. All knowledge of generic and specific ideas is reduced to this virtuality for as long as the mind does not reflect on these ideas: they are in the mind as a *middle form*, not as a term of the act of knowledge.

3. Finally, the mind can possess entities by feeling. The mind possesses itself in object-being where it exists informed by being and inobjectivised but not yet perceived because it has not carried out the act of the perception of itself. With this act (which we can in a way call reflective), the mind becomes an

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actual object to itself and is known not only because it is a principle but because it is a term of knowledge. This fact that something is a term of the act of knowledge renders the knowledge of the thing actual and luminous (*PSY*, 2: 1479–1484, 1684–1685). In the same way the mind possesses all its acts of any kind whatsoever, including finalised and moral acts, on which it has not yet in any way reflected. It possesses them with the same feeling-based, virtual knowledge that it has of itself.

The mind therefore can possess entities in an *actual* and a *virtual mode*. The virtual mode is twofold, consisting of an *objective form* and an *informed subject*. I call these two modes *objective virtuality* and *subjective* or feeling-based *virtuality*.

Speaking in all generality, a relationship is virtual whenever one or both of its terms are possessed only virtually by the mind, because in this case the relationship can in no way be actually known. But just as the mind can acquire by reflection the actual knowledge of the terms it virtually possesses, it can reflect on the relationships of the terms and actually know the relationships.

954. As a result of all this, the following three classes of virtually known relationships can be distinguished, to which I will then add a fourth.

Granted in fact that the mind can possess some entities through actual knowledge, these entities can include others virtually, in which case the relationships of these other entities are virtual. For example, we can know two bodies without having compared them and hence without knowing the comparative quantity of each. This relationship is found later between the two known entities. This first class of virtual relationships pertains to the third class of general relationships, that is, relationships arising from the forms. They are called ‘relationships of concomitant virtuality’.

If the mind considers an entity by means of a *virtuality of objective form*, then before reflection makes the knowledge of such entities actual, their relationships are virtual. Genera and species are of this kind. The relationships of this second class are called ‘virtual relationships of objective virtuality’.

However, if an entity is possessed by the mind through a subjective virtuality, we have the third class of virtual relationships. These are called ‘virtual relationships of subjective virtuality’.

The fourth class of virtual relationships are *relationships abstracted* from their terms. But if only one term, or both of them, is the subject of the relationship, the abstraction is purely hypothetical. Thus, if *containership* is abstracted from the container and from the content, it is clearly an abstract which involves terms determined by the relationship. The mind leaves them implicit in the abstract concept, which without them would be an absurdity. If the terms of the relationship are not a subject of the relationship but simply terms and as such conditional causes, the abstract relationship does not determine them; it is sufficient that it contain them in an undetermined way. Thus, distance or even a particular distance is an abstract relationship that certainly supposes two points or terms but not in one part of space rather than another. The two points are not a subject of the relationship but its conditional causes; the subject is space (*Logica*, 421). Hence relationships abstracted from their terms exist virtually in the relationships known between the terms, and constitute a fourth class of virtual relationships.

CHAPTER 6

The difference between the subsistent forms of being and the categorical forms

Article 1

The way in which the three subsistent forms of being differ from the three categorical forms

955. I said that a philosopher must solve three supreme questions concerning relationships:

What are the relationships between the subsistent forms?

What are the relationships of the categorical forms?

What are the relationships of the abstracts drawn from each form ([948])?

I must first recall and clarify the distinction I made between the *subsistent forms* of being, the *categorical forms* and the *abstracts of these two*.

The subsistent forms are not in effect distinct from being: each is being in a different mode. We make the distinction by the way we mentally conceive things. The concept of being in only one form is absurd, when the other forms are denied. The only concept possible, that is, a concept containing no implicit contradiction (*Logica*, 508, 712), is the concept of being simultaneously subsistent in the three forms with one act triple in its term.

But when this triple term is abstracted by the mind from its act that makes it subsistent, only the three *categorical forms* remain in the mind separate from each other, and because separate, they exist only relative to the mind considering them. Reflection therefore can form the concepts of the categorical forms by means of an *abstraction from subsistence* (*NE*, 2: 495) carried out on absolute being.

But we cannot carry out this theosophical abstraction without having previously formed the concept of absolute being. Before this, we find the three forms by abstracting them from finite entia, because 1. in our ideas we find the *objective form* —

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ideology demonstrates that everything formal in our ideas is objective being; 2. in the real things we know we find the *subjective form*, and 3. in the feelings that concern moral obligations we find the *moral form*. When abstraction has enabled us to find the three *abstract forms*, and precisely because they are abstract, we can apply them to any ens whatsoever. By integrating finite ens, we find infinite ens, and by applying the three forms to this, we see that it must have not only all three forms but be identical with each form and be 'one' in the three forms. We conclude therefore that these forms, previously known only as abstracts, are subsistent in infinite being.

After this, we are in a position to consider the *categorical forms* as three abstracts of the *subsistent forms*, which exist beforehand, before everything, not only before the abstract forms but before finite entia which share in them.

956. To understand the difference between the forms of infinite being and the categorical forms it is not sufficient to say simply that the former are *subsistent*, identified with being, and the latter are *abstracts*. The concept requires further examination. Strictly speaking, only the *objective form* is an abstract, and in my opinion a divine abstract. Categorical subjectivity and morality are not, strictly speaking, forms but the *possibility of forms*, and the possibility of a form is not the form itself.

We can understand this better by considering that the subjective form is simply *subsistence*, whereas the categorical form of *subjectivity* is the possibility of subsistence, not subsistence itself. Similarly, the *moral form* is the free act of the subject conformed to the object. But the free act of the subject is something subsistent. The categorical moral form therefore is not the form itself but 'the possibility of a subject freely conformed to the object'. The possibility of a subject or of its subsistent act is simply the subject or its act seen purely in the abstract object without contradiction in its subsistence. Clearly, only the abstract form of objectivity exists before the mind; the other two are not seen being in themselves, as *containers*, but as *contained* in this form without any contradiction. This agrees with what I said: all relationships reside in the objective form, which is their principle and source, a form seen on its own, abstract, with the other forms seen in it.

Article 2

The three subsistent forms are maximum containers, but of the three categorical forms only the objective form is a maximum container

957. We have therefore the following corollary: the three forms of being, considered in themselves as subsistent, are maximum containers, but considered in their abstraction as *categorical forms*, only the objective form has the nature of *maximum container*.

This is not difficult to understand. The categorical forms do not subsist as such in themselves; they are abstracts formed by the mind, to which they exist only as knowable. But the form of the mind is solely the objective form, which as a maximum container must contain the others; it is the means of knowledge, the form simultaneously of the mind and of knowledge.

It is true that even under the subjective form seen in its possibility we can think an ens, an intellective subject, a mind which contains the object and everything. But this mind or this intellective subject which is thought and, as a term of thought, contains everything, is, I say, first contained in the object informing the thought, precisely because the mind is a term of the thought. Hence it is not a maximum container, because a maximum container *as such* is not contained. The subsistent subject, on the contrary, is as such not contained but contains.

It may be objected: 'But how do you know that the subjective form and the moral form, considered on their own, are also maximum containers? You cannot show this directly from the nature of absolute being because you do not perceive this being. On the contrary, you form its concept by means of the doctrine of the three maximum containers?'

I reply that I know the maximum containership of the subjective form and the moral form by seeing them in the object. Maximum containers considered solely on their own as terms of intelligence are before me in the object as the form of intelligence. The object in which I know them is not the term but the means of knowledge. It does not therefore affect the two forms as terms, but I consider them on their own as terms of my intelligence. Consequently, I can conceive that if they exist, they

must subsist as maximum containers. These two categorical forms therefore can be called two *possible maximum containers*, while the objective form is maximum container existing before the mind.

The relationship of the categorical forms therefore is the following: the subjective form and the moral form (because before the mind) are contained in the objective form as in a maximum container and not vice versa.

Article 3

The three modes of containership

958. Although the relationship between the three forms of being is that of container, the relationship differs in mode for each of the different forms, and the mode is determined by their nature.

The subjective form is subsistence. Hence, *in the order of subsistent things* it is *maximum container*, and in so far it is as the act of subsistence, contains within itself the other two forms.

The *objective form* is that which is understood as understood, and is the origin of the intelligible or knowable. It is therefore *maximum container in the order of knowable things*. As understood, it contains everything that is understood, including the other two forms as understood or knowable.

The *moral form* is *that which is loved* as loved, and is the origin of what is lovable. This form is therefore *maximum container in the order of all that is good*, that is, of all that is lovable. In so far as it is what is loved, what is lovable and what is good, it contains all that is loved, all that is good and all that is lovable, and also the other two forms as lovable.

Thus, in the order of subsistent things, the form of subsistence, because it is container, is first, and through it things are called subsistent; the subsistence of the other two forms is in and through this form. The object and the moral subsist because *in se* they have the form of subsistence and are contained by this form as subsistent.

Relative to the order of knowable things, to which all

abstracts pertain and therefore also the categorical forms, the objective form as container is first, and is that by which things are said to be *known*; the other two forms exist as known in so far as contained in it.

Relative to the order of all that is good, the moral form is, as container, first, and the other two are called good because they are considered contained in it.

Article 4

Relationships are essential to the nature of being

959. Generally we fix our attention exclusively on the third class of relationships (those I have called *relationships resulting from the forms*) and do not rise to the two preceding classes.

As a result, we usually judge that a relationship is certainly something between two entia or entities, but we never come to know that right from their beginning relationships reside in the very essence of being, even though being is one. If being were not constituted and organated by certain of its intrinsic relationships, it would neither be, nor be conceivable.

I believe that everything discussed so far in this book and in the previous book clearly explains this great ontological truth.

If being had no relationship with the mind, we could neither conceive it nor, consequently, speak about it. Ontology would be wasting its time if it tried to show that being does not involve necessary relationships. Merely thinking and speaking about being requires that there be a mind (subjective form), and that being be the object of this mind (objective form). Knowledge therefore is essentially founded upon a first, inescapable relationship.

It may be objected that being can subsist without our thinking and speaking about it. But precisely in order to say this, we must admit a relationship of being with our mind. Indeed, what does 'being can subsist' mean? If nothing subsists either to itself or to something else, it does not subsist, because it subsists to nothing. Subsistence, when analysed, requires a relationship and, without a relationship, is inconceivable. This relationship requires a subject-mind and hence an object of this

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subject-mind. If an ens subsists to itself, it must have intelligence and some feeling of itself; what is totally dead does not subsist to itself. If an ens does not subsist to itself but to something else, this other thing must have intelligence; a thing would never subsist to something else if the other thing did not first subsist to itself and if therefore it were *in se* unable to know other things. The very word 'itself' supposes a mind, something alive and personal, otherwise there is no 'itself', which is the term to which the relationship of subsistence necessarily refers.

The moral form needs no discussion because its nature is grounded precisely in the relationship between the object and the free act of the subject. The subject perfects itself by adhering to this object.

Relationships exist therefore in the very essence of the nature of being. Without these relationships nothing can subsist, nothing be known, nothing perfect itself.

CHAPTER 7

The forms of being considered as perfecting being

Article 1

After considering the abstract forms, the student of ontology must consider the application that thought makes of them to subsistent ens

960. I have distinguished the abstract forms of being and shown how they differ from the subsistent forms. I have also shown that our human knowledge begins with abstract forms drawn from the consideration of finite entia and that once we have these forms, we apply them to both finite and infinite ens. Applied to infinite ens, they identify with it but, prior to their application, our mind distinguishes them from infinite ens as abstract forms. Hence, we conceive infinite ens as a synthesis of the forms and of being, as if infinite ens were composed of two elements, although the mind sees that all composition must disappear with the identification.

However, the case is quite different when our mind applies the abstract forms to finite ens. Finite ens is not being; it is the finite subjective form with which the other forms have a relationship but cannot be identified with it because they are incommunicable and inconfusable and at the greatest distance from each other. The subjective form or finite subject also has actuating being as something else and as an antecedent.

Hence, after our consideration of the categorical forms as abstracts, we must now consider how they perfect ens in their union.

However, there is, as I said, a difference between considering them united to infinite ens and considering them united to finite ens because the nature of their union is most diverse.

Article 2

The subject as the first condition of perfections

961. Nevertheless the subject of perfections pertains always to the subjective form, whether in the case of the infinite subject and hence of being itself as subject, or of the finite subject and hence of the subjective form which, like everything else, is not being but has being.

But if the subjective form is always that which is perfected (because the subject is always what is first), it does not, strictly speaking, have the nature of *making perfect* but of *perfectible* or made perfect.

However, there would be no perfection without a subject, so 'the *subjective* form is the first condition of every perfection'.

If, moreover, a particular perfection merged with the essence of its subject, the subject would result from the perfections. This must be what happens with infinite ens, where the perfection is the *perfection of being*, because the subject is being.

In the case of finite ens, the perfections it has from its union with the other forms can be accidental or essential, and vary in degree. Here the perfection we are dealing with is the *perfection of the subjective form* because the subject is not being but subjective form.

We must accurately distinguish therefore two kinds of perfections:

1. perfections of being,
2. perfections of the subjective form.

Article 3

The object as first perfection, and as the second condition of ultimate perfection

962. The first form therefore constitutes the *subject* of perfections and is their first condition. We could not conceive a perfection without thinking either actually or virtually a subject of it.

[961–962]

As I said, a subject would not be perfect if it lacked intelligence. Intelligence is therefore the first *perfection* of a subject. But a subject has intelligence through its union with the object, which informs it. Hence the first perfection of the subject comes from the object as formal cause.

This alone is sufficient to show that the concept of *perfection* is absent in the system of the *Unitarians*, if they are going to be coherent. The concept arises solely from the trinity of the forms. The concept of perfection must involve a duality: there has to be a subject and the perfection of this subject. If there were no duality in first being, there could be no perfection. But because the plurality of being is impossible, the concept of perfection must come from the plurality of the forms. The first plurality is the duality that appears with the objective form. Consequently, the concept of perfection begins with this form, from which, as we saw, the concept of relationship begins, when the objective form is considered united to and perfecting the subject.

963. But we have seen that the *union* of objective being with a subject requires a double relationship, that is, a reciprocal containership. The object can be considered in so far as in the subject, and the subject can be considered in so far as in the object.

The first of these two relationships, that by which the object is contained in the subject, gives rise to the subject's first ontological perfection: intelligence.

The second relationship, that by which the subject exists in the object, makes the object a container and secures for it the name 'truth', as I will explain later. All we need note here is the difference between the concepts of *object*, *intelligence* and *truth*. The concept 'object' expresses the nature of the second form and contains only virtually the relationships to the other two forms. The concepts 'intelligence' and 'truth' express the reciprocal relationships between the subject and object, and these relationships are revealed in the union of these two. *Intelligence* expresses the subject in so far as containing the object; *truth* expresses the object in so far as containing the subject, together with all that can be joined to the subject.

As a result, the object appears now as the *objective form of intelligence* and now as the *cause of the form*. If we consider it as

contained and possessed by the subject, it is clearly the form of intelligence, but if considered as containing the subject, it appears as the *cause of the form* of intelligence.

964. The object considered in the second relationship to the subject, that is, as container or truth, is immutable and unchangeable. As the cause of the form of intelligence, it gives intelligence its law.

965. The object considered in the first relationship to the subject, that is, contained in intelligence, as form of intelligence (by 'form' I mean not only the first form, the being of intuition, but all thinkable objects), is partly immutable, partly mutable and in the power of the subject. It is immutable as first form because this form constitutes the subject and makes it to be what it is, and the first act of any subject whatsoever is never in the power of the subject itself, which does not yet exist. The finite subject, in the first instant of its existence, is posited in objective being as in its container. If we consider it in this first state, it does not yet fully informed; it does not yet exist as intelligent. It is really like a subject with the proximate potency to become intelligent, that is, to acquire fully the form of intelligence. It acquires this form directly by means of the act of intuition with which it sees objective being in which it is. Thus, objective being, which contains the subject, is the cause of the subject's form: the subject (still incomplete because still not intelligent) appropriates objective being to itself by means of intuition and in this way is formed. But this first act of formation is necessary and instinctive: the subject appropriates the object to itself but it cannot exercise any willed action on it because its action on the object is exercised only in so far it has appropriated the object to itself. Moreover, the act of appropriation is not made on the appropriated object but in order to appropriate the object to itself. This act of the first appropriation can therefore vary in perfection (*Logica*, 1109) but cannot alter the object (*Logica*, 66). Hence the acts of the subject that can make good or bad use of the object are those that follow upon intuition. They are therefore acts of reflection exercised on the object already appropriated by means of the mind's first intuitive appropriation. The object, remaining unchangeable because joined to the intuition determined by nature, acquires a new relationship with free reflection and, as object of this, can be altered and falsified. But under

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these objects of reflection, the object of direct intuition and of every other direct, natural perception remains immutable, as I said (*NE*, 3: 1154, 1374).

This means that reflection can, by abstraction, break up the object of intuition and connect the resulting parts in various ways. It does this truthfully if the connections exist virtually in the object of intuition, but falsely if it connects them in a way opposed to the connections that are virtually understood in the object. This explains the origin of those objects that are the work of the reflecting mind, objects that the mind could not make except by taking the objective form from the object of intuition and clothing the severed parts or connections with it.

966. The double relationship I have indicated between the subject and the object explains two obscure concepts used so often in philosophy. I said that *something known* is one thing, *how it is known* another. Indeed, how is it known? For example, we have often been told that a thing can be thought *in an absolute mode*, but the thing thought is relative, not *absolute*. But we easily understand how the thing thought cannot be absolute because we are continuously thinking relative, finite things and relationships. But thinking them *absolutely*, that is, in an absolute mode, simply means thinking them in so far as they are contained in objective being, and in this sense the expression I have used is valid: 'to think them *in se*' in so far as they exist *in se*. To think a thing in itself is to think it as existing in objective being, because all things exist *in se* in objective being. This is precisely the same as saying they exist absolutely and impersonally. Truth is thought in this way as impersonal truth.

The subject does this because it exists first in objective being, and inobjectivised, and existing there, can think itself as having being in being and think all similar things whether analogous or connected to itself.

Hence, the explanation for the concept of thinking things *absolutely* or in an absolute mode is in the nature of the second form of being, objectivity, an impersonal form which imparts non-personhood to all the things it contains and clothes with itself.

Nothing of this can be explained by anyone who denies the three forms of being. Unitarianism is the death of all knowledge.

Article 4

The moral as the ultimate perfection of being

967. The subject, knowing being in the object, which contains being, takes pleasure in being, and with this act attains the term of its perfection, that is, its perfect union with being. All virtue and happiness lies here.

Being, as loved, is the moral form.

It is clear that being could not be loved if there were 1. no loving subject, and 2. no known object that must be being itself. This is why I said that the subject and the object are two *conditions* of ultimate perfection.

We saw that the subject and the object are united by a double, reciprocal relationship of containership, and that consequently a philosopher must deal with both. He must first consider the subject as container and the object as content, and as perfecting the subject. He must then consider object-being as containing the subject, which is the same as considering the object *in se*.

Loved being (the moral form) can equally be considered contained in and perfecting the loving subject. However, it is not contained directly in the subject in the way that the object is but contained there in so far as it is contained in the object, which itself is contained in the subject. The object therefore mediates the containership.

If the subject is being (as it is in fact in God), loved being can equally be considered as containing the subject, because in such a case the beloved is the subject. But the beloved contains the subject in so far as the beloved is understood (it is lovable only as understood), and therefore contains the subject in the *object*, so that the object is still the mediator of the containership. On the other hand, if the subject were not being, as in the case of finite entia, the finite subject would be contained in the beloved, that is, in subject-being, and to the extent that it is contained in the beloved, and the beloved in the object, it would be contained to the same extent in *loved being*.

968. The two reciprocal relationships of containership exist also between objective being and loved being. But the relationship where objective being is taken as container and loved being as content is twofold.

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Objective being, as container of *loved being*, can be considered as:

1. a *maximum container*, where the subject, as containing the beloved, is considered contained in objective being;
2. a *mediate container*, where objective being, which contains the beloved, is itself considered contained in the subject.

Objective being therefore, relative to the other two forms, can be a *maximum* and a *mediate container*, but in this last respect it does not have the nature of supreme form. On the other hand, *sa being* can be only *maximum containers* and *supreme forms*, or ultimate content.

Hence, if loved being is considered as contained and possessed by the subject, it becomes a perfection, indeed the *ultimate perfection*, of the subject. But if considered in absolute mode, as seen in the object, it presents the notion of good, which I will discuss later.

CHAPTER 8

Order, and perfection in all its universality

Article 1

Order

969. The concepts ‘order’, ‘perfect’, and ‘perfection in all its universality’ are drawn from what has been said.

In absolute Ens there is a primal order.

By ‘order’ I mean ‘the conspiracy of many entities into one’ — The word ‘conspiracy’ is universal and embraces all concepts of coexistence, agreement, accord, consent, confluence, tendency, co-operation and suchlike. All these express the diverse ways in which many entities, conceivable by the mind, can be joined together and form a unity. If order is to exist, conspiracy must be considered as an ultimate act.

But all plurality conspires into one through the relationships that bind entities together. Therefore order arises from relationships.

970. Two entities having a relationship between them constitute an *order*. This is order at its simplest and the *first element* of all other more complex orders.

If two entities had one relationship, and two others another relationship without any relationship to the first two, the two pairs would form two orders, not one. On the other hand, if both pairs, each joined by their own relationship, also had a relationship with each other, they would form one order because they would conspire into one. The same would apply to a larger number of pairs of entities. All the entities that form a single order must be joined in twos because every relationship always joins two entities. But all these entities need not be actually distinct from each other; it is sufficient that they are distinct in concept. Consequently, if three entities, actually distinct, formed a single order, at least one of them would admit a distinction of concept which would make it two before the mind, although in itself it was one.

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Because relationships can exist between entities distinct only in concept, many entities can constitute one order under one aspect, another order under another aspect and no order under a third aspect.

The same group of entities therefore admits many orders, according to the diverse entities we mentally conceive and distinguish in them. Among these conceived entities there can be those in which we see no order or, in order to see any order, we need to rise to entities still more remote.

971. I will first consider order in absolute Being, where order exists essentially and in its first source.

The entities which conspire into one, most simple and absolute ens are the *three forms* in which Being is. This is the first fundamental order, from which all other orders proceed in their various ways. Without this primal order, no order would be possible. The Unitarians, if they were coherent, could not speak about order or about anything else, because every word we say supposes a plurality of relationships, an order.

The primal order is so essential to absolute Ens that the latter cannot be thought without it. The question therefore arises: 'If the primal order is included in the essence of absolute Ens, why do we need to invent the word "order", different from the word "absolute ens", as if order were something distinct from absolute ens and needed its own word?'

The human mind thinks absolute ens by composing abstract concepts. Having no direct perception of absolute ens, it must form the concept by unifying the many perfections it finds in finite entia and removing finiteness from them, which it can do. It first thinks order present in finite things to which not every order is essential. It then distinguishes the concept of *order* from that of essence, and finds some orders that are not essential to finite entia, and some that are essential to particular entia but not to others. Hence, the distinction between the concepts of *order* and *ens*.

Furthermore, in the concept of *ens* we think the *unity*; the *plurality* that must be in it is understood only virtually in the concept, whereas in the concept of *order* the plurality that subsists in the one is actually thought.

This happens because our means of thought is *virtual being*, not actual absolute being. *Virtual being* therefore stands before

the mind without order. In this extremely simple concept of virtual being our mind does not yet see any plurality and hence not any order (nor does it see disorder, because the order is simply hidden, not denied). Later, to this extremely simple concept our mind adds an order that completes the concept. But this order is thought either without or with determinations. When thought without determinations, *being* becomes the concept of abstract, universal *ens*. When thought with determinations, a *particular ens* is thought. *Order* is therefore a concept added by the mind to the concept of *being* and, in the case of a *particular order*, is a concept added to the concept of *ens* in general.

This is true for any *order* whatsoever whether essential or accidental to *ens*. There is however this difference between these two: although *ens* cannot exist *in se* without the *order essential* to it, it can exist to the mind without that order. The *order* is distinguished only in concept not in effect from *ens*. On the other hand, *ens* can exist *in se* and be thought without an *order accidental* to it. Hence, *ens* and *accidental order* differ not only in *concept* but are actually distinct in themselves.

In the case of *being*, therefore, the order resulting from the *three forms* is essential to it, but *being* can be thought without this order, as in the case of *being* that is present to intuition. The distinction between the concept of *being* and the concept of the order essential to *being* arises from the abstract mode of knowledge natural to us and not from any distinction in the order itself.

Only essentially ordered *being* exists *in se* without any possible distinction between *being*, existence *in se*, and its order. This means that *order* constitutes *being* as *being*; and *being*, as *being*, is *subsistent order*.

This explains precisely why the *plurality* from which this order results (whose concept we have separately, like the concept of plurality) is not a plurality merely of concept, but a true, factual plurality, that is, a trinity of forms, where the forms are actually distinct in themselves.

This plurality and this actual order that exists in absolute Being must be distinguished from another non-actual, conceptual plurality which, due to our human way of imperfect thinking, we attribute to absolute Being and thus bestow on it another order. This plurality and order on the part of the pure

human concept that we apply to God arises when we attribute to him not the first supreme perfections that the three forms are, but the various perfections we find and distinguish in individual forms. The perfections we attribute are those we see in finite entia, for example, power, wisdom, goodness, etc.; they are distinctions only in the human mind and in finite entia. But in God they exist only virtually distinct because they pertain to Being in each of the three forms, and pertain to it perfectly unified in one single perfection, as it were, which the form is.¹²¹

972. I said that order results from relationships. I also said that if the entities where it is present were three (or another uneven number), at least one of the entities would have to be doubled by means of the distinction of the concepts under which it is considered, so that the terms of the relationships can always be even, because each relationship supposes a pair of terms.

This explains why, in the discussion on the three categorical forms, we saw that the middle or objective form has a double concept because it is simultaneously term of the relationship of the first form (the subjective form) which it manifests in itself, and also principle of the ultimate form (the moral form), because lovable-ness has its origin in the manifested essence.

However, in the case of the subsistent forms, theologians teach that the effective relationships in God arise from the two principles of procession: the intellectual and the volitive. Personhood is therefore doubled, is trebled, with the result that four terms are conceived, together with the relationships of each term to the other, that is, four relationships. This is the case in supreme, eternally subsistent and totally constituted Being.

All order therefore arises from duality and the connection of many dualities. This is the ontological explanation for the duality present in all philosophical systems, where it held a very important position despite the fact that, as far as I know, no one knew the true explanation. And precisely because no one knew the true explanation for this necessity of *duality*, it was freely used without anyone locating it where it belonged.

973. When many *relationships* unite different entities and result in *unity*, there is *order*. Hence in every order it is possible

¹²¹ 'The divine essence *in se* includes the noble endowments of all entia not by composition but by perfection'* (St. Thomas, *C. G.*, 1, 54 and 24–59).

to distinguish: 1. a resultant unity; 2. the terms of the relationships, and 3. the relationships which unite and make the terms conspire into one. The terms of the relationships are understood as *elementary* or *material cause* of order; the relationships, as the *formal cause*; the *one*, as result of the two causes. The result, as such, is the container of the two causes, and in so far as it contains them, is the order itself. Hence, order is always reduced to a container with its content. The relationship of container and content is the supreme relationship that constitutes all order; it is the general formula of order.

Therefore, the possible diverse orders can be classified in three diverse ways because the foundation of the classification is either 1. the one, or 2. the terms of the relationships, or 3. the relationships themselves.

974. If the classification is founded on the one resulting from many entities, the number of orders equals the number of ones formed from many entities. I have spoken about the different genera of ones in the previous book, to which I refer the reader.

975. If the classification of the various orders is founded on the *terms* of the relationships uniting the terms and forming one from them, the supreme classification of conceivable orders will be that of the terms, according to which I have also classified relationships. The terms of relationships, I said, can be reduced to three supreme classes: 1. the subsistent forms of being; 2. the categorical forms, and 3. the abstracts pertaining to each categorical form. We must note that the second categorical form does not exist in the mind solely as a form distinct from being, but exists on its own in finite entia. Thus, all the relationships of really existing finite entia pertain to the second class, that is, to relationships between the categorical forms.

We have therefore 1. a first order among the subsistent forms of being, 2. an order among the categorical forms, whether these exist solely before the mind as forms abstracted from subsistence or exist really in finite entia, and 3. an order among partial abstracts extracted by the mind from each categorical form.

We could ask if there is perhaps a fourth order that includes these three. But there is no need for a fourth order: the first includes everything, and everything is reflected in some way also in the second order.

Indeed, in the first order (the order of the supreme forms)

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there are all conceivable orders, including tripled orders in unity. The first order is a triple order that makes one order, the order of being. As I said, being, in each of its three forms, does truly contain being in the other two forms, so that in every form all of being is present together with its forms (although the other two are not present as maximum containers). And each perfect form has unity with all the other forms because being in all three is identical and not tripled. If being is therefore considered in each form, all of it is present; if considered in the three forms, all of it is still present, not as a greater all but as the same. The sole difference is this: in each form, being is only once maximum container of the other two containers contained in it; in the three forms, it is three times maximum container, and in each form the other two forms are present which, as contained, do not multiply because they are identical. Consequently, the three forms do not contain more than each form; only the mode of containership varies.

Similarly, the second and third orders are contained three times in the first, as follows. In so far as all that exists with a relative existence (and hence outside God) is subjective form, like finite real things, it exists in the subjective form of God; in so far as it has objective form, like the forms abstracted from subsistence, or like the abstracts of each of these forms (which are the third genus of orders), it is in the objective form of God; and finally, in so far as it is lovable, that is, in either the complete or the abstract moral form, it is in the moral form of God.

976. We must however keep in mind that order either refers to a *subject* or exists solely in the *object*. Hence each of the three orders I have distinguished as three generic types can be considered in these two relationships.

If the first order is considered in relationship to the subject, we see that its subject is God alone. Consequently, the first order relative to God is also subjective, whereas relative to another intelligent subject, for example, the human mind, it is solely objective.

The second and third orders also exist in God but only *objectively*, that is, as objects of the free mind. Nevertheless, in so far as the divine mind is not only speculative but practical and creative, the subjective creator-act contains the *relative existence of created things in an absolute mode*. I have explained the two

concepts of *what is thought* and the *mode of thinking it*. I said that what is thought is always thought as it is in itself. Therefore, if what is thought is a relative, it is thought as relative. But the *mode of thinking it* is absolute because the *relative* is thought as contained in the absolute object. The absolute object, containing the thought, is the form of the mind and mediator between the mind and the relative thing thought. I have said that the name given to a thing, and what forms its nature, is the container. If therefore we wish to name the *relative* considered independently of the object of the divine mind that contains it, we will call it 'relative', but if we wish to name the relative contained in the container, that is, in the object of the divine mind, we will take its name from the container and call it 'absolute'. Nevertheless, because the container in God is not the relative thought thing but the mode of thinking it, we say that the relative is thought in an *absolute mode*. But in God, the container-object is also thought (in contrast to what happens in the human mind, which is not being and therefore not object). Hence we say that 'the relative has an absolute existence in the divine mind'. We must understand that we are not dealing with two existing entities but with the same identical, relative entity which is in the divine mind and at the same time is *in se*; in other words, we are dealing with two necessary relationships. I say 'necessary' because the relative entity could not exist to itself if it did not exist to the divine mind in its object. Thus, in so far as it exists in the divine mind, it does not exist *in se* but is only thought *in se*. On the other hand, it exists to itself for the reason that its act of existence does not include the divine object, which is its container. Because it does not include its container (which is nevertheless a condition of its existence), it itself exists as container rather than content. This existence to itself means existence outside God, or existence relative to itself. Thus, it is said to exist *in se* and not in another.

The practical, creating act of the divine intellect therefore contains relative things known in an *absolute mode*, that is, as contained, strictly speaking, in the object of the divine intelligence and not purely existing in themselves. This object together with all its content is the form of the divine intellect, whether necessary to the divine essence or as a free effect of the practical divine intelligence. Hence, the relative things that form

one thing with this object exist in the practical intellect with their *order* undivided from the absolute order of Being. They do not exist as a simple object but as a subjective creative act, because the objective being subsists and creates. This explains the ancient saying that divine ideas ('idea' is inappropriate here) are active, creating forms. Similarly, the second and third orders are united with the first order without constituting an order separate from it. Thus, there is no need to admit a fourth order which includes all three: the first already contains all three, while the second and third are different only as separate from the first, or as existing with an existence relative to finite subjects.

977. I also said that the second order is formed by the categorical forms. It is a double order, and the two subordinate orders it contains can be considered two lower species or genera into which the supreme genus subdivides. These two subordinate orders are:

1. the order formed by the categorical forms considered purely in their idea, that is, considered as three *categorical abstracts* of the first kind of abstraction, the abstraction which prescind solely from subsistence (*NE*, 2: 498–499, 510).
2. the order of the forms in so far as they subsist as finite entities. We saw that the first of the three forms, the subjective form, can subsist with limitations and in fact constitutes the subject of finite entia, both the perfect and imperfect subject. The perfect subject participates in the two other forms that communicate themselves with varying degree of virtuality — this is the sole kind of limitation (and only relative) that they can admit.

In regard to the order present in the ideality of the categorical forms, they contain no subsistent subject in which order can subsist. Hence, their order can be only *objective*, not *subjective*; in other words, it is relative to a mind to which the order is present as something known. But a mind can be infinite or finite. Relative to the infinite mind, I have already explained how the order is object to it, and in the case of the finite mind, it pertains to the subsistent subjective form with limitations. Thus, of the two species of *order* the first is relative to the second. But in the second, where the finite mind is involved, we see how the three orders can in some way be united in one single order.

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Indeed the finite mind has the infinite object present, although without content from the start. It receives this content by successive acts of intelligence, as described in ideology. In this object therefore, as in an infinite container, every order can be present: 1. the order of the forms subsisting in being; 2. the order of the abstract categorical forms; 3. the order of the subsistent finite forms, and 4. the order of the abstracts drawn from the individual forms. These four orders can be more or less perfectly and explicitly present in this container and, united in it, form a single order. The *objective order* therefore, whether in the divine mind or proportionately in the human mind, is an order which includes all orders in one.

But the *object-order* exists only in relationship with the *mind* that is the subject. It pertains therefore to the *order* between the subjective and objective forms. In the case of forms subsisting in absolute being it pertains to the order between the subsistent forms, which is the first order of the three. In the case of pure forms it pertains to the second kind of orders present between the categorical forms, that is, to the order between the finite subjective form and the objective form, which is the second of the three orders.

Because the human mind is not being and hence not the object, the object with which it apprehends everything exists in it from the beginning as pure form and not as some known thing. It exists as a subjectively existing object. Reflection alone makes this mediator-object become something known. Moreover, because this object of intuition given to the human mind is not the human mind and hence exists solely as intelligibility, the content acquired by it is also intelligible but not active or productive, which is the meaning, strictly speaking, of 'idea' and 'ideal' — all activity comes into the human being from the subjective form.

978. We must now deal with the third way of classifying the various orders, taking as the foundation of the classification the *relationships* from which the orders result.

We have seen that the supreme classes of relationships, divided according to their intrinsic nature, are three: 1. relationships of the forms in absolute being, 2. relationships between the infinite forms and each form in its finite actuation, and 3. relationships between the finite things of each category ([950]).

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This foundation of the classification will also give three supreme genera of orders.

Just as relationships are formal causes, so is the nature of the order resulting from relationships a formal cause. Thus, the order of the supreme forms in absolute being is an order of *reciprocal containership*. The order between the finite and infinite forms is an order of *content* and *container*. The order between finite things is a consequence of the last order because finite things have an order between them only in so far as they are contained and considered contained in the categorical forms. This containership is the *conditional cause* of their order. Because the cause is triple and the forms three, this last kind of relationships and of resultant orders also divides into three. The relationships arising in finite things contained in the subjective form are of *action* and *passion*. The relationships arising between finite things in so far as these are contained in the objective form are of *likeness* and *unlikeness*. The relationships arising between finite things in so far as they are contained in the moral form are of *goodness* and *depravity*.

Relative to this formal classification of orders, we can also say what we said about the other material classification: the other two orders are contained in the first order. In the second order, we have the human mind which is a subjective form with finite actuation; this form is contained in the infinite forms. But it itself is relatively a container of the virtual object, and within this object can embrace every *order*. Hence, the *objective order* relative to the human mind unites all orders in itself, as in one order.

979. Let us now investigate whether order has a principle from which it can be derived and what this principle is. We saw that the principle and source of all relationships is the *objective form* of being. We must therefore acknowledge this form as the principle and source of all order.

Order is truly present 'when many entities conspire into one'. Multiplicity is therefore essential to order. But if being could be one, without any multiplicity whatsoever, we could not conceive either relationship or order. The principle of order can be found only where *multiplicity* begins to appear. But the first *multiplicity* in being is found with the second form which is the *objective* form. This form therefore is the beginning, principle

and source of multiplicity, of relationships and of the order consequent upon these.

In fact, granted that being does not remain solely subject but there is also the object, we immediately have the explanation for all possible orders. This explanation becomes the foundation of a classification of the various orders, for the following reasons.

Object-being contains the subject, and reciprocally the subject contains the object. This bond and existence of one within the other gives rise to their union, which is being's third form that contains both forms and is contained in the first two.

If the object is considered as containing the subject and the moral form, we have the first kind of orders, that is, the *objective order*, of intelligibility.

If we consider that the *object* cannot stand alone because it refers to the subject and is therefore considered as contained in the subject, which itself is considered as containing both the *object* and the moral form, we have the second kind, that is, the *subjective order*, of subsistence.

Finally, if the *third form* of union is considered which contains the *subject* and the *object*, that is, the subject contained in the object, we have the third kind, the *moral order*, of perfection. In finite entia, this order also pertains to the subject and can therefore be called *subjective order of perfection*. In infinite Being, it subsists of itself.

This confirms and explains more clearly what I said, that all other orders are contained in the Order between the three supreme forms in being.

It also confirms and explains how all *objective orders* are virtually contained in the order of the finite mind with its objective form. Their level of actuality is proportionate to the development of the mind. But this is not true of all subjective orders, due to the subject's limitation.

Hence, the primal seat of every *order* is clearly the subsistent *object* in being. This contains the subsistent subject and moral element, and is contained by the subject and moral element. However, if the *object* is not subsistent, it can give only the *intelligibility of orders*, that is, display orders as purely objective.

980. We can now answer the question concerning the *criterion* that determines order. Is there always a criterion of order by

which we can see that many entities must be joined in one mode rather than in another, if they are to form an order, or a criterion by which such entities are actually joined in a given order? And is this criterion the only one, or can there be many criteria for the same order?

I will start with the last question. Granted there is order, its criterion and rule must be only one because if there were two criteria or rules, there would be two orders, not one.

Let us suppose that the same order had two criteria and rules. These two criteria would either be connected in such a way that they reduced to one, or not conspire into one criterion but be two independent orders separate from each other. I said however that order results from many entities conspiring into one. How then could many entities conspire into one if they had to be distributed and joined according to various rules? Rules vary when they govern entities in another way and terminate them differently. But the same entities cannot be determined in two ways, in the act itself and in the same respect. A multitude of entities cannot be determined in two different ways and therefore by two different rules: some of the entities, regulated by one criterion, would form one group or order, others regulated by another criterion would form another group and order. But this is contrary to the hypothesis that the given order is only one and unique. Therefore one criterion presides over one order only.

981. The second question was: 'Does every order have its criterion which determines it?' We cannot answer this without investigating more deeply the nature of the criterion of order. Order, I said, is 'what results from many entities that conspire into one'. The thing necessary for forming an order is, as we see, the *conspiration* into one of many entities. Therefore the criterion of order is *conspiration*, also called the *accord* of many entities into one. Because this conspiration or accord of entities into one is the criterion of the resulting order, and necessary for it, every order must have a *criterion* that determines it. This criterion is precisely the conspiration and accord of the entities into the one they form.

Our concept of this accord or conspiration of diverse entities into one has its origin in the complex of all the relationships binding diverse entities. These relationships are or can be many.

In an order that does not result from simply two entities (elementary order) but from many, the relationships and their connections are also many. But these are involved in the order only if they all conspire to produce one from the many. Hence, the conspiracy or accord of entities into one depends proximately on the accord or conspiracy of their various relationships, and these should conspire in such a way that the entities form a one. Consequently, the *criterion* of a given order is a *relationship* of the relationships between the entities, *one unique relationship* of the many relationships (granted they are many — if there were only one relationship, it would be the criterion of the order). This one unique relationship includes all the relationships between the entities forming the order. It is an abstract concept, it is that *quality* of all the relationships, not of one separate from another, through which they make all the entities simultaneously conspire into one, and in this way the order is constituted. This *quality* which determines the nature and arrangement of the relationships is also called a *rule of order*, and because each of these relationships determined in this way contributes to the order, each is called a *partial formal cause*. But the *total formal cause* of the order itself is the comprehensive *quality* of the relationships, through which all the relationships determine the entities to constitute the order.

981a. We can also say that, granted any necessary explanation and the absence of any equivocation, the *one* found in a given order is the criterion, rule and formal cause of that order. Note however: this one exists only when it is formed from the conspiracy of diverse entities; it is not a pure, simple one, but a one in plurality, a one with a relationship to many. Hence, whenever we say that *one* is the criterion of order, we must understand *one* that is caused by many. This one can be conceived in two ways: either most universally, in the sense that 'in any order whatsoever one is the criterion of order', or specifically, in the sense of a particular order. When we say generally that 'one is the criterion of order', the proposition is less inexact because 'one' means any *one* whatsoever pertaining to any order whatsoever. But because the human mind can also conceive one as simple and totally abstract from every other relationship, we must make the proposition fully precise by saying, 'One in many is the criterion of order.'

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But when we say, 'One is the criterion of a particular order', the proposition lacks all exactness. The proposition should be: 'This given one resulting from these given many, connected to these given relationships, is the criterion of order.' This coincides with the criterion that I have expressed as 'that quality by which the relationships joining many entities make the entities conspire into one'. This criterion is always a concept midway between many and one, and can be equally expressed by beginning from many and finishing in one, or vice versa. In the first case it can be defined as 'that quality by which the relationships joining many entities make the entities conspire into one'; in the second case, it can be defined as 'the given one resulting from these given many connected to these given relationships', or very generally: 'one in many'.

982. Clearly then, the *criterion* of order, although distinguished by the mind from order, inexists in the order. The criterion is understood as the proximate, formal cause, not the efficient cause that can be conceived outside an order and, strictly speaking, does not cause the order as order but the existence of the order.

If the criterion of order inexists in the order itself and is the direct, formal cause of the order's unity in multiplicity, then just as there are three supreme classes of orders when orders are distributed according to their origin, so there will be three supreme criteria, one for each order: a *criterion of the subjective order* of subsistence, a *criterion of the objective order* of likeness, and a *criterion of the moral order* of perfection.

Nevertheless, because being is identical in the three forms, the three forms make only one order. Thus, there will be a supreme *criterion* of this one order in which the three orders, present in the three forms, have unity.

To explain better these three forms and their nature, I will again use the principle that 'the criterion of order inexists in the order itself'.

Some orders are *subsistent*, and as such pertain to the class of subjective orders. Others are considered by the mind only as *possible* — these pertain to the class of objective orders.

Some of the *subsistent* orders are *necessary*, while others are *contingent*.

But whatever the orders, the *criterion* of each is always

necessary because the order subsists either in a necessary mode, or in a contingent mode or is only possible; in whatever mode a given order is conceived, in that mode it must have its one only criterion and no other criterion. The subsistence of an order therefore is one thing, its criterion another. The subsistence can be contingent, that is, not have the cause of its own existence in itself. But the *criterion of order* pertains [to the] nature of necessary things whether subsistent or mere possibilities.

However, in contingent things the criterion itself of their order also seems contingent, for the following reasons:

The first line of argument is obvious: if the order is contingent, it can obviously perish. But the criterion of the order inexists in the order. Therefore, if the order perishes, its criterion perishes.

This is a paralogism. 'Criterion of order' simply means the reason *why* many entities constitute one. This reason why many unities constitute one continues to exist whether the entities exist or not, or if they exist, whether they are separate from each other and therefore do not constitute one, or whether they are united and constitute one. The *reason* continues to exist, like every other *reason*, except that it is not applicable when the thing whose reason exists is lacking. We see therefore that the *criterion of order* pertains to the world of intelligible things and is certainly realised in contingent things, thus acquiring a new form, nevertheless it exists independently of contingent things; it exists in their possibility. Hence the opinion that 'the criterion of every order inexists in the order' should be cautiously applied to contingent things because their order pre-exists in necessary things. Therefore the *criterion* of the order of contingent things must be sought inexisting in the order of necessary things and, when found, must be applied to contingent things when they exist.

A second objection can be made against the necessity of a criterion for any and every order. It argues that contingent things change; they relinquish the order they have and form another. When the order changes, its criterion changes. Therefore, the criterion is not necessary but mutable and contingent.

What has already been said answers this objection. The seat proper to *order* and its criterion is located where the order is first conceived as existing, not where it appears later as

participated. Granted this, the order and the criterion of the order of contingent things reside in ideas, which show the order as possible; here is the essence of the order of contingent things and of the criterion of that order. Contingent things simply make the order real, copy it, express it but do not make its essence, which is independent of them as such. When the contingent is annihilated therefore, neither the order in its essence (which is in the idea) perishes, nor does its criterion perish. Similarly, when the contingent changes and manifests another order different from the first, the first has not perished but still exists where it was, in the idea. This is precisely what Manzoni demonstrated in his *Dialogo dell'invenzione* concerning the ideas of contingent things: things change but their ideas always remain the same and eternal. Consequently, because the criterion of the order of contingent things is in ideas, the criterion is necessary and immutable, like ideas. This is true whether the criterion is realised or not, or realised only for a short time, or whether an ideal order and its criterion are realised at one moment, and another order and its criterion at another moment.

This proves simply that contingent things do not exist *per se* but through an ideal essence anterior to them, and that their mutability is not communicated to the ideal essence on which they depend.

983. The *ideal order* can therefore be called the *exemplar* of contingent things, whether these are created by God or fashioned and produced by human beings. A sculptor, for example, makes a statue from a block of stone by copying the ideal design he has previously formed in his mind.

The *exemplar* in the idea also serves as a *rule* for judging whether works of art have been perfectly executed in contingent matter, so that they conform and correspond perfectly to the exemplar.

Because it is difficult for us to have this *exemplar* fully and perfectly present to our thought, we take only *bits* of it and make them serve as *partial rules*.

But the *ideal order*, either in its completeness or in its parts, is not a rule for judging the excellence of an order. It judges only the *exactitude* with which the order was executed, and pertains to the *imitative part*, and not to the part of art called *ideal*.

Consequently, the *criterion of the ideal order* of contingent things is called, and is, the *rule* for composing ideally the whole order and equally for judging whether this order composed by the mind or imagination is complete and corresponds to its criterion and rule. For example, a floor in the form of a chess-board is a simple order. The rule for this order will be: 'The squares of two colours must alternate.' I can use this rule for composing in my mind and imagination the order corresponding to it, that is, I can represent to myself a chess-board floor of a room in which all the squares are so distributed that one colour alternates with the other. I can also judge therefore that, if I imagine that one part of the floor but not another part has a chess-board design, the order is not yet complete. Similarly, if I imagine a chess-board floor which here and there contains two adjacent squares of the same colour, I can judge that I have not correctly composed the order according to the rule, which acts as a kind of theme for the floor. By not fully observing the rule, I have made a mistake in my picture of the floor.

The mind therefore extracts the *ideal order* from the *rule* and knows whether such order corresponds to or falls short of the rule. The *ideal order*, composed in the mind, now becomes the rule and serves as an exemplar for judging whether the order formed in contingent matter is formed accurately or diverges from the rule of the exemplar. This can be called the *second rule* or the rule of contingent order.

984. The rule governing the order that I used as an example (the chess-board floor) is very simple because this kind of order itself is very simple. But order can be complex, and our search for the rule can therefore be more difficult. As I said earlier, there has to be *one rule only* for every order, precisely because order implies unity, 'one resulting from many'. If we consider the general definition I have given of the rule, 'the accord by means of which the parts of an order produce one', we clearly see the difficulty we can encounter for knowing which rule governs a given order. The difficulty always arises from our imperfect knowledge of a very complex order. Granted the order, we cannot determine the *rule* producing and governing it, unless we know perfectly 1. the *one* to be formed, and 2. the nature of the parts which must form this one and, consequently, the arrangement they must have in order to

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conspire into one. However, because every existing ens is *one*, and every *one* must have its *order*, we cannot know the order of a given ens and extract from it the *rule* on which the whole order depends unless we know perfectly the nature of the ens, a knowledge which we do not attain. The only rule we know perfectly is that of the orders we ourselves make, or ideal orders, where the terms and the relationships between the terms are few — and the relationships are few when we abstract from many others. The orders therefore which we know and from which we can abstract their supreme *rule* are orders composed of abstractions.

984a. Nevertheless abstract orders give us some knowledge, even if imperfect, of the total orders present in various entia. The rules drawn from the consideration of these abstract orders have the condition and nature of *rules abstracted* from the *one* rule governing the total order. Thus, the *one rule* divides into many *partial rules*. Although the one rule remains unknown to us, we come to know some of the partial rules. These give us the wisdom for making a judgment about natural orders and for producing the orders seen in works of art.

Anyone who has discovered some laws of nature by many observations, experiments and reflection, is highly praised. These laws of nature, as they are called, are simply partial, abstract and subordinate *criteria* of the order of the universe.

The order of the universe certainly has its own *one criterion*. If this were known *a priori*, nothing else would be needed: the whole order of the world and all its parts would be fully displayed and revealed to us. But instead, we are forced to investigate *a posteriori* the *criterion* of the order in natural things, which cannot be found unless we first know the order itself. We are therefore obliged to obtain the knowledge of this great order that we do not naturally have by the perceptive means at our disposition. With these means, we can come to know only one tiny part at a time, and know these parts only imperfectly, relative to the nature of our organs. We then have to work on the limited knowledge we draw from them by abstraction (which leaves aside many things) so that we can pool many particular things and note what is universal and common in them. From these bits of order we draw certain fixed, abstract rules and call them *laws of nature*.

984b. The same applies to the art of the beautiful. We can take as an example those arts that represent the human body using shaped material, like sculpture, or colours, like painting; in fact we can limit our thought to the forms of the male. Human nature has its own order and there is undoubtedly only *one rule* for this order. Anyone who possessed this sole rule totally, could think up any human form and know when the form in his mind is complete and conforms perfectly to the rule. But we do not in fact know this *one rule*; our mind has to acquire it *a posteriori* by induction, from perceived bodies, that is, from the order we see in these. But we can perceive and observe only one body at a time: our observation can never take in all the possible individuals of such a nature. Moreover, in the perception and observation of several individuals, we will never succeed in knowing fully the *order* in each of them. One single human body is itself a unity resulting from numerous parts, and involves numerous relationships, even when only what is external and the accidents of shapes and colours are considered. Granted we had full knowledge of the order of a body, the order would be different in other bodies. We would have to compare them, universalise and abstract, if we wanted to identify one order only in them all. This order itself is abstract and leaves aside many particulars. It is therefore impossible to find the *one criterion* that governs the human unit or even the order present in the external appearance of a human body. These limitations cause us to give up the search for the *one criterion* and *rule* that governs so great an order; we restrict ourselves to obtaining *partial, abstract* rules, and use these to reach some ideal criteria of bodies after long and strenuous research. This explains why the art of the beautiful is made up of many rules, even in the simple composition of ideal types. If we knew *a priori* the *one true rule* for this order, it alone would profitably suffice for all the rules.

These *secondary rules* are very often imperfect or presented in a manner more undetermined than necessary to retain their subordination to the *supreme rule relative to the special order in question*. As a result we see *conflicts* in them.

These conflicts introduce *exceptions* into the application of such rules. In fact, we meet cases where, if we applied one of them, there would be no order; on the contrary, there would be disorder.

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Hence, the *exception* is necessary to allow the desired order to be perfected. But the exception confirms the defectiveness of the rule. *Every rule*, if perfect and perfectly expressed, should admit no exception at all, nor ever come into conflict with another rule.

985. An order is perfect when it is total and conforms in every part to its criterion.

This does not mean that all perfect orders are equal in value. Their value and worth is proportionate to the excellence of the *one* they form. The excellence of the *one* is directly proportionate to the quantity of entities (as I explained in the previous book) and to how closely the many are connected and how much they conspire into one. Therefore, the first, most excellent order is that of Being in its three forms.

986. Retracing our steps, I said that every finite and contingent subsistent thing is not strictly speaking an order but the copy and realisation of a previous, ideal order. The idea contains the essence of the orders seen in contingent things and thus contains the criterion of these orders. Hence, order and its criterion pertain to necessary, eternal things.

The fact that the Universe (in other words, the finite) is the copy and realisation of a previous order is a result of the theory I presented about creation in the previous book, and of the consideration of the nature of the universe itself. When we say 'universe', 'finite ens', we are speaking about a relative existence. An entity exists absolutely in the object, and exists relatively as subject. If the subject is essentially also object, the entity exists absolutely as subject as well. But in the case of a subject that is not essentially object its existence is relative and not absolute. The divine subject itself is essentially object, but the finite subject is not object; its existence is therefore relative. Thus, if the finite subject is not object and has an existence only relative to itself, it must exist in the object, because there is no existence which is not in the object. But in proportion that the finite subject exists in the object, it does not exist in itself but exists absolutely. Consequently if it did not exist absolutely, it would not exist relatively. However, because it exists absolutely in the object, it exists relatively to itself as a pure subject, by means of its own feeling which is not object. Relative existence is therefore a result of absolute existence. But the

universe (and we can say the same about every part or entity of the universe), in so far as it exists absolutely, that is, in the object, has all its own order. The fact that there is order in the universe, in so far as it exists relatively in itself, results from the order that exists absolutely and previously in the object. The order is the same but its relative existence is posterior to and follows from the existence that it also has absolutely in the object. In other words, the order seen in what is contingent is not a new, different order but simply a copy and realisation of the absolutely existing order.

986a. This concept of realisation and copy which the contingent universe has and is always difficult to understand, can also be explained by recourse to the teaching I have given but presented in a different way. I showed how the intuition of being is, as it were, the key to everything created. I said that being, present to the principle which intuitively it, informs the principle and imprints itself on it. It thus makes the principle exist subjectively, like an imitation of itself, although the principle exists objectively, that is, absolutely in the object. In the way that the principle receives existence and nature from this communication of being (and from every subsequent communication of being), so it receives order. In the case of all other finite entities, they exist through their relationship with intelligent subjects. Because these subjects are in being, in the way I have explained, they transport into being all that is relative to them together with themselves. Thus everything is; everything has the nature and order of being. Everything contingent therefore is not order but a reflection and relative repetition of the order existing absolutely in the eternal object. Possible things exist absolutely only in being, having no existence relative to themselves. Subsistent things have two inseparable modes: they exist absolutely in being (granted a divine decree) and exist, simultaneously and as a necessary consequence, relatively in themselves and to themselves.

We come again therefore to the conclusion that order and its criterion pertain to eternal, necessary things, and that contingent things only participate in order and its concept.

987. I said however that our mind can abstract the *criterion of order* from order itself, and that *order* is the exemplar, the norm according to which contingent things are produced whether by

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God with creation or by human beings with art. The criterion of order, abstracted from order, is the principle of order. Relative to this principle, order has the nature of consequence. The principle therefore is the *rule* that the mind follows in composing the order. According to this rule, the mind judges whether the existing order, even outside the mind, is as it must be, that is, is the order resulting from its rule, or is defective by deviating from the rule.

I also said that the criterion of order is the accord between the elements from which the order results and the one they must produce. If the elements are of such a kind and arranged and disposed in such a way that they produce as perfectly as possible the one which they are ordered to produce, the criterion is fulfilled in all its consequences, and the order is perfect. Otherwise, it is not.

This shows that the whole order is implicit in the *criterion* of the order. Anyone who knows this *criterion* knows virtually the whole order, just as anyone who knows a principle knows virtually all the consequences of the principle. For example, the criterion for the order in an arithmetical progression is: 'Each term of the series differs from the preceding term by the same difference.' Once the order in an arithmetical progression is known, we have the rule for forming all possible arithmetical progressions and for judging whether a string of given numbers is arranged in an arithmetical progression or not.

988. We see therefore that the distinction between the *criterion of order* and *order* itself is founded on the two ways we have of knowing: *virtually* and *actually*. If we had only actual knowledge, we could indeed know order, but never distinguish its criterion. Consequently, all the orders that are produced by *free intelligence*, which can form objects proper to itself that do not exist *per se* independently of the intelligence's free act, could not be, nor be formed by the mind. This is why I said in the previous book that we are obliged to conceive a certain logical process in the very act of creation of the world (not a process in time or involving any actual distinction on God's part, but only logical distinctions on the part of the things known by God). This process allows us to conceive that before all else God performed the divine abstraction of *undetermined being*. This being acted as supreme rule for his free, speculative intelligence

relative to the order of the world, which he brought into existence with practical thought.

989. In fact the whole foundation of virtual knowledge is *undetermined* being. Present to the mind, undetermined being contains all things virtually, and through it they are thought actually. The nature of *being* is such that it can be thought because it is essentially intelligible, is intelligibility itself, and it can be thought virtually. Once the *essence* of intelligibility has been reached, we can go no further, nor investigate 'why being is intelligible'. The sole final explanation is: 'That is its nature — absolute intelligibility pertains to the essence of being.' However, we can still investigate 'why being, as that which has the essence of intelligibility in its essence, has no need to be always actually seen but can be also virtually seen and thought'. The question is not absurd, and the answer can be found in the essence of being and of the intelligent subject.

If we consider the essence of the intelligent subject understood most generally, we see that the intellective act of this subject can be conceived in two modes: as an absolutely necessary act and as an act under the control of the subject. In the first mode, the act is like a continuously open, fixed eye that is obliged to see the luminous bodies before it. In the second mode, it is like an eye which can be closed or half closed or fixed on whatever its owner wishes. The continuously open, motionless eye corresponds to the necessary mind of God: his mind sees and always actually knows being, sees and knows actually and necessarily the whole and totality of the intelligibility of being, an intelligibility identical both as intelligible and intelligent. However, although this necessary intelligence is always like this, there is no contradiction in our conceiving that the divine subject has, as it were, another eye at his free disposition, and that this eye sees everything it wants to see in being, which with the active eye it necessarily sees always in its totality. Indeed not only is there no contradiction, but this other mode of freely knowing completes the concept of the perfection of divine intelligence, which sees not only the totality of necessary being, but also being limited by the free, contingent will of divine intelligence. This does not cancel the first mode of seeing, just as seeing a quality by abstracting it from a fully known ens does not cancel but indeed supposes knowledge of the ens or, as

I explained in *Psychology*, abstract thought supposes complete thought. Hence, granted this free intelligence in God, we can clearly see how it could limit his gaze in such a way as to make present to it being in its virtuality, prescinding freely from considering its actuality, and be able to communicate this virtual being, rather than actual being (or better, most actual being), to his human creature as the light of this creature. But we need to see whether this contradicts the very nature of being.

989a. The fact of human intuition is sufficient to demonstrate that there is no contradiction. But I must give an *a priori* explanation, that is, taken from the essence of being. The essence of being has two characteristics: it is 1. totally simple, and 2. indivisible. The second derives from the first: if being were divisible, it would not be totally simple. We must also consider that Being subsists in three forms and subsists identical in each, although the forms are distinct. If it exists identical, and in so far as it exists identical, it is not trine. Hence there is an essential difference of *concept* between the unity of number of being and the trinity of its forms. If there were no difference or better no distinction, of concept between one in number and three, we would have an absurdity because one in number, as one, would be three. But saying that there is a distinction between the *concept* of being that is one in number and the three forms is the same as saying that being is naturally conceivable separate from its forms. This aptitude to be conceived separate is essential to being; it is precisely that intelligibility which refers to *free intelligence* (as I have called it). If we can conceive being separate from its forms, we must remember that being is *per se* totally simple and indivisible. Granted that it is totally simple, indivisible and, by its very nature, conceivable without the forms, the forms, which in this way of conceiving it actually are not, must remain implicit and hidden, not truly denied and separate: in other words, they are virtually contained in being. If they are virtually contained in being, they can be deduced *a priori* from it, provided the conditions necessary for every deduction are not lacking. In the same way, consequences can be deduced *a priori* from a principle. But certain conditions are necessary for making this deduction in fact, and the condition is the need to apply the principle, and the need to apply the principle is our need to explain something, and to explain a thing to ourselves

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means to take it back to the principle. Hence, there must be some given entity that pertains, in any way whatsoever, to a form of being. We then explain this form by referring it to being, by acknowledging it its form. Thus, the finite real is given us through feeling, and we explain it to ourselves by knowing it in being where it was virtually contained, and where we now see it actually contained because we possess it by means of feeling.

But if the mind already knew being and knew actually what being contained, it could abstract both being and its content, and then refer the content to being; in short, it could perform all operations of analysis, synthesis and integration. A prior, perfect knowledge of everything does not so bind our mind that it cannot carry out all these operations.

990. We have seen that 1. the *criterion of any order* is a concept of the mind which implicitly and virtually contains the whole order; 2. the distinction between an order and its rule arises from the two modes, actual and virtual, of knowing a thing, and 3. virtual knowledge begins from the idea of *undetermined being*, to which all other virtuality is reduced as to its proper essence and origin. Only being has naturally this double intelligibility, a *displayed* and a *virtual intelligibility*. *Undetermined being*, therefore, as the legitimate consequence of all this, is the first, supreme and universal criterion and rule of every order whatsoever.

To understand this, we must recall the definition of the *criterion of order*. I said that it is a concept that reveals to the mind 'the accord that the elements of the order have with the one resulting from these elements'. *Undetermined being* expresses precisely this accord in the most universal way possible because the one in question (the one resulting from many), expressed in the most universal way, is an ens; every 'one', resulting from many, is conceived as an ens. Abstract one has no multiplicity whatsoever and does not pertain to the one in the many. We have therefore on the one hand an ens, and on the other the elements that compose it. The accord that these elements have with the one they form is *being*, the act of being. In other words: 'An ens results from many, because the act of being that the elements have is only one.' Hence, the accord between this one and the many forming one is the totally simple act of being that the many have. If they did not have this act, they would not form

one, that is, they would not constitute the order we see. But the extraordinary property of this supreme criterion and rule is that it can be thought by itself by means of the *virtual intelligibility* proper to it, independently of the elements and the one that results from them. It is therefore, by its essence, the universal criterion of every order.

991. Let us now return to the order subsisting in necessary, absolute Being. I said that it is one and trine, like Being itself. If subsistent Being is considered in its three forms, we have one sole order; if the order of Being is considered in each form, it appears triple. But because each of these three orders cannot be separated from the other two without destroying all three, one sole order remains, which is also one and trine. The only way to represent this order adequately in a human concept is through a kind of analogy. I will therefore represent it analogically (the sacred authors used similar ways), and ask the reader to consider this representation (which is not an image) under this aspect alone where there can be analogy, and not under other aspects where analogy is insufficient. In the diagram below, upper case A, B and C represent the three divine forms as containers and *persons* (using the names determined by Christian theology). Lower case a, b and c represent the same forms as content. The pointed end of the symbol 'v' points to being as container; its open end, to being as content. The equal sign indicates identity. We have therefore the following symbol of the order in divine Being:

$$\begin{array}{l}
 A = a = a \\
 \wedge = v = v \\
 b = B = b \\
 \wedge = \wedge = v \\
 c = c = C
 \end{array}$$

In the diagram, A = a, B = b and C = c, which means that each of the three forms is a container and content. However these two respects do not remove each form's identity. Consequently, the three divine forms do not become nine. Each, although identical, is considered in three inseparable ways (although our

mind can separate them): in one respect, each is considered as container, and under this respect is a supreme form in itself; in the other two respects, each is considered as content, in which case it is present to and in the other two forms.

In absolute Being therefore the three supreme forms constitute only one order but can, through diverse respects, appear abstractly as three orders, although in fact it is only trine one.

992. This unity and simplicity of the supreme order would seem to indicate that it contains no criterion that the mind can distinguish from the order. Someone may object that 'anything the mind separates from this order destroys the order'. But I said that the *criterion of order* is found in the order itself, not outside it, and that when the mind sees the criterion, it does not separate it in any way from the order but simply notes the principle of the order. Being, when abstracted from the forms, is undetermined (determination is not denied to it but supposed, not included, in its concept). Consequently, there is no contradiction when we consider *being* as the *criterion* of supreme order. All this simply restates what I have continually said: 'Being, abstracted from the forms, virtually contains the forms. Hence the necessity of the forms can be deduced *a priori* from the pure concept of being' — of course, to carry out this deduction the mind must possess the material conditions necessary for it. The criterion of order is truly 'the accord which the elements of the order have with the one and through which the elements form one'. The universal criterion of every order is, I said, 'an accord through which the elements of the order have one sole act of being'. Let us apply this to absolute Being. The one of order in all its universality is ens. The ens we are talking about here is the ens that essentially is, being. The problem therefore that we still need to answer is: 'How, or on what condition, can the act of being be an ens?' The act of being cannot be an ens unless it subsists. It must therefore have the subjective form with a feeling that is as extensive as infinite, subsistent being. But if the act of being subsists, it does not lose what it previously had as act. It is therefore intelligible, infinite feeling and thus has the objective form. But if identical being is an act that is simultaneously subjective and objective, and is not only infinite feeling (that is, pleasure) but infinitely and essentially intelligible, then it must be infinitely lovable to itself and

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infinitely loved; it thus has a moral form. However, because this ens is pure being, it must itself *be* these forms, not simply have them. Hence, we can again argue that the forms must compenetrates each other reciprocally without intermingling; they must reciprocally inexist in the way that theology aptly calls *circuminsession*, a word that avoids their intermingling. Thus, as soon as we assert that *being* must be *ens*, the order it must have is drawn solely from its concept as from its criterion or principle, from which it dialectically derives.

993. But *virtual being*, the principle of this reasoning, is present to our mind in the object. Hence, the first seat and origin of all order (as I noted about relationships) is in *objective being*. If we consider order dialectically, that is, as known by our mind, its criterion is *virtual being*. For this reason I said in the previous book that we can conceive everything in a dialectical unity. If we consider *subsistent being*, order begins with *subsistent, objective being* because the plurality necessary to order begins here. All this confirms what I said in the book dealing with the supreme forms of being: the *sufficient reason* for the three forms is in the second form. ‘Sufficient reason’ however must not be understood as the cause or principle of origin but only as the criterion that the mind uses to conceive the three forms and explain their order to itself by reducing them to the unity of being.

Article 2

The concepts ‘perfection’ and ‘perfect’

994. In the absence of all multiplicity, ‘one’ gives no concept of perfection or perfect.

These concepts appear to the mind as soon as it thinks the particular ‘one’ that results from many, in a given order.

Hence, ‘perfect’ is a quality predicated of one in so far as it results from many.

995. Just as there is one in every order, so there is a sole criterion, conceivable by the mind and the principle of the whole order. When the mind possesses this criterion, it can judge whether the order is complete or defective in some way. The

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order, judged by the mind, can be an ideal order (or an order that the mind freely represents to itself ideally) or a subsistent order known by the mind. This last is either necessary or a contingent realisation of an ideal order.

The criterion of order and also the rule for forming judgments about order is 'the accord, abstractly understood, between many (which I call elements of order) and one so that many constitute one'. This accord contains virtually but not visibly the complete order. Hence, in the final analysis, order is always judged by order, visible order by implicit, virtual order. The latter can never be *false* or *defective* because, as totally simple, it is either known or not known by the mind, like all simple ideas, which do not involve judgments. Although the rule is infallible, the order judged can be defective and deficient because it can be an order formed freely by the human mind (an order of opinion) or be a simple contingent realisation of an ideal order.

If many entities lacked the accord that made them into some kind of one, the entities would be separate and not form an order because they would not form a unity. Whenever many entities constitute something as one, there is necessarily the accord of the entities with that one. That is why I said absolutely: "perfect" is a predicate applied to "one" in so far as this results from many'.

Leaving aside those entities that are incapable of forming a given one, and turning our attention solely to those that are capable of this, I say that if many form one simply, this one is *perfect*, simply.

However, if many formed one incompletely, we could not say that they formed it simply: they would partly form it and partly not. Consequently this 'one' would not be simply *perfect*, but only partly perfect.

'Perfect' therefore, without any other addition or limiting distinction, is 'one formed in the most complete way by the entities capable of forming it'; I call these entities elements of order. Hence, in so far as we see a unity formed by many, and this many constitutes the unity only in part, the one is called *imperfect*, and in this aspect the quality 'imperfection' is predicated of it.

Consequently, the concept 'perfect' is one thing (as noted

above) but the concept 'excellent' another. The richer a 'one' is in entities, the more excellent it is. But every 'one' is perfect when it results totally from all the entities capable of forming it.

Excellence therefore admits gradation, whereas the predication of *perfect*, when understood simply, does not admit gradation. 'Perfect' expresses the relationship of the accord realised or actually existing between the elements capable of forming one and the one they actually form, no matter what this one is or the elements are.

Just as we say the *one* is 'perfect' when all the elements capable of forming it form it completely, so we say the order is 'perfect', because in the expression the order is understood as one. In fact, everything considered as one resulting from many can be called perfect.

Moreover, each of the entities that, according to the criterion of order, constitute one by contributing to its formation, is called *perfective* of the one when considered in relationship and conjunction with this one that results from them.

If however the *one* is considered in relationship with each entity constituting it and we bear in mind that as one it receives some part of its being from each entity, the relationship is normally called a *perfection*. Hence, 'a perfection' differs from 'perfection'. 'Perfection' is the abstract of perfect, but 'a perfection' is the abstract of *perfect partially understood*, not of *perfect simply understood*.

996. *One resulting from many* is the universal subject of perfection and is called 'perfect' when perfection is predicated of it. Consequently, there can be as many kinds of 'perfect' as *ones resulting from many*. But the *ones resulting from many* can all be reduced to the three supreme categorical classes. We have seen that there are subjective orders, objective orders and moral orders (these last are also gathered into only one order). This gives three classes of ones resulting from many: subjective ones, objective ones and moral ones. Moral ones are simultaneously subjective and objective (inobjectivised subjective ones). All of these ones are dialectically reduced into a single one resulting from many and constituting the dialectical unity of all things. In another way they are also reduced to one single divine order.

However, when the one resulting from many is only objective, the subject of perfection is simply a dialectical subject. To this

class of objective *perfects* all the perfection conceivable in abstract entities is reduced, for example, in an algebraic calculation, in the form of syllogism, etc.

Everything I said about the *criterion of order* must be applied equally to *perfect one*. The criterion is unique, determines order and virtually contains order in itself. The same rule is valid for every *perfect one* and has the same uses. In fact, *order* and *perfect* are two concepts referring to the same thing considered from opposite points of view. *Order* is defined as 'the conspiracy of many into one'; *perfect* is defined as 'one resulting from many'. The question always concerns the conjunction of one and many. But if this complex of entities is considered from the point of view of the many that conspire into one it is called *order*, but considered from the point of view of the one resulting from the many that conspire into one, it is called *perfect*. In the first view of the complex of entities, the mind takes the *many* as subject of its thought and considers the entities in relationship to the one as to their predicate. In the second view, the mind takes the *one* as subject of its thought and considers it in relationship with the many which constitute the one. When the mind considers the *many* as subject and pronounces the word 'order', it is thinking with a dialectical subject because many cannot constitute any other subject. Hence, the word 'order' expresses the complex of entities in a purely objective mode, contained and thus unified solely by the intuiting mind. But when the mind takes the one as subject and pronounces the word 'perfect', the one can be both a *dialectical subject* (as in the case of an ideal or abstract one) and a *subsistent subject*.

All I have said about the *criterion* forming and determining order applies equally to the criterion forming and determining the perfect, because the same criterion determines both order and the perfect

997. I have distinguished between *order* and the *realisation of order*. I said that order is necessary, and hence immutable and eternally determined. The realisation of order however can vary in the fidelity with which it presents this necessary order.

When we use the *rule* or criterion for judging necessary order, our judgment can only be favourable, because necessary order is essentially perfect. This judgment can affirm three things:

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1. Each entity has an *accord* with the one into which it conspires.

2. All the entities have this accord, and if we consider all the accords that the conspiring entities have, each with its own accord, and how these accords do not hinder but rather help one another to bring about the *one*, then the complex of the entities, which is an *accord resulting* from them all, is called *harmony*.

3. The order is perfect.

The second of these judgments is the source of the criterion of order and of the perfect; it is the *supreme rule* determining all order, because the rule is precisely the *accord* resulting from all the accords of the individual entities or, as I said earlier, the *relationship of all their relationships*.

If we give the name 'ens' to eternal, necessary order and eternally determined orders, then what the philosophers say is true, that *order*, or the *perfect*, adds only the consideration of the mind to the concept 'ens'. In such entia the mind simply distinguishes 1. the diverse entities from which the entia result, 2. the accords of these entities with the resulting ens, and 3. their harmony or conspiracy into one.¹²²

The case is different however when the rule of order and of the perfect is applied not to eternally determined orders but to *their contingent realisation*, or to *orders of opinion* of the human mind. These orders can be realised incompletely or the opinion can be incomplete, so that the judgments about them, using the rule, are neither always nor entirely favourable — they can be unfavourable. Hence, in addition to the three kinds of favourable judgments given above, we can judge 1. that an entity which ought to conspire to form one does not have an accordant conspiracy into one; 2. that no perfect harmony exists between the conspiring entities; 3. that the order is imperfect.

¹²² Wolff says: 'Perfection is attributed to things in so far as intrinsic determinations can be explained through some general criterion or certain rules,' and then adds: 'If none of these determinations mutually exclude each other, they constitute an ens. The perfection of a thing does not attribute to it a determination that it does not already have. The only respect in which the determination is attributed is through a general notion or certain rules that explain why the intrinsic determinations must be these rather than others'* (*Ontol.*, §530).

998. But neither favourable nor unfavourable judgments could be made about the realisation of an eternal order or about an opinion on it if the order were not at least partly realised or thought. We must therefore consider the following cases relative to these kinds of judgments:

1. The human mind can judge the order of a contingent thing by applying another order and another criterion which are not those of which the order is a total or partial realisation. These orders or criteria (not its own) are denied to the contingent thing because they are not the orders that it realises.

Relative to these, the contingent can be judged 'to be without order' or 'to be false'. For example, the ancient philosophers described chaos as *disordered matter*. Some understood this disordered matter, that is, matter without order, to be an abstract entity; others understood it as 'matter without the order into which it was later distributed and formed the world order'. Thus the opinion is that these things are thrown together without order and lack the order useful to them. But the matter of chaos and things thrown together without order truly lack all order; they simply do not have the order that the mind has, to which to refer them. Thus, when we say, 'This gold coin is a fake' we are simply saying, 'This metal does not have the order which constitutes a gold coin.' This does not mean that the coin lacks its own order, but simply that it lacks the order which our mind has used to judge it.

2. Secondly, when judging a contingent thing, the human mind can apply an order and rule which is truly the mind's own. In this case, it can indeed judge the thing as *imperfect*, but because nothing can exist without some order, the mind cannot judge the thing totally lacking in order. Order pertains to every entity resulting from many: anything that results from many must have an order. But entities so simple that they do not result from many exist only through abstraction. Hence subsistent entities, whether contingent or not, always have a plurality and order. This makes it possible for us to know 'their necessary order' because they are presented to our thought with the traces or signs proper to and characteristic of their order.

999. How can we know the nature of the order proper to a contingent thing we perceive? This order, which can never be

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absent in the contingent, constitutes its *abstract, specific essence*. The abstract, specific essence is what is first known in what is contingent. Granted therefore that we know the contingent thing, we know its essence (NE, 3: 1215). In order to judge whether a contingent thing realises a particular order, we have to know it; we must therefore know its essence. But the *essence* is precisely what allows us to discover its order with which alone we can make the judgment. The reason is that the *abstract, specific essence* virtually contains in itself everything possible in the thing, and contains it in such a simple way that we cannot err about the essence: we either see or do not see it (NE, 3: fn. 142). Hence, the *abstract, specific essence* of any contingent thing is the *criterion of its order*. As I said, the criterion of order is a simple concept which virtually contains the whole order, and this is precisely what the *essence* of all contingent things is, an essence of which we cannot be ignorant. Consequently, if we want to judge ‘whether a contingent thing faithfully realises its order’, we have the *criterion of order* in its essence. From this criterion we can deduce *a priori* (granted the condition explained above) what is its *order proper*, and by comparing the thing with this order we can judge the degree of fidelity and perfection with which the order is realised in it.

The human mind makes this analysis in all deontological judgments. With these judgments it pronounces how things must be made if they are to be perfect. First, it knows the *essence* of a contingent thing. From this, as from a unique determining rule, it extracts the *order proper* to the thing. It then deduces that the thing, if it is to be perfect, must realise this order. Finally, the mind applies this judgment to verify and recognise whether and to what extent the contingent thing realises the order.

The analysis tells us the following:

1. In every contingent thing, what is explicitly known in its *abstract, specific essence* can never be absent, because we positively know this essence through our perception of the thing. The *essence* therefore is always given in the intellectual perception from which it is extracted, and is the first property of contingent things on which the other properties depend. Granted this, everything pertaining explicitly to the essence is necessarily realised in the perceived contingent

thing. Therefore in no contingent thing can some part of its order ever fail to be realised; in other words, nothing contingent exists without some order.

2. The part of order that remains unrealised in a contingent thing, which makes the thing imperfect, is only the part which, in the *criterion* of its order (that is, in the abstract, specific essence of the contingent), remains in a state of virtuality and is not displayed. This part is normally called *accident*.

We must therefore distinguish between *essential* and *accidental order*. They are not in fact two orders but parts of the same order, and the union of the two parts constitutes *perfection*.

Hence *perfection* is clearly something added to the concept of *contingent ens*, because this concept is given by the abstract, specific essence. The abstract, specific essence reveals to thought only the *essential* order, which precisely does not constitute the *perfection* of the contingent.

1000. We can now answer the question: 'Does order and perfection add something to the concept of ens?'

1. The most general concept of ens does not include *perfection* but simply an order without any determination. But not every order is the perfection of entia. Therefore the concept of *perfection* adds something to the most general concept of ens.

2. If instead of the most general concept of ens we take the concept of a necessary ens or entity, this ens cannot exist without its order, which is unique, because accidents are not present in a necessary ens. Therefore, the concepts of *necessary ens*, *order* and *perfect* are interchangeable. They are the same entity considered from different points of view: it is ens when the mind is concerned with solely what is; it is order when the mind is concerned with what is 'as many producing a one'; it is perfect when the mind is concerned with what is 'as a one constituted by many'.

3. If instead of the concept of necessary ens, we take the concept of something contingent, that is, a realised ens which is contingent in its realisation, we have the distinction between *essential order* and *accidental order*: the former can never be lacking from the realisation, the latter is not sufficient to make the contingent thing perfect. When *order* is realised in *the essential part*, this essential order virtually contains an

accidental order, which is not always realised or not fully realised. In this case, the realised order is *imperfect*. *Perfection* is therefore a concept different from that of realised ens, to which it is added.

1001. A contingent thing is said to be *perfect* when not only the essential order is realised in it, but also that accidental order that is virtually contained in the essential order, and completes and perfects the complete order. Thus the *perfection* of a contingent ens, which has accidents, is always *accidental*.

Again, because the perfection of a contingent ens consists in the realisation of its *accidental order*, it follows that there are degrees of perfection in this order. Although its *perfection* certainly consists absolutely in the total realisation of the accidental order, nevertheless the ens is said to be in some way more or less perfect according to the degree it is realised in the accidental order, on the basis that whatever is realised of this order is something extra to the existence of the realised ens. Hence, when 'perfection' means 'everything entitative that is added to the pure existence of an ens', perfection admits degrees. But this meaning of 'perfection' differs greatly from the strict meaning of the word.

1002. Finally, we should note another difference in the *imperfection* to which ens is susceptible in its contingent realisation. The most general *imperfection* of contingent ens is when its accidental order is not realised in it. This imperfection is greatest when the order is not realised in any part of the ens. If it is partly but not totally realised, the unrealised part is the amount of imperfection. We should remember however that all order results from 1. many entities, which are, as I said, the material cause of order, and 2. relationships between the entities, which are its formal cause. Of course, in anything contingent, *accidental order* might not be realised due to defect as much in the entities, which as material elements must form it, as in the accordant relationships which join the entities and make them conspire into one. If in the realisation the defect of the accidental order consists solely in the failure of the lesser entities to be what they ought to be, and if their deficiency does not alter the accord of the relationships between the remaining entities, then the resulting defect in the completeness of the order is called imperfection or simple defect. On the other hand, if the

relationships between the entities are so defective that the accord which makes the entities conspire into one is lacking, contrary relationships result between the entities that ought to conspire into order, that is, there is a disaccord, by which the entities, instead of conspiring into one, tend to destroy the one. An intrinsic struggle takes place between the essential conspiration that can never be lacking if the contingent is to be present and the accidental tendency that threatens the unity and hence threatens remotely or imminently the contingent existence. In fact when two individual entities are joined into one (this is an element of every order because every order results from entities joined together), there is either the relationship that binds them, and thus an elementary order, or no such relationship. In this second case, order does not exist; only two separate entities exist, each of which on its own does not constitute an order. But in the case of many entities that must conspire into one, whenever bound together, even in pairs, the relationships between them may lack the *harmony* that makes them conspire into one. This harmony consists in all the relationships being dissolved into a single relationship with the one resulting from them all. But some relationships have this harmony, others do not. In this case, instead of conspiring into one, they collide and conflict with each other: those that lack harmony in their union will attempt to dissolve the unity that the others are conspiring to form. This kind of defect in relationships, this intestine struggle which has the notion of limit or defect or simple imperfection or the lack of totality of the accidental order, is appropriately called *evil*.

1003. Evil is therefore most generally a *disorder*, not simply a lack of order. The disorder is found solely in the contingent realisation of a given order. It is a disorder in the realisation of *accidental order*.

The seat of evil is not in entities that must form a certain order but in the relationships binding these entities.

The nature of evil lies in the disaccord between some of these relationships and others, that is, in the disharmony between the relationships that join together the entities that ought to realise a given accidental order. Consequently, disharmonious relationships, instead of making the entities conspire into one, tend to separate them and thus destroy the one.

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Evil is the contrary of *good*. Good, considered most generally, lies in the harmony of all the relationships between the entities that constitute or must constitute a given order, of whatever excellence.

Good therefore lies in perfection. On the other hand, *evil* is not present in every imperfection but in the imperfection which has the nature of disorder and conflict. Hence, between good and evil lies the *diminution of good*, which is called *simple imperfection* or *simple defect*.

1004. The following concepts must therefore be distinguished:

1. Necessary order — good considered in its abstract essence.
2. Excellence, greater or less, of necessary order — absolute quantity of good.
3. Perfectly realised order — good in the contingent.
4. Order realised in its essential part but not fully in its accidental part due solely to lack of some entities which ought to form one — *diminution of realised good*, simple imperfection.
5. Order realised in the essential part but imperfectly in the accidental part through the disharmony of the relationships between the entities — evil.

I said that the *perfect* can be objective (as the predicate of order) or a dialectical subject, or subjective (as the predicate of a one that has a true subsistent subject). The same can be said of imperfection, evil and good: they can be considered either purely as objective or as qualities of a subsistent subject, that is, subjective. In *Principles of Ethics* (76–81), I dealt with the relationship between purely objective good and a subject which can enjoy it, by which the good becomes subjective.

CHAPTER 9

The terms of the relationships in being

Article 1

The argument of this chapter

1005. *Subjective relationships* have a real subject, in which they are considered subsisting as its qualities or attributes.

In these relationships there is the real subject (the *principle* of the relationship) and the *term* of the relationship. The foundation of the relationship is in the subject and is the subject considered solely as referred to the term, not in its totality and simplicity. For example, if we take a man as the subject of the relationships, and what he knows and what he loves as their terms, then as intelligent, but not in his totality and simplicity, he constitutes the foundation of the relationship he has with his known term, and as loving, he constitutes the foundation of the relationship with his loved term.

We have seen that the subject, through its accordant relationship with its term, acquires or rather has a perfection. When expressing this opinion, I dealt with the subject compared to the term to which the subject refers, but now I must deal with the *terms* of the relationships compared to the subject, and consider them where they first exist, that is, in being.

Article 2

There are three supreme terms of undetermined being, and only two supreme terms of determined ens

1006. The human mind first knows undetermined being. In this being, I said, we conceive three supreme terms, which are its three categorical forms.

But undetermined being to which we attribute those three terms that determine it is a dialectical, not a real subject. Thus

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the relationships which the mind conceives between undetermined being and its terms are *objective relationships*, not subjective relationships of the terms, and it is these relationships which I wish to deal with in this chapter.

If we consider a being or ens that is a true, complete subject, that is, an ens endowed with intelligence and will, we will find that the supreme terms of this being or ens can be only two: the forms of objectivity and lovability, that is, the known, in so far as known, and the loved, in so far as loved. We must therefore investigate the condition and title that these two forms acquire as terms of the first form, that is, of the subject.

We will see that the object considered in relationship to the subject and as term of the subject receives the condition and title of *truth*, and that the moral, considered also as term of the same subject, acquires the condition and title of *good*. However we must first consider how the subject, in a determined ens, never has the condition and nature of term but of essence or of subsistent subject, depending on the way it is considered. This will show us the truth of that admirable opinion of the ancients that the true, the good and ens are interchangeable, are in fact relative terms and, in being, are indivisible.

Article 3

Subject and essence

1007. I defined the subject as ‘that which in an ens is the first container and the cause of unity’. This definition clearly shows that a subject, as subject, can never be a term of any relationship but is the principle of all relationships.

This is so true that even when the mind takes a dialectical subject and attributes something to it, the dialectical subject is always the first thing thought and pronounced in the judgment. The mind forms dialectical subjects by taking and placing before itself an entity that in itself is not first and considers it hypothetically as if it were first, and then, based on this supposition, reasons coherently about it. However, *subjects* that are *true subjects*, not purely dialectical subjects, are first *in se*, not first through a mental supposition.

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1008. Now, the subject and everything pertaining to the subjective form is, through abstraction, the source of *essence*. We cannot therefore understand the subject's nature without considering it in its connection with the concept we extract from it, that is, the concept of essence.

Essence is what is seen in the idea (*NE*, 2: 646). The idea is the pure objective form. Essence therefore is that which is contained in the objective form. Being and the other two forms are contained in objective being. One of these forms is the subjective form, which contains the moral form. Thus, in so far as subjective being and moral being are contained in objective being, they pertain to the subjective form: we have either subjective being or moral being, but contained in subjective being, and therefore clothed with the subjective form. Hence, the concept of *essence* arises in the mind from the relationship between objective and subjective being.

1009. The idea containing the essence can be spoken of in two ways: either generally, without regard for the differences that distinguish one idea from another, or in particular, about some idea or a class of ideas. In the case of ideas in general, 'essence' has only a general meaning, expressed by the definition I have given: 'Essence is what *a thing* is.' In the definition, the *thing*, to which essence is attributed, although undetermined, is in fact the subject. *Essence* therefore is the act of being relative to any subject whatsoever which is or has being, without the subject entering into the definition. *Essence* is thus the act of subjective being considered in abstraction from the subject.

Although the *act of the subject* pertains to the subject, we do not know which subject is in question when the subject before the mind is undetermined. Moreover, because the subject's act is determined by the subject itself, we do not know which act of the subject is involved. Hence, when the mind considers the subject's act without knowing to which subject the act pertains, this act, in abstraction from every individual subject, is called the essence of the subject.

This indetermination of the subject and of its act can vary in extent. For example, the essence we see in a specific idea is partly determined, like an essence that refers to a partly determined subject. Thus, if the idea were of the ideal human being,

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we would say that it contains 'the essence of a human being', where human being is a specifically but not totally determined subject, because a real individual is not involved.

In this way of speaking, *the content* of the idea is analysed by the mind. The mind, by means of abstraction, distinguishes between the subject's act, which it calls essence, and the not-totally determined subject, which it calls human being. But this duality, arising from an analysis with which the mind distinguishes 'the act of the subject from the *subject* that does the act', has no foundation outside the duality of finite ens. In this second duality the subject is truly a *real form*, and the *act of being* is effectively distinct from the real form and added to it by the first cause. In God, on the other hand, essence indicates 'the essence of being', and the essence of being is being itself. Consequently, in God, there is no distinction between the *act* and the *subject*;¹²³ the only meaning possible for 'essence' is *subjective being*. Hence, in God-ens, being and essence identify. Nevertheless, we can use 'essence' to mean the divine nature in so far as it is manifest to itself in objective being.

1010. Being, in the subjective form, is *reality*. Therefore, essence is reality. However it is not reality in the subjective form but *reality contained* in the objective form. As I said, essence is 'what is intuited in the idea', or more generally, 'what is in the object'.

But reality in the idea is determined to varying degree, and the less determined it is the more virtuality it has. When the absence of determination is maximum, the reality is totally virtual. The essence present in the being of human intuition is of this kind.

When the essence is fully determined, it acquires the form of complete *subject*. The fact that our mind can think the essence determined to varying degree, explains the distinction it makes between considering in reality only the *act* and considering the *subject-act* (*Logica*, 334).

¹²³ Theologians speak about the abstract forms of God as subsistent. As St. Thomas says: 'Divine nature differs from material forms in two ways. First, material forms are not subsistent. Hence humanity in the human being is not the same as the human being who subsists, whereas deity is the same as God. Divine nature therefore is subsistent. Second, no form or created being is its own being, but the being of God is his nature and quiddity'* (*De Potentia*, q. 11, art. 1).

However in the case of a real and hence fully determined subject, the subject's act would also be real and indivisible from the subject. If the real act is removed from a real subject, the subject is no longer real. Consequently, the expression 'the essence of man' differs greatly from 'the essence of this real man'. The first means 'the act of any human being can exist', where act means an *abstract act* that refers to a possible individual. The second means 'the act of any human being whatsoever realised in this real man', where act, that is, the essence, is still abstract but refers not to any possible individual but a real, determined individual in whom the act is realised. But the realisation of the act of the man-subject, conceived by the mind, constitutes the act's *realisation*, not the act itself. The act was before the mind even before it was realised; the fact that it is realised adds nothing to it. Nevertheless the act constituted the essence of any possible human being. Hence, *essence* has this proper to it: it is something present to the mind and is independent of its contingent realisation; it is present *per se* and in the object, that is, in the idea. Although the essence pertains to the subject of which it is an abstract, it is not detached from the object, but is an appurtenance of the subject in so far as the subject is contained in the object. And because it must receive its name from the container, it has objective not subjective form; it is not the subject.

The *realisation* of finite things is thus an act different from their *essence*. The essence is independent of the realisation; it is eternal and necessary, whereas the realisation is contingent. The essence is the act that absolutely is, the realisation results from the relative act.

1011. Nevertheless, the realisation makes a *real subject* exist relatively, which means that not every subject has an *essential act*. In fact the act through which a real subject exists relatively is accidental, just as the subject itself is accidental — a subject, and hence its act, can exist or not exist, without any contradiction. In discussing the nature of essences therefore, we must leave aside their contingent, factual realisation, which differs from them, and restrict ourselves to the relationship between the essence as such and the subject to which it refers.

Restricting ourselves therefore to essences and prescinding

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from their accidental realisation, they can refer only to an eternal, necessary subject like themselves, because they are its act, abstracted by the mind. But essences are finite or infinite. The necessary subject of finite essences is a possible subject. But a possible subject is never fully determined by itself. It receives its ultimate determination from free intelligence, from the faculty I have called (humanly speaking) 'divine imagination', which determines it with the same act with which it realises it. Consequently, in finite essences, the human mind can always conceive the essence distinct and separate from the subject, as an act of the subject. Because the subject's act that is thought cannot refer to a determined subject, this sole *act* is conceived as possible for many possible subjects, but the sole act is distinguished from many subjects precisely because two things whose difference is one and many can always be distinguished.

Pure ideas therefore, without the addition of acts of free affirmation or imagination, cannot fully determine a subject.¹²⁴ This explains precisely why nothing in the *idea* can subsist: a creative act is necessary to make it subsist and simultaneously determine it.

However an *essence* which we suppose to be infinite is an act of the infinite subject. But the act of the infinite subject, lacking all potentiality, is the subject itself, is most pure act. Hence the divine essence cannot be considered separate from the divine *subject*, as in the case of human beings: the God-subject is the divine essence itself.

¹²⁴ This seems the opposite of what I said in the first book that the *fullest species* admits only one individual. But here, it should be noted, I am speaking 1. about true, volitive and intellective subjects, 2. about subjects determined in themselves and not by means of external relationships, and 3. about a determination which arises not from the divine attributes but from the individual subject in question.

§1. *The definition and concept of truth in general*

1012. Truth in general is the necessary *object* in so far as term of the *subject*.

I say ‘necessary object’ because, as we saw, the intelligent subject can perform two kinds of intellectual acts: *necessary* acts determined by what is *per se* object, and *free* acts by which it produces some abstract objects and combines them in various ways. Although strictly speaking these objects, freely produced by intelligence, are not truth, they can be *true objects* when virtually contained in necessary objects. But if they are not in these, they are purely *objects of opinion* and conceal some contradiction. They can thus be called *false objects*, but more correctly, absurdities, not objects.

Contingent real things, precisely because contingent, are not necessary objects; they become objects of the mind through objectivisation. They are not therefore truth, because truth is object, and a necessary object. If the intelligent subject refers the contingent real to its own necessary object (its own concept), this objectivised contingent real is still not truth because it has not become object. Nevertheless it is true because clothed with its own object which is truth. ‘To be true’ therefore means the same as ‘to be clothed with its truth before the mind’, that is, to be seen by the mind in its truth. This explains the saying: ‘Contingent things are not, but participate in truth’.

The first objectivisation a human being makes of the contingent real does not pertain to free intelligence but is a necessary operation determined by nature. Hence, perception does not err (*NE*, 3: 1248–1257; *Logic*, 895, 913). However reflection follows and judges the objectivised real. This judgment means attributing to this real as its predicate a quality that is seen in an object. If the qualities attributed in these kinds of judgment are not taken from the real’s own object, the judgment contains error.

Error is therefore always the effect of free intelligence. If the action of intelligence finishes, necessarily or freely, in the

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necessary object, it apprehends the truth or what is true, but if it finishes in something contrary to the necessary object, it apprehends what is false, not what is true.

1013. Free intelligence can oppose the necessary object, that is, the truth, in two ways: either

1. it freely joins together abstracts which are not virtually in the *necessary object*, in which case, there is either implicit or manifest *absurdity*, or

2. it attributes to an objectivised contingent real qualities that do not exist in its own necessary object, in which case there is *error*.

In the first of these two kinds of falsehood, the *ideal object* conceived arbitrarily by the mind is in opposition to the *necessary object* because the former is not virtually included in the latter.

In the second kind, the *objectivised real*, whose formal part is the *necessary object*, is in opposition to the object that is attributed as a quality to the *objectivised real*, because the object is not contained in the *objectivised real*. Although the *object* attributed by predication to the *objectivised real* as its quality can be a necessary object, the mind has opposed one necessary object to another; it has joined two objects that according to their nature are not necessarily joined. The error is in this arbitrary conjunction.

In the first case the mind affirms that an *object of opinion*, which is not an object, is virtually in a *necessary object*. The falsehood lies in the opinion that there is an ideal object when there is no ideal object. This kind of falsehood is a lack of the correspondence affirmed between the necessary object and the object of opinion composed by the mind through abstraction.

In the second case the mind affirms that an *objectivised real* contains an object which, although it can in itself be a true, necessary object, is not contained in the objectivised real. This kind of falsehood is a lack of the correspondence affirmed between the *objectivised real* and a qualitative *object* when the latter is predicated of the former.

Because truth and falsehood arise from the relationship between the mind and the term of the mental operation, they are attributed to the two terms of the relationship. They are

attributed to the operation of the mind when, for example, we say, 'This judgment is true' or 'This judgment is false'. According to these and similar statements, the judgment, terminating in the necessary object which is the truth, is either contrary or not contrary to the truth. Truth and falsehood are also attributed to the thing thought, when we say that it is true or false; in saying this, we are saying that the thing is not what we think it is. Expressed in philosophical language, the statement, 'The thing is not as we think it is', means that the necessary object (whether the thing is object or objectivised) does not accord with the term of the mind, whether this term is an absurd object of opinion or an object affirmed about another which does not contain it and about which no affirmation can be made.

Thus, when we say that some given *thing* is false, this thing is either an *object*, or is a real thing considered as contained in the object of the mind (*objectivised*) but not a real thing purely as it is in itself. Consequently, the fact that a thing is false means that either the object of the mind is not an *object* and therefore is something false (like an absurd object of opinion) or the real thing is not contained in the object in which the mind nevertheless pronounces it as contained. In both cases the free mind attempts to alter the *necessary object* either by opposing it with one of its own creation that is not an object and claiming to find it contained in its own creation, or by claiming that an object contains a reality that it does not contain.

Truth therefore is the *necessary object* of the mind. Falsehood is the pronouncement by the mind that the necessary object contains what it does not contain, whether this is another object composed of abstracts or a real thing.

Therefore, truth resides in what is contained in the object in so far as this is term of the mind's operation. Falsehood is the lack of this content in relationship to the same operation.

But I must say more about this very important argument and speak about the nature of truth as it appears distinctly in infinite and finite ens.

§2. Truth in infinite Ens

1014. After considering truth in general we will consider subsistent Truth.

The first essence is divine essence, and is manifested *per se* in objective Being. The mind to which it is manifested is the same essence, that is, subjective Being. Subjective Being is therefore manifested to itself and, as manifested, is objective. Because being is both the subject to which being is manifested and the object that is manifested, the manifestation is totally perfect: everything in the subject of being is in the object. *The known* is therefore equal in every respect to *the knower*. The title 'truth' eminently befits this totally equal, knowing relationship between the known and the knower. The Scholastics defined it as *adaequatio rei et intellectus* [equality of the thing and intellect].¹²⁵

The seat of the first truth is therefore infinite Being, where the subsistent essence of truth, and hence perfect truth, resides.

The properties of the first truth are:

1. The known object is Being in its three forms. Outside of being in its three forms there is nothing. The object is therefore everything knowable.

2. The knowing subject is Being, also in its three forms. Outside of being in its three forms there is nothing. The subject is therefore most knowledgeable. Note here what I have said: the *knowing subject* is not distinguished from the *knowing act*, they are totally identical.

3. The knower is the same, identical, absolute all that the known is. Their equality and, so to speak, their comprehension are maximum and infinite.

4. The known and the knower are not and can never be in potency; they are in most ultimate act, and this by a necessity of nature.¹²⁶

¹²⁵ St. Thomas, *S. T.*, I, q. 16, art. 1.

¹²⁶ Note carefully this perfect, necessary coexistence of the divine, intellectual act and its object. When we apply to God language invented for human things, difficulties necessarily arise due to the imperfection of language. For example, in human beings truth is prior to the intellectual act that makes truth known to us. Good is prior to the act of the will that makes

This relationship is called *truth* when considered in the *object*, but in the knowing subject, it is called *knowledge of truth*, or simply cognition, knowledge, wisdom. Hence St. Thomas correctly states that 'knowledge is an effect of truth'.^{*127} In day-to-day language, we speak about 'knowing a truth, discovering a truth', 'certain truths have been lost, etc.' All these expressions show how in ordinary speech 'truth' means a known object (*NE*, 3: 1113–1124). Consequently the divine Word, as absolute Being in the objective form and in so far as pronounced and generated by the Father, is called Truth, the first, subsistent Truth.

§3. *Truth in finite ens*

1015. We have found the essence of truth and seen that truth is subsistent. Clearly then, if something else is called truth, it can receive this title only through participation. Also, the perfection of these participated truths is proportionate to their participation in the truth that is absolute and absolutely Truth. I will therefore say something about this participation which intellectual entities have, in the way that it is seen in human beings.

1016. The knowledge we have of ourselves differs from our knowledge of other real entities. I will begin with our knowledge of other real entities. This knowledge involves four distinct, diverse things: 1. the knower, 2. the thing in itself, 3. the idea which makes the thing known, and 4. the thing as known.

The knower is sometimes in act, sometimes in potency to knowledge. This is the first distinction between the divine

us love good. In God however truth is generated by the intellectual act, and good proceeds from the act of the will. But when we say, for example, 'God naturally loves his goodness, just as he naturally understands, HIS TRUTH'* (St. Thomas, *De Potentia*, q. 10, art. 2, ad 4), we would seem to suppose that the first truth of the intellectual act and the first goodness of the volitive act exist, as in human beings. But this is not the case. We must understand that the intellectual and volitive acts are *ab aeterno* united to their object and their term, and are also inseparable in the ontological concept. Thus there is a perfect synthesis, which does not remove but establishes the order.

¹²⁷ *De Veritate*, I, 1. — I showed elsewhere that where there is no truth, there is, strictly speaking, no *knowledge* (*Logica*, 1047).

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knower and ourselves, the human knower: the divine knower is naturally in act and can never be in potency. We have these truths therefore only *potentially* by nature, not actually, that is, we do not yet have them, but can have them.

We also naturally have the intuition of the *idea*, which is the objective form of being, but an empty, objective form, whose content is only virtual, not actual. This form is indeed truth (*NE*, 2: 1061–1064) but reduced, virtual truth, which gives us only the potency to know reality (*Logica*, 334).

These two observations indicate the first two differences between human and divine knowledge. The first is that we, relative to the subjective real, have by nature only the potency of knowledge, not the act, and the second, that relative to the objective real, we do not have objective being but only the objective form of being, in which objective being is concealed in a virtuality.

Our intellectual act is not our total humanity. We, subject, have an essence distinct from our intellectual act, which constitutes only a special act of the human being. On the other hand, God's intellectual act is his totally simple, undivided essence. This is a third difference between the God's knowledge of truth and our knowledge.

Our intelligible object is the ideal form of being, but we are not this form, which is united to us solely by its presence. On the other hand, God is united with his object by identity, because he himself is the object-being which he knows. Hence there is a fourth difference, through which we see that God is subsistent truth — we ourselves simply participate in truth, by way of intuition and perception, as in another human being present to us.

Knowledge of ourselves does not give us knowledge of all other things, because we do not contain and encompass all things. God however, knowing only himself, knows all the things he contains. This is a fifth difference between divine and human knowledge.

The real thing we know, whether ourselves or another human being, is not manifest, that is, knowable through itself; it is known through the idea, the objective form of being, which makes it known. But the real thing, known by God, which is purely himself, is *per se* manifest, because it is objective being

itself. We do not naturally know Being-real object but only the real by means of the objective form; we do not have subsistent Truth but the real in the empty form of objective being. This is a sixth difference.

The real thing in itself is never completely known by us because it is never fully felt by us. We do not even completely feel everything in our own nature: one part of our nature remains excluded from our feeling and feeling principle; another part, although present to our feeling, cannot be known. Because it is not manifest *per se*, we need to manifest it by applying the idea to it but, incapable of carrying out this application, we remain ignorant of it. A *thing in se* is one thing, a thing *known by us* is another. This constitutes a seventh difference.

Such are the differences between the modes of divine and human knowledge.

1017. What then is the essence of truth?

It is the object *per se* manifest, and the object is being, because only being has *per se* the form of object.

This object *per se* manifest is twofold: the absolute, most real object and the ideal object. The former is God and contains all that is knowable; the latter is present to human beings and is pure objective form; the only real it contains is contained virtually.

Truth therefore divides into two: truth that is God, absolute object *per se* manifest, and truth in which the human mind naturally participates by intuition. The latter is something of the first, but not the first, which, as I said, is necessarily absolute.

1018. Absolute, divine truth is *everything knowable* because God embraces everything in himself including all finite things, as we have seen. In so far as these are in him, they also are truth because known *per se*, object *per se*; they are *the divine ideas* of finite things.

These divine ideas are totally perfect and differ totally from human ideas of finite things. In so far as they are virtually and indistinct in the Word, they are the Word which is not a real subject distinguished in any way whatsoever. But in so far as the free intellect of God mentally distinguishes these ideas, one is not the other. Each idea, as an object knowable *per se*, is indeed *truth* but not *the whole truth*. None of them therefore is the

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subsistent essence of truth; each is the essence of truth by abstraction from the subsistence proper to truth and by limitation to the ens which each represents.

This is the first limitation of *truth* made by the mind creating the world.

If the divine ideas are taken all together in their connection, we have the one sole *Exemplar* of the world.

This Exemplar of the world in God is essentially truth, but not subsistent Truth. It exists virtually and eminently in this subsistent Truth, that is, in the divine Word.

The Exemplar therefore is not subsistent, infinite *first Truth*, but *second truth* whose essence is identically in the first which is total, infinite Truth.

If we consider the parts or ideas with which the divine Exemplar is organated, we see in each part by abstraction the essence of truth but an essence greatly limited by the mind: the greater part is a *greater truth*, the smaller a *minor truth* because it has in itself more finite reality enclosed in objective being.

If we then consider the *relative existence in se* of created entia and refer the exemplar to them, the divine *Exemplar* is called the *Truth of the world* and each idea or part of this exemplar is the *Truth of those entia* which correspond to the idea or part.

Vice versa, if we refer the world to this exemplar, the world is said to be 'true'. 'True' expresses the exact correspondence between the relative existence *in se* of the world and the world Exemplar in God, which is its truth.

If we refer one ens or many entia or entities to the ideas of the Exemplar to which they correspond, a simple or composite ens is said to be 'true', which indicates the relationship of exact correspondence between the ens and its truth.

1019. This kind of truth was called the metaphysical truth of entia.

The perfect correspondence between the relative, subjective existence of finite entia and the eternal Exemplar is necessary, because the Exemplar is the cause and explanation of their subsistence or existence in themselves. Therefore metaphysical truth cannot be lacking to any of the things that are: they are all necessarily *true*, although they are not truth nor their own truth, just as they are not their own being.

For the same reason *finite entia* are correctly said to possess

metaphysical truth, that is, *are true* in the measure that they possess reality and therefore being. The degree of shared truth is perfectly proportionate to the degree of being.

World entia, in their relative, subjective existence, are not truth but are *true* in so far as they are, because in so far as they are, they necessarily correspond to the Exemplar, their cause, which is their *Truth* manifest *per se*. If we wondered what would be the concept of the *maximum* correspondence between the manifesting Exemplar and manifested relative entia, it would clearly be when that which *manifests* had become *identical* with that which *is manifested*. And this is precisely what happens in God: that which *manifests* is the same identical Being as that which *is manifested*; God is Being which manifests itself to itself. Hence, Truth in God is not a relationship between two diverse things but a relationship which the same thing has with itself. It is most absolute, ultimate truth: everything is in being as manifesting, and everything is in manifested being.¹²⁸

1020. But I need to make another observation. The relative, subjective world, considered as one and in all its duration, has a perfect correspondence to the eternal Exemplar formed by the divine mind; it is therefore *true*. In its organic unity, it is certainly a *supremely good* finite entity because the work of a supremely good infinite entity. But there are many physical, intellectual and moral defects in its parts. Defective finite things also have their correspondence in the eternal Exemplar, which is the cause of all finite entia. If we want to know therefore how much metaphysical truth is possessed by an individual ens of the world at a given moment of its relative existence, clearly this amount must be determined by comparing it with its *archetype* (*NE*, 2: 649–651). If none of the entia of the world fully realises its archetype, this archetype will not be found in the exemplar, but if any of such entia does realise its archetype, this archetype will also be in the exemplar, and with it will be the other full and fullest species which serve as type for the defective entia we see realised in the world. Thus, not everything in the eternal

¹²⁸ JESUS Christ says: 'I am the truth' precisely because, as Word of God, he has the condition of 'manifest and manifesting Being'. When he speaks about the Father, he calls him *True* under the relationship of *Being manifested* by his consubstantial Word: 'He who sent me is TRUE (ἀληθινός)*' (Jn 8: 28).

Exemplar can be called the metaphysical Truth of the individual entia of the world.

To solve this difficulty we must note that all imperfect full species are simply archetype species from which something has been removed (*NE*, 2: 648–652); they are *modes* of the one sole archetype species, not truly different species. All the archetype species are therefore contained in the eternal Exemplar, and from them the Creator realises all the real individuals, while imposing on this realisation the limit required by the greatest good of the whole and by the economy of his wisdom. Furthermore, we cannot doubt that the archetype must also be realised in some or many of the individuals realised by the Creator; this seems to conform to the excellence of the maker. Indeed whenever an abstract species admits many archetypes, in my opinion all these are found realised in the world. I believe this to be the case in the human species: Adam, Eve, JESUS and Mary are realised archetypes. Many others perhaps could also, in their final state, have this dignity.¹²⁹

We see from this consideration that the metaphysical truth of individual, finite entia is twofold:

1. One truth depends on their greater correspondence to one archetype than to another. This is the amount of truth possessed by the archetypes when compared with each other: one archetype can have more objective reality than another. Also, a finite ens is more a *true ens* the more it corresponds, in its subjective existence, to a greater archetype, because it will possess more reality and being.

2. The other truth depends on the extent to which an ens realises its own archetype. If it realised it totally, it [would be] more *that ens* than if it realised it with defects and in a damaged state, in which case it would correspond to *imperfect, full species*. Consequently, its metaphysical truth is proportionate to whatever amount the *full species* retains of the truth of the archetype.

¹²⁹ I think it probable that all the saints in heaven are realised archetypes of the final state (*TCY*, 617–641), that Adam and Eve were realised archetypes of the first state, that is, at the moment of their creation, and that JESUS Christ and the Virgin Mary are realised archetypes at the beginning of their human existence, throughout their lives and in their final, eternal state.

What I have said about individual entia also applies to groups of entia. If every group is such that it has an organism, it has its *archetype* that virtually contains all possible *imperfect full species*. If the group includes all entia for every moment of and throughout their existence, and includes them with all their reciprocal actions and relationships, the group is the world, and its archetype is certainly the eternal Exemplar.

1021. Summing up, 'truth is the object known *per se*'. Truth therefore is:

1. The absolute Object, Word of God, subsistent, infinite first Truth.
2. The archetypes of finite entia, whether archetypes of an organism of entia (the greatest of these archetypes is the Exemplar), or of individual entia. These divine *ideas* are finite, second truths, which do not exist *in se* but in the divine mind.
3. The imperfect types virtually contained in the archetypes, whether imperfect types of organisms or of individual entia. These are third truths, of second limitation.

Finite real things existing in themselves are true in so far as they correspond to the *truth*. But because there are three *truths*, they are called true in three ways, in the sense of metaphysical truth. They are *true* because:

1. in so far as they correspond to the first truth of the Word, they participate in the first truth;
2. in so far as they correspond to the truth of the archetypes, they participate in the second truth; and
3. in so far as they correspond to the truth of the imperfect types, they participate in the third truth.

But how can finite entia correspond to the first truth if correspondence to the truth means realising it in themselves? Nature cannot do this, because the Word, which is neither type nor archetype of finite things, cannot be realised in such things — the Word is already real, and also infinite. But the mystery of Christianity consists in what is impossible for nature and never attained by reason, a mystery in which supernatural reason and light abide. This subsistent truth, with which finite ens does not naturally communicate, constitutes the *supernatural order*. Through this order we become *true* with the truth of the Word communicating and uniting itself to us. This is the truth that the

Gospel speaks about when it says that Christ was 'full of grace and TRUTH'.¹³⁰ He was a human being hypostatically united to the Word, that is, to the subsistent Word. The Gospel also says that 'from his fullness we have all received',¹³¹ that is, he has made us 'participants of his divine nature'.¹³² Through Moses, only the law was given, but 'grace and TRUTH CAME THROUGH JESUS CHRIST'.¹³³ The statement that Truth made itself human is similar to 'and the Word WAS MADE flesh'.¹³⁴ The expressions, 'the Word was made' and 'the Truth was made', both indicate that the Word is this subsistent Truth which has appeared in man, first through a hypostatic union, then through the union called *spiritual generation*. Philosophy however cannot explain how the intellectual finite ens can be *true* with this infinite, absolute Truth. I will therefore discuss the other two ways in which finite ens is called *true*.

Everything pertaining to world entities is *true* at every moment, because it realises a type and therefore a truth, whether it realises a perfect type or archetype, or realises an imperfect type, which is a deficient mode of an archetype. But it is *true* in diverse degrees.

The real ens we are discussing is true in proportion to the degree of finite reality (and therefore, of objective being) that the archetype to which the type of ens refers has *in se*. I call this: 'amount of entic truth'.

The realised type of a finite ens is true in proportion to the amount the type has of its archetype. I call this: 'amount of teletic truth'.

1022. I have distinguished between *truth* and *true thing*, that is, between the object which is truth and the subject with is the true thing. I will continue by considering the nature of these two supreme forms of being.

The object *per se*, that is, *truth*, is always in a mind. But in a mind it can exist either in itself or only in the mind. As I said, the

¹³⁰ Jn 1: 14.

¹³¹ *Ibid.*, 16.

¹³² 2 Pet 1: 4.

¹³³ Jn 1: 17.

¹³⁴ *Ibid.*, 14.

first, essential, infinite Truth exists in the divine Mind, but exists there *in se* because it is subsistent, personal Truth and also God. On the other hand, the Exemplar of the World does not exist *in se* in the divine Mind because its subsistence is solely that of the divine mind itself that produces it with a free act.

In the human mind subsistent Truth exists solely through grace, and even here this Truth, which is God, does not fuse its nature with our human nature. However, something of the Exemplar, that is, something of subsistent Truth, is communicated to the nature of the human mind, but not the subsistence of this Truth.¹³⁵ This something of the Exemplar is, as I said, *undetermined being*, which is also truth because it is an object known *per se*. But this truth is not ourselves, although it is present to us. Hence in this communication the *intellection*, which is the act through which we intuit truth, remains distinct from intuited truth itself. It is not incorrect therefore to call undetermined being a ray of eternal truth visible to us human beings.

The *true thing* in God is subjective being, which is the Mind, and the Mind in act. The being of God *est ipsum suum intelligere* [is his own understanding], as St. Thomas says.¹³⁶ Divine intellection is therefore the same as the Mind of God, the Mind is the same as the divine essence in subjective form, and the divine essence in subjective form is divine being. Hence divine being is the *true thing*. But all things, including finite things that God creates, are contained in divine being. All things therefore are *true* in God. Hence, God, in so far as considered, and is, Intellection, is essentially *what is true*, and in so far as considered and is *per se* understood, is essentially the Truth. These are the only two terms in God.

1023. But in the order of finite entia, as existing in themselves, none of them is *truth* or even a *true thing per se*. This does not mean that finite entia existing in themselves are not true — if they were not true they would not exist; nothing exists if its existence is not *true*. They are *true*, and God had to make them *true* for them to exist. However they are not true *per se* and

¹³⁵ St. Thomas says that 'every intellect participates in light by which it judges accurately about a matter, and which has been modelled on uncreated light'* (*In I Sent.*, d. 19, q. 5, art. 2).

¹³⁶ *S.T.*, I, q. 16, art. 5.

therefore do not exist *per se*. Nevertheless, because they can be made true by God, they can be created by God. But nothing can be true except through participation in truth. God therefore had to make them participate in *truth*. Truth is what is known through itself. Hence, if finite entia, in their relative existence, cannot be truth, that is, cannot be known through themselves, they must at least *have* truth and through it become known in themselves. They become known in themselves when they become known to themselves — the very word, 'THEMSELVES', has the sense of a personal pronoun which includes intelligence. This constitutes the *relative existence* of finite entia; their existence depends on it, depends on truth relative to themselves. If this were not the case, they would have only objective existence in God and in him objective truth, not relative to them.

The communication of *truth* to finite entia by means of intuition renders them intellectual. Intellectual entia are the first and anterior genus of finite entia, to which the other non-intellectual entia relate. By the intuition of truth therefore, finite, intellectual entia intellectually feel themselves in truth. Thus, they are *true* in their own subjective existence because this feeling of intuited truth, which constitutes them, is something known in and through intuited truth. Their intuition of truth, that is, of undetermined being known *per se*, enables them to apply truth to their own feeling. In this way they comprehend themselves as both intellectual entia and rational, feeling entia. They can also apply truth to the other real things that enter their feeling as agents. They comprehend them either as intellectual or non-intellectual entia different from themselves. In this way, they acquire consciousness of themselves and also ideas of different finite entia, as shown by ideology. At the same time, by affirming these entia, they can be persuaded of their subsistence.

The ideas of finite entia which the human mind acquires by apprehending its own feelings in *ideal being*, which is truth, enrich this ideal being with determinations and is a greater revelation of *objective being*. These ideas of finite entia may be imperfect but they increase the *truth* present to us. They do this as matter not as form because *objective being* acquires some relative reality in itself, and this reality also is truth because, present in objective being, it is known *per se*. With this increase of

ideas of finite entia there is an increase in the real amount of *truth* united to us through intuition, that is, the number of *truths* increases.¹³⁷

1024. Although human intuition has truth directly as its object (within the limits just discussed), it is not *truth*. But because truth is its direct object, intuition is *essentially truthful* — ‘truthful’ means ‘to have truth or true things as object’. Human intuition, having truth as its proper object, either does not exist or, if it exists, is necessarily truthful. This is the ontological reason why intuition can never be mistaken (*NE*, 3: 1065–1112; *Logica*, 66 fn., 115, 192, 1047–1055).

Similarly, direct perceptions are *truthful*, not because they have *truth* as their proper object but because *true things* are their proper object (*NE*, 3: 1248, 1257; *Logica*, 895, 913). ‘True things’ means ‘things existing in truth’. *Finite entia* have a double existence in truth: an *absolute* existence in the divine mind, that is, in the actuating Exemplar, which is Truth, and an existence *relative* to finite intelligences, that is, in the ideas of these intelligences, and these ideas are truth although limited truth. Finite entia always have the first existence actually. This means that they are always true in so far as they exist, because to be true in this way, that is, to be always in the exemplar truth, is the same as to exist. But in the case of the truth which they have relative to finite intelligence, and limiting the discussion to human intelligence, which is the only intelligence we know through experience, they always have this truth *potentially* (I am speaking about a potency *to have* relative to the mind, not about any other potency) but do not always have it actually because human intelligences do not always have their ideas, which are their truth. Nevertheless finite entia, having truth always potentially and relative to human intelligence, can never be *false*; they can only be not known. As a result, we always suppose that what is true exists prior to and independent of our knowledge. Before we know things, and in so far as they are, they are *true* with the

¹³⁷ It is often said that ‘truth is one’. This proposition is true in three senses when it refers to 1. subsistent Truth, 2. formal truth, that is, the *objective form* which constitutes truth, and 3. a proposition, because every proposition is either true or false. If a proposition is true, all contrary propositions are false. But truths under different aspects are many and of varying degree, as we can see from [what has been said].

absolute truth they have in the creating mind. They are therefore *true* also potentially with the truth relative to our ideas.¹³⁸

From this we draw the consequence that what is false does not exist in any existing thing; all things are either true or are not. Truth accompanies being everywhere because truth is 'what is known *per se*', which is precisely the characteristic, indeed one of the supreme, necessary forms, of being. Hence, St. Augustine's excellent definition: 'Truth is that which reveals what is.'¹³⁹

1025. What then is *falsehood*? Or do we deny it totally, as Malebranche did?¹⁴⁰ This is one of those questions whose difficulty lies mostly in the use of ambiguous and equivocal language.

Everything that is, in so far as it is, is certainly true. But 'true' must be distinguished from 'truthful'. What exists in what is known *per se* is true, and what is known *per se* is object of the mind. To be true therefore means to exist in the mind's object known *per se*. To be in the object known *per se* of the divine Mind is the same as existing. To exist and to be true therefore is the same, relative to the divine mind. To exist in the object known *per se* of the human mind is also to be true. But finite entia exist only virtually in the object known *per se* of the human mind. They cannot exist *actually* in this object and thus become *actually* true relative to us without the intervention of some operations of our mind.

When we carry out these operations through which entia and entities appear to us in the object known *per se* of our mind, we sometimes perform operations which make the potential truth of finite entia become actual truth. At other times, however, we do not perform these operations; instead, we do others, while thinking we are doing exactly the first operations. The first operations are called *truthful* because their object is truth, which for us becomes actual from potential; the second are called *erroneous*, and their object is *falsehood*.

What are *truthful* and *erroneous* operations of the human mind?

¹³⁸ Cf. Baldinotti, *Metaph. G.*, n. 591.

¹³⁹ De Vera Religione, 36.

¹⁴⁰ *Rech.*, 6: 5.

To include what has been said above in the reply, truthful operations are simple *intuitions* whose object is *truth*, that is, individual ideas. They are also *perceptions* whose terms are the things felt in ideal being, that is, *true things*.

But in addition to these truthful operations, there are *judgments of reflection*, which are sometimes truthful and sometimes erroneous. Such judgments can have as their term either the relationship between ideas or the application of ideas to known things. The relationship between ideas is contained in the nature of the ideas involved in the relationship; it is an idea that contains other ideas, the extremes of the relationship. But if instead of pronouncing the relationship between the ideas, our judgment pronounces another relationship pertaining to other ideas, it is not dealing with the relationship it wishes to deal with. Such a judgment is therefore erroneous because it does not actuate the potential truth. This *relationship* that the judgment attributes to the ideas present to it is called 'false' not because the relationship is in itself false but because attributed to ideas to which it does not pertain; one relationship is exchanged for another. The same absurdity, hidden in a notion of the mind, is found in the union of two ideas that are taken to have a relationship of congruency, when in fact they have a relationship of contradiction (*Logica*, 116–118, 422, 508). This error is in the *connection* of the ideas, which the mind asserts but which they do not have. This *asserted connection* is not seen in the ideas themselves, in the *truth*; it is a pretence, or a creature of our mind. This is *falsehood*. *Falsehood* therefore is not nothing but 'is the term of the *erroneous* operation of the mind'.

1026. The *asserted or affirmed connection of ideas* differs from their *intuited connection*. The intuition of the connection is the truth actually present to the mind, and because truth can be or not be actually present, the intuition either exists or does not exist. If it exists, truth is in the intuition; if it does not exist, truth is not actually present, and neither is *error*, only *ignorance*. Hence, if the only operation in any intelligence were intuition, there could be *ignorance* relative to objects not included in the intuition, but there could not be *error*. But in human beings there is another operation that tends to truth: *judgment*. Judgment is an operation by which we do not intuit the connection between ideas but *assert* that we intuit the connection. To assert

the connection is not therefore to intuit it. Assertion is not an operation whose proper, direct object is truth in itself but whose direct purpose is to place ourselves in a certain state relative to truth, a state called persuasion. We can accommodate ourselves in a right or wrong way to the truth; we can adapt or not adapt to it, or pretend to adapt to it. We adapt to it when we assert and profess the truth presented to us by intuition. We pretend to adapt to it when, instead of asserting and professing the truth presented by intuition, we assert and profess a *fiction* of the truth, which we substitute for the truth. In the order of ideas this *fiction* is a *connection* between two given ideas, but the connection does not exist except *as an idea* on its own and as such is truth. Hence in the order of ideas fiction is the power we have to assert or profess a connection between two given ideas that does not exist; it is a power to deny the *order* of truth and feign another which the truth does not have. This order, precisely because feigned by the human faculty of reflective judgment, does not exist in truth but in the act of the person pronouncing the judgment. The person is a real thing, and a real thing is not *per se* truth nor *per se* *truthful*, that is, does not have truth or true things as its necessary object. *Falsehood* or *error*, when present in the person judging and certainly not in the truth, is, *in so far as false* or erroneous, a modification of the judging subject; as I said, the proximate effect of a judgment is always a modification of the subject, that is, 'an adaptation of the subject in relationship to truth'. If the effect therefore is an adaptation of the subject, a reflective judgment never produces a new object, a new idea (*Lezioni filos.*, 19–52). I maintain that what is false or erroneous is not an object *in so far as it is false*, because, as we saw in the order of ideas, error or what is false is composed of three ideas: predicate, subject and connection or copula. All these three ideas, considered entirely on their own, are *objects*, and as such there is nothing false in them. Falsehood therefore lies 'in the connection, in so far as the judgment's operation attributes this connection to those ideas to which it is not appropriate'. *Attribution* of the connection is not a new object but a subjective operation; the two ideas are not in themselves connected but are connected by the *subjective operation*. Error therefore has the nature of subject, not object. It is taken for an object of the mind because the subjective element is

always united with the object, that is, with the three above-mentioned ideas. Clearly then, error or falsehood standing before the mind involves both the object and the subject. In so far as involving the object it is not error, but error in so far as it involves the subject and lacks the object. Thus, when error appears before the mind as an object, it is called a *fiction*, where 'fiction means precisely something that the subject has put of its own into the object to which it does [not] pertain'.

Such then is the nature of error, an essentially subjective nature. But because everything that has a subjective nature can be objectivised, the subjective nature of error also can be objectivised. It thus becomes an object of thought in another mode. The objectivisation itself contains no error, so that when error has become an object, which itself is truth, error is, as object, true. Hence, we correctly speak about 'a true error'. However, the objectivisation does not change the nature of what is objectivised; it simply makes it known. 'A true error' therefore does not mean that error has changed its nature of error and become truth but that error is truly known as 'error', that is, is known for what it first was.

1027. So far I have been speaking about error that can be produced by reflective judgment in the connection of ideas. But the same teaching applies to judgments made by the intelligent subject about real entities: the erroneous, false element is always an act and modification of the subject to which no object corresponds.

Malebranche and others who have said that error is *nothingness* have considered only one of the constitutives of error: the absence of the object. They paid no attention to the other constitutive which is something of the subject. This something is the assertive operation and the consequent deteriorative modification of the subject. But in this operation and the deteriorative modification there is certainly something negative in which consists the wrong we call error: indeed, there is the lack of the *order* that the intelligent subject must have relative to truth, and this lack is disorder. But this disorder, inherent in the assertive operation and although something negative, cannot be conceived or exist without that *operation*, which is something positive. We have therefore a negative in a positive, and the nature of the positive would require that order is not

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lacking. This is called *privation*, not simply negation. Such then is the nature of error.

As a consequence of this teaching, we see that falsehood or error is necessarily joined to some truth or to something true, and that pure falsehood, pure error cannot exist. This is the basis of the *eclectic method*, which is good provided it is not made exclusive and has as its guide the love of truth (*IP*, 45,).

The judgment's operation is therefore truthful when it affirms the *truth*, when it affirms what is *per se* object or what is and is seen in the truth, that is, what is *true*. It is erroneous when it affirms in the object what is not in the object. The error lies not in the object but in the affirmation, which is a subjective operation.

If what is affirmed is in the object, it is *true*. If it is not in the object but is purely an affirmed connection, not an objective connection, it is *false*; in other words, it is not true, it lacks the object.

'True' and 'false' are used for propositions according to the meaning of the propositions. If propositions express a true judgment, they are called true; if a false judgment, they are called false.

1028. A *lie* is a particular class of false propositions. We say that a person lies when he says the opposite of what he thinks. But how can this be classed as a false proposition, because whenever we assert the opposite of what we think, we can be stating a true proposition although still telling a lie, as would happen when what we thought were not true. Reflection demonstrates that a *proposition* we pronounce when talking with someone can express two different objects; it can therefore be true or false in two ways. One object is what is said independently of the opinion of the person speaking. The other object is the opinion or knowledge of the speaker. If the proposition is considered independently of the thought of the person pronouncing it, that is, if it is considered in itself and either expresses or does not express the first object, it is simply called *true* or *false*. If it is considered as expressing the thought of the person stating it, which is the second object, it is called *truthful* or *lying*, whether it is in itself true or false. How then are *truthful* and *lying* propositions only a particular class of *true* or *false* propositions? To understand this, we must reduce the lying

proposition to its explicit form: 'I believe or know that the thing is such and such.' This form shows that the object expressed by the proposition is 'what the speaker believes or knows'. Hence, if the proposition does not express what the speaker believes or knows, it does not express its object, it is therefore false. But in most cases the words, 'I believe or know' are taken for granted by the speaker, who simply says: 'The thing is such and such.' This form gives the impression that the proposition is asserting 'the object in itself' and not 'what the speaker believes or thinks'. But this second expression is always the direct object of propositions called *truthful* or *lying*, precisely because they either faithfully express or do not express their object.

1029. Summing up what we have said about this supreme relationship between the objective and subjective forms of being, the following distinctions must be noted — without them the teaching becomes complex and confusing:

1. *Truth* means every object known *per se*.
2. It differs from what is *true* which means what is and is intuited in the object known *per se*, that is, in truth.
3. Different again are error and *falsehood* which mean the effect of an operation of the intelligent subject. This operation does not have its own object but unites objects by means of a union they do not have. This union is in the subject as one of its dispositions and modifications relative to the objects.

What is false and what is true are also attributed to the words and other signs which express such statements, that is, to *propositions*. True propositions express truth or what is true; false propositions express what is false.

The falsehood and truthfulness of propositions which express what is in the thought of the speaker as their direct object are called *lying* or *truthful*.

4. And still further different is the meaning of *veracious* and *fallacious*. They indicate the operations of the intelligent subject in so far as these operations terminate in the truth and in what is true, or in what is false. The operations are *reflective judgment* and the *speech* that expresses this judgment by sensible signs.

Article 5

Goodness

1030. *Essence* is a concept that expresses the relationship between the *real form* and the *objective form*. It is what is contained in, and in so far as contained in, the objective form.

Truth is a concept that expresses the relationship between the *objective form* and the real form. It is 'everything that is object *per se* and in so far as object *per se*'. But nothing could be object *per se* if there were nothing real, at least virtually; objectivity supposes real being, of which it is the objectivity.

The foundation of the relationship called *essence* is therefore the real form, and the term is the objective form. The foundation of the relationship called *truth* is the objective form, and the term is the real form. But when truth is considered as a relationship on its own and not simply as the term of the relationship, a dialectical subject is taken as its principle, that is, the object itself is considered as subject of the relationship. This requires very careful attention.

The first two forms of being, compared and mutually opposed, present these two supreme relationships to the mind.

If these two forms are considered in their union, the third form of being appears, the moral form, which gives the mind a third abstract relationship, *goodness*.

I first considered *essence* and *truth* in infinite *Ens* and then in finite *ens*. I must do the same with *goodness*. This is required by the principle that 'we cannot have full knowledge of any thing if the thing is not considered where it is *in se*, fully subsistent, and from where it subsequently issues and communicates itself.' Just as *essence* and *truth* are and subsist first in absolute Being, in which relative *ens* participates, in the same way *Goodness* is and subsists first in absolute Being.

§1. *Goodness in infinite Ens*

1031. We must first note that *essence* in absolute being and fully determined by its very infinity is naturally a real, living and intelligent subject. This subject, by dint of the natural,

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eternal act of intelligence, which this subject is, affirms itself and thus makes itself understood *object*; I mean it is understood *object* in which the real, living and intelligent subject consequently resides as contained. In the language of supernatural theology, this is called 'generation of the Word'.

If we take the abstract concept of an intellective ens and apply to it the rule of the *ideal* (*Logica*, 993), we can think an intellective ens which can know itself in such a way that all its nature present in its own reality is in this known thing, because if it lacked anything, the intellective act could still be conceived more perfect. But if the intellective, knowing act, affirming itself, is such that the known self is identical to the knower, we cannot go any further or conceive or attain a more perfect intellective act. But the act of absolute Being must, through intelligent essence, be totally perfect. Therefore it must communicate (and must have always communicated) its own nature to its own object, that is, to itself known and affirmed, with the exception of the relationship of affirming and affirmed. By using this deontological but very effective argument, the most perceptive theologians were able to demonstrate rationally the generation of the Word announced by divine revelation.¹⁴¹

The main reason for our not understanding this mystery is that everything we perceive in the natural order is reduced to finite entia. Such entia are not knowable through themselves but through something else, that is, being. As a result, the intellective form with which we know them differs from the known entia themselves, whose subsistence is not an object of intuition but purely a term of affirmation. This is the case when we think about our own intellect: it also is a real thing but is not being, known through itself. Moreover, our intellect is not the whole of our nature,¹⁴² whereas the divine intellect is the divine

¹⁴¹ In many places St. Thomas uses this kind of argument, for example: 'Our word differs from the essence of the intellect. — The divine intellect however, which in the PERFECT ACT OF INTELLECTUALITY CONFORMS TO ITS ESSENCE, cannot receive any intelligible form which is not its essence. Hence its Word is of one essence with it and is the divine nature of its intellectuality. Thus the communication made in an intelligible way is also through nature, and therefore CAN BE CALLED GENERATION' (De Potentia, q. 2, art. 1).

¹⁴² St. Thomas again wisely says: 'Because our intellect is, according to its essence, is not IN THE PERFECT ACT OF INTELLECTUALITY, and human intellect is

nature itself, which is being, intelligible *per se* and apprehending everything. Hence, the act of the divine intellect, understanding itself, does not need another form to understand itself, but it itself is directly its own intelligible, its own understood and its own affirmed, and this understood is everything that it is, intelligent and subsistent. In other words, the understood is the divine nature itself in all its completeness and simplicity, subsisting as understood and affirmed, and therefore in another mode, that is, with another relationship.¹⁴³

1032. Subsistent Being, as most real, is also a maximum feeling. I have shown elsewhere that the essence of life consists in feeling (*AMS*, 45, definition 7) and that this essence is an essence of pleasure, so that pain is simply life's or feeling's fight against the causes which strive to terminate feeling.

If we continue to apply the rule of the ideal to feeling and conceive this feeling in its greatest possible perfection, we will have the concept of *beatitude*. Absolute Being is therefore Beatitude and first, infinite and subsistent Life. The abstract concepts of beatitude and life are ontologically posterior to Beatitude and subsistent Life. Indeed, all undetermined entities, for example pure ideas, are ontologically posterior to maximum subsistent things, although ideologically, that is, relative to the human mind, any of them can be antecedent, as in fact the idea of undetermined being is.

We must note however how we can conceive this Life or subsistent Beatitude of Being. Being that understands and Being that is understood are necessarily co-eval, that is, co-eternal: what understands supposes what is understood, and what is understood supposes what understands. These two forms of Being, the real and the objective, can never be abandoned, so that when an infinite, real subject is conceived as feeling, which is fittingly called 'Life' and 'subsistent Beatitude', this subject

not the same as human nature, the word used above' (human), 'although in the intellect to which in some way it conforms, is not therefore the same as the essence of the intellect, but its expressed likeness. Nor again is human nature communicated in the conception of this intelligible form, such that it can be properly called generation which involves the communication of nature'* (*De Potentia*, q. 11, a. 1).

¹⁴³ 'The same nature is in the Father and the Son but IN ANOTHER MODE OF EXISTENCE or with another relationship'* (*De Potentia*, q. 11, a. 1, ad 13).

can be conceived only as understanding itself. In fact, Life that was not intellective would be imperfect, and if there were no maximum delight, which is the delight of contemplating one's own good, the concept of Beatitude would perish (this concept means a delight that is infinite in every respect). The intelligent subject therefore is Life and Beatitude and this act of Life and Beatitude is the same intellective act with which it contemplates the beauty and perfection of its own nature. But because the intelligent subject, in so far as contemplated and affirmed, is its total self, this contemplated and affirmed is itself Life and Beatitude, just as much as is the contemplator and affirmer. Nevertheless, the contemplated and affirmed retains the relationship of contemplated and affirmed (called *Filiation* in the language of theology), a relationship which is undivided from its essence.¹⁴⁴

1032a. The fact that Being is both Life and Beatitude originates from the contemplation and affirmation which Being, as essentially real and intelligent, makes of itself. Consequently, it is contemplated and affirmed object-Being. Contemplating and affirming itself, it penetrates itself totally with this act and totally posits itself as contemplated and affirmed. The contemplating, affirming subject is therefore in this object, but in objective form, that is, as contemplated and affirmed.¹⁴⁵ Moreover, because this subject is thus Life and Beatitude, the contemplated, affirmed subject is also identical Life and identical Beatitude. To be Life and Beatitude however is an act of love, a most perfect, actual love; in other words it is a will in its final, most perfect actuality. Intelligent Being therefore loves itself infinitely as contemplated and affirmed. Contemplated, affirmed Being, on the other hand, with the same act of love, infinitely loves understanding, affirming Being contemplated and affirmed in itself. I say 'with the same act of love' because the loving

¹⁴⁴ St. Thomas says, 'The relationship does not really differ from the divine nature'* (*De Potentia*, q. 2, a. 1, ad 13). The fact that there is no true difference between the relationship and the nature reflects the principle I posited: in absolute Being, form identifies with Being.

¹⁴⁵ Hence it is called χαρακτὴρ τῆς ὑποστάσεως αὐτοῦ [mark of his hypostasis] (Heb 1: 3), which the Vulgate renders as: *Figura substantiae eius* [the figure of his substance]. Note: 'hypostasis' means a true, substantial, subsistent subject, not an *undetermined substance*. Hence, it was used to indicate person. The *persons* in God are distinguished solely through the relationships of origin.

subject is the same, except for the two forms of contemplating-affirming and contemplated-affirmed.

Although the understanding one and the understood one differ through relationships but have the same nature, neither can be conceived without the other; they are coexistent. Consequently, the loving being cannot be understood without supposing the beloved, nor can the beloved be understood without supposing the lover. Here again we see synthesisism: the three forms or modes of being are seen as coeternal in infinite Ens.

The understanding, affirming Being penetrates the whole of itself perfectly with its act of understanding and affirmation (an act which itself is being) and thus remains itself as understood and affirmed. In the same way, both affirming Being and affirmed Being, which have an identical, loving, subjective act, penetrate, with this act, all their own unique being, all of which is therefore loved. But the lover could not be in an infinite act if he were not totally loved, and he would not be totally loved if the loving subject were not, as loved, in the beloved. The beloved therefore itself must be a subject, the identical loving subject, but in another form or mode of being, that is, as loved. In the imperfect acts of love which occur in human experience, we see the lover's effort to transform himself into the beloved. The gentlest of poets wrote:

I know in what way
The lover transforms himself into the beloved.¹⁴⁶

He expresses a similar concept in another way:

Sometimes in the midst of sad laments
A doubt assails me, How can these limbs
live far from their spirit?
But Love replies: Do you not remember
That this is the privilege of lovers
Freed from all human qualities?¹⁴⁷

This kind of effort is proper to the nature of love, by which the lover tends to relinquish himself spiritually and separate himself from himself to become or identify himself with the

¹⁴⁶ Petrarch, *Trionf. di Am.*, c. 3.

¹⁴⁷ Petrarch, *Son.* 13.

beloved. In an infinite Being, in which love must be conceived as totally perfect, this effort can never be imperfect but always have obtained its full effect. Hence, the loving act must be intense but finalised and at rest in the end obtained. The lover must therefore have taken the form of beloved. If the lover is now the beloved, the subject must subsist as loved *per se*, which is the ultimate, conceivable actuality and perfect repose of being [App., no. 5].

Although there is an order in the procession of understood Being from understanding Being, and of beloved Being from the loving act of understanding Being and understood Being, and although we see a certain priority and posteriority according to abstractly logical reason,¹⁴⁸ there is truly no priority in the three forms, neither in effect nor according to ontological reason. This is due to the synthesism I indicated: a lover cannot be conceived to be in act without the coexistence of the beloved, just as the one who understands cannot be conceived in act without the coexistence of the one understood. Hence, the ontological reason is a logical reason, a complete, non-abstract, unilateral reason.

1033. Such then is subsistent Moral Being, constituted by an act of will that is simultaneously an act of the divine nature.¹⁴⁹ It

¹⁴⁸ St. Thomas acutely says: 'They are right who said that one procession is by way of nature and intellect, the other by way of will, in so far as a procession that is according to nature or intellect does not PREVIOUSLY REQUIRE another procession. However, procession by way of will PREVIOUSLY REQUIRES another procession: love of something cannot proceed from the will unless the conceived word of the thing has been previously understood to have proceeded from the understanding. Good as understood is the object of the will'* (*De Potentia*, q. 10, a. 2). I have called this necessity of the human mind to understand one procession before another 'priority of abstractly logical reason'. It arises from our imperfect way of conceiving processions, which we conceive as actions that are either being done or are not yet done. In fact they are truly and fully accomplished *ab aeterno*, that is, finalised, but finalised with an order which is simultaneously procession and synthesism.

¹⁴⁹ St. Thomas shows that 'nothing prevents something proceeding naturally from the will.'* Thus: 'The will naturally tends to the final end, just as any other potency naturally operates towards its object.'* He teaches that the Holy Spirit, no less than the Son, proceeds *naturaliter* [naturally], but the Son proceeds by *modum naturae* [by way of nature] and the Holy Spirit by *modum voluntatis* [by way of will]. The difference is this: procession by *modum naturae* does not necessarily suppose a previous procession. He

is the act that finishes and perfects divine nature that subsists identical in a triple mode, beyond which there is no other mode.

If we consider the properties of this final act, we find the following:

1. *Subjective Being* is perfectly commensurate with *objective Being*. The former tends into and affirms its total self in the latter, taking the form of object. Because this affirmation is most perfect, it is also a most perfect *appreciation*: the totality of a thing cannot be affirmed in all its perfection if its endowments are not affirmed. The most perfect affirmation is naturally an act of practical intelligence, because *practical intelligence* pertains to the intelligent subject, which unites itself to the known thing and the known thing to it. In the divine intellection and affirmation we are discussing, the intelligent subject makes itself object of its own intelligence. The result is that the union between the object and subject is maximum and absolute, because there is perfectly identified being.

We have seen that practical appreciation is the foundation and principle of all morality (*PE*, c. 5; *Storia comparativa*, c. 1). But here we have a perfect and most complete, practical appreciation, subsistent as a necessary, eternal act, the very nature of infinite being. Every other practical appreciation can be only a kind of imitation of this first appreciation.

2. I have said that the act of divine intelligence which tends into and affirms itself, and makes the subject perfectly commensurate with the object, is an act of practical appreciation. Note, however, our thought must not stop at the intellection and affirmation and thus fail to consider the final act of the will, which constitutes the third mode or form of being. If the intellection failed due to an ontologically impossible abstraction, the appreciation, because not willed, would not be moral. It must be seen as united to the willed act by which the subject loves itself as understood, that is, the object, so much that, with this most perfect, loving act, it

says: 'The will cannot tend to anything unless there is some pre-existing production of the intellect which has conceived something, because good understood moves the will. A procession from a natural agent does not presuppose another procession except accidentally, that is, in so far as the natural agent depends on another natural agent. But this does not pertain to the essence of nature as nature'* (*De Potentia*, q. 10, art. 2, ad 4 and 7).

pervades the whole object, that is, itself as object. Hence, just as the subject consists totally of truth through the act of affirmative, perfect intelligence, so through the loving act the subject in the object consists totally of love. This is the second property of moral being, that is, the effectual love of understood being.

We have in fact precisely seen that all morality, beginning with the appreciative act, continues in an efficacious, loving act.

The loving act is a willed act that in God does not follow upon the intellective act but is coexistent and contemporary with it. With the intellective act the subject-Being tends into and, as it tends, posits (that is, has always tended and always posited) itself as object. As a result, the loving act embraces within love the subject generating the Word. Hence the generation of the Word is loving and willed. It can therefore, by a kind of regression, be called willed and free, and acquire the notion of moral, practical appreciation. Consequently, we can justifiably say that the divine Word proceeds not *per modum voluntatis* [by way of will] but *voluntarie* [by free choice], just as we say that the Holy Spirit proceeds not *per modum naturae* [by way of nature] but *naturaliter* [naturally].

Thus, holiness is in the whole Trinity and in the procession of the persons. Hence, the angelic 'Trisagion'.

1034. Because the whole of divine nature is penetrated by consummate love so that the divine nature is an infinite act of love of its eternally subsistent self, charity must be the ultimate form of morality.

But this *essence* also has some relationships different from personal relationships.

The *charity* that pertains to the divine essence is, in so far as proceeding from the Father and the Son, the person of the Holy Spirit. But when considered in the Father, this same identical charity takes the form of *beneficence*: the Father gives all his nature to the other two persons, and all that is comes from him as from a principle. Hence in the Father we see first, infinite, absolute and universal *beneficence*. We have here therefore a characteristic proper to good: to be *diffusive* and *operative*.

In the Son, charity takes the *form of gratefulness* and gratitude. The Son is grateful for everything from the Father and refers everything to him in such a way that he acknowledges the

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spiration of the Holy Spirit as received from the Father and refers it to the Father. This gratefulness is the first, infinite, absolute gratefulness that can be conceived, and is another characteristic proper to good: to be *ordered, just, truthful*.

In the Holy Spirit essential charity takes the form of *union*. The union is between the infinite understanding subject and the infinite understood subject by means of infinite mutual pleasure, which is the loving union itself in the final act. The union is of the all with the all which is, as it were, doubled through understanding and tripled through love, without ceasing to be one sole, identical all. Beneficence and gratefulness terminate, repose and subsist, simplified and consummate, in this union as in their ultimate term. In the union there is not only moral, subsistent good but this moral good has become, as it were, eudaimonological good, with which it has become identified; it is virtue subsistent as Beatitude. Such *good* is good reduced to its ultimate ideal act, good *per se* most perfect, where 1. the desired object has a maximum perfection because it is infinite; 2. the desiring subject has a maximum *force* of desire because it is infinite, and 3. the union between the desirer and the desired is maximum because, by means of desire, being is identified with being (*PE*, 45). We have therefore other characteristics proper to good: good *unifies*, is *one* and *consoles*.

The three categories of the virtues that manifest themselves in any finite ens reduce to beneficence, gratefulness and the loving union between the one benefited and the one who is grateful. This is the ontological origin of all ethics. In each of the categories there is appreciation, love and operative efficacy, three indivisible properties of one most perfect moral act, which subsists in each of the three forms indicated above.

1035. If, instead of considering the immediate *properties* of a moral, holy nature, we look for other qualities obtainable through abstraction, we will find that moral essence must always have the following characteristics:

1. The principle and term of moral actuality is being, under diverse forms; this actuality unites being with being.
2. Because being is not *per se* divisible or multipliable (multiplication originates from the finite, real form, not from being) and embraces the all, the principle of morality is the all, and its term is the same all in a diverse form.

3. Because being is *per se* intelligent, the principle of morality is the intelligent; the term is also the intelligent in the form of understood.

4. Because being is life or infinite feeling, perfect morality is a kind of reduplication of infinite feeling. Beatitude consists in this vital feeling which perpetually enfolds itself in itself (cf. *Storia comparativa e critica de' sistemi morali*, c. 8).

The instinct therefore which induces God to be blessed, and the instinct which induces him to be holy is one identical instinct that induces him to be perfect, to be absolute. Essential holiness residing in the supreme Being is simply the most ordered act with which this Being continuously makes himself blessed, and is always accomplished *ab aeterno*. Hence, God is continuously and totally blessed and consequently most holy. Thus, holiness and effective beatitude in act in absolute Being do not differ, not even in concept. In the human being, however, holiness differs from beatitude in concept and effect, while beatitude differs from holiness in concept but not in effect.

The act therefore by which God makes himself blessed and is blessed, is the first, conceivable act. It contains *moral dignity*, in which all the moral acts of finite entia later participate in some way.

From what we have said we can also deduce that there is in divine holiness an order corresponding to the order of the divine persons, so that the holiness of the first form appears as an ultimate tendency towards *another* by way of beneficent communication; the holiness of the second form appears as an ultimate tendency again to *another* by way of return of the other to the first, and finally the holiness of the third form appears as a repose of one in the other and of the other in the one, each of which has found itself in the other. The order consists in the following: this very dynamic repose is conceived as posterior to and resulting from the first two infinite movements by which one, as if escaping from itself, hastens into the other, while the other, again as if escaping from itself, hastens into the first. The discovery that each makes of itself in the other comes after each has escaped from itself into its other. This is the order of divine holiness.

§2. Goodness in finite ens

1036. No finite thing is being; no finite thing is even its own being. But good is being, as we have seen. Therefore no finite thing is good itself; no finite thing is its own good.

Nevertheless, finite ens participates in being; if it did not, it would not exist, would not be ens. Hence, it participates in good in exactly the same way as it does in being, neither more nor less.

Only intelligent finite ens participates *per se* in being. Non-intelligent finite things participate in being only through the minds that give them being; they are relative entia and thus enjoy a participation in relative good. Hence, because we must now discuss goodness in finite ens, we must consider it in intelligent finite ens; only this ens participates *per se* in goodness and from this ens goodness filters down to non-intelligent finite things through the order of service that these give to intelligent finite ens.

Now, the only intelligent finite ens we naturally have experience of are human beings. We must therefore consider goodness in them (*PSY*, 1: (27)–(30); 12–23). Moreover, the knowledge we have of the goodness in which they share can also serve as a foundation for partly certain and partly conjectural deductions relative to other conceivable intelligent finite entia whose nature differs from ours. These deductions and conjectures pertain to cosmology.

1037. Like all finite entia, we are constituted by the real form, but this real form participates in being and in the three categorical forms. It participates in objective being by intuition but intuits this objective being imperfectly as virtual, as idea. It participates in subjective being because the divine mind pronounces this subjective being existing, which, through the idea, intuits, pronounces and affirms itself, affirms its feelings and the agents that change these, that is, external real things; it affirms its own intuition and affirmations, and gives itself *consciousness* that it exists and acts. Intuiting, it exists, and existing, it knows *being* in the idea, and *finite entia*. As a finite real subject, and because the real is a form of being, this form must essentially tend to its principle, being; if the form is separated from being, it

is nothing. This is the ontological origin of the *tendency* of every real thing towards being. This tendency in the intellectual ens, in which being is present without limits, is manifested as an intellectual tendency, a tendency that is borne towards unlimited being, that is, to being itself, which by nature receives no limits of any kind.

In us therefore (and the same must be said about every intellectual, real ens) there is a real, essential tendency to *being*. Because intellectual entia *live*, since to intuit being is to feel and to live (*Introduzione alla filosofia*, p. 414 ss.), this tendency is a vital feeling which is borne towards being. Hence, it is a *moral tendency* because it comes from being and goes to being; it comes from intuited being, which manifests essential lovability, and goes to real being, to which the finite real form (the finite intelligent subject) intensely aspires to unite itself. It is this same tendency that inclines us to happiness which, as we have seen, is really complete in complete holiness and ultimately identifies with holiness. Such is the origin of our human natural inclination to universal good. It is also called natural love, although nature gives it to us purely in the state of habit, as an initial inclination, without a determined object, which constitutes the will.

If the human being as subject is a pure real, and the moral tendency is towards being which is not the human being, everything moral in the human being must have the characteristic and property of a movement into another, of an abandonment and continual negation of self.

This moral movement, which always tends into another and makes us, as subjects, always abandon and constantly deny ourselves, can be reconciled with human happiness because the other into which the moral tendency propels and bears us is that from which we receive all we are and have. To tend ceaselessly into this other (after abandoning ourselves) is to tend into the source of ourselves, into the fount from which our reality, as it were, issues, a fount in which our reality finds its essence, its life, its intelligence, and the perfection of all these things, together with good and happiness. We must remember that the nature of a contingent ens lies in a continuous *receiving*; everything that the contingent ens is consists in this act of pure receiving, and to tend into being is simply to adapt ourselves to receive from being. This tendency is carried out by an

intellective and affective affirmation which results in adhesion and hence communication.

1038. Moral nature therefore, as shared in by human beings, begins with the form of *gratefulness* or gratitude; it comes from the form which, in God, we saw as appropriate to the second person, to the Word. Just as the Word, who receives everything *ab aeterno* from the Father, is eternally grateful for everything from him and glorifies him, so we, receiving everything from God, are grateful for everything we have temporally from him and glorify him for it. This is the first and the last form of human morality. Granted therefore that God had to appear among human beings as their exemplar, it was fitting that among the divine persons the Son assumed human nature, because strictly speaking the form of morality and holiness in which the human condition shares pertains to the condition of Son. Consequently, the God-Man, when among human beings, said: 'I do not seek my own glory but the glory of him who sent me.'¹⁵⁰ The morality and holiness of the created ens has therefore that categorical form which has its apex, its first, its eminent type and subsistence in the eternally begotten Son-Being.

In us, this moral form is *first, maximum container*, that is, it contains everything moral in us, including everything under the other two forms of beneficence and unification. In God however these two forms are also maximum containers and contain each other reciprocally. Hence, the whole of divine nature is equally holy in the three inseparable persons, but in God the first container, through the order of origin, is the form of beneficence and diffusion.

1039. The difference between the moral form in a human being and in the divine Son and proper to him is that the Son is Being itself, while a human being is not being but a finite real.

The Son is grateful to the Father for the divine nature he has been given. Human beings are grateful to God for their human nature and everything contained in it. Gratitude is not given without appreciation: a perfect appreciation of what is received is necessary for a perfect gratitude. Consequently, the Son cannot exercise his infinite gratitude to his Father unless he infinitely evaluates the infinite Being he has received. But he himself

¹⁵⁰ Jn 8: 50 [and 7: 18].

is the received infinite Being. He therefore infinitely evaluates himself, and without this infinite appreciation, he could not exercise infinite gratitude to the Father from whom he is. This infinite gratitude to the Father therefore involves the infinite appreciation of himself.

What will be our gratitude? We will be grateful to God for the whole of our nature and all the good, of whatever kind, it contains. But what about our appreciation? It will be divided, because the only thing absolutely appreciable is being. We will understand that being is infinitely appreciable, but the act of infinite appreciation can be only limitedly explicit and actuated in us. Hence, because we do not know explicit being totally but only in an implicit and virtual way of varying degree, our appreciation of being also will have an implicit and virtual infinity, and our explicit and actual appreciation will be limited. Therefore, due to our nature as a finite ens, we will feel ourselves infinitely deficient relative to absolute morality and holiness.

Moreover, we will see and feel that we are neither being nor absolute being nor ideal being nor even our own subjective being. Hence, because appreciation can refer only to being, our moral appreciation will not be an appreciation of ourselves as subjects but of something else. As I said, being is something else relative to us, and we are something else relative to being.

There are therefore two principal characteristics by which *moral appreciation* differs in the Son and in us:

1. The divine Son's appreciation of being is actually and explicitly infinite, whereas the sole appreciation possible for a finite, intellective ens is an appreciation that is only implicitly and virtually infinite. Also, the quantity [and] actuality, which are always limited, are infinitely deficient relative to the quantity and actuality of the Son.

2. The Son's appreciation terminates in himself, because it terminates in the Father from whom he receives the same being as in the Father. But we, with our moral appreciation, terminate in something else, that is, in Being, because we cannot find in ourselves alone as in a real subject anything appreciable — if we separate ourselves from what is not ourselves, we are nothing.

These two differences show us that if morality and holiness in

the eternal Son have the form of *gratitude*, in us they have the form of *gratitude* with *humility*, as our moral gratitude does not exist without the humility which has become one of its essential constitutives.

1040. But if we, as subjects and separate from what is not us, cease to exist and are not even possible, if in other words we are nothing, for what will we be *grateful* to absolute Being? Precisely for this: that, as we are *per se* nothing, and therefore not an object *per se* of appreciation, Being gives us something of itself so that we may be, and may live, and understand, and may love and perfect ourselves and make ourselves blessed. As real human beings therefore, united to something else, we are something without becoming the other thing, united with which we are something. What we are in virtue of this union does not come from ourselves, nor were we able to give it to ourselves or demand it, because we were not. Hence, we must be *grateful* for this union and for all that we are and have from it, from this *other thing*, that is, from the absolute Being, our creator, who continually gives us all these things. Consequently, we must not appreciate our own things but all that the other thing has; we must attribute all we have to the other thing because we are continuously from and of the other thing, and never from and of ourselves. A finite ens will therefore be grateful for receiving all that it is and has from the absolute Being and will give glory to this Being for what it has. But it will understand that all it has is not itself, and what it is would not be if it were not united to what it has and is not itself: if it were divided from this, it would fall into nothingness. On the other hand, the eternally begotten Son, however, will be grateful for receiving all that he is from his Father and will give him glory for it. But because at the same time he knows that all he receives is he himself and what he receives is everything that is in the Father, who is infinite being, and because he glorifies the Father with gratitude, he will glorify, with appreciation, himself in union with the Father [*App.*, no. 6].

1041. Another notable difference arises from the differences between moral essence considered in God and in us. God is simple; his infinite form is identical with being. We are twofold: we are finite form, that is, the real that is us, and existence, that is, actuating being, which is not us but another. As a result, the

will of the divine Being is determined to unity, it tends and directs itself only into itself, just as the divine, intellectual act is determined to unity, that is, to itself as the object which embraces everything. However, due to the duality in us, the human will is not determined to unity but can either direct itself into being, which is other than us, or stop at the finite form of being, which is us, a form existing through being but is not being. This is the first ontological explanation of the bilateral will that is in us but cannot be in God. But this is not all.

1042. The human will follows the first essential act of intelligence. This act is purely speculative and commands comparatively second acts that are practical. In God, there is no division between the speculative and the practical; the act is always practical and operative because intellect and will are not distinct powers (they are not even powers). There is a single, totally simple act, an act of being which, considered in its effects, corresponds entirely to the speculative and practical in human beings. In this divine intellectual, volitive act there is an act so essential that it is included in absolute Being with two effects (allowing for the inexactitude of the word). One effect corresponds to the act as intellectual, the other to the act as volitive; hence the two persons of the Word and Holy Spirit. But the creative act follows upon and continues the essential act. It is free in that its effects are not contained in absolute Being but follow from what is contained in the concept of this Being. This is an eminent freedom because the first cause is not forced by some other cause or necessity foreign to it to create, or to create one thing rather than another, nor is it forced by any need it may have for such external, relative effects, which do not form part of the *per se* totally perfect, divine nature. How morally appropriate it may be to create or not create, or to create this thing rather than something else is the concern of cosmology. But whatever cosmology may tell us, it is always true that 1. created entia add nothing to the divine nature, and 2. only his spontaneous goodness obliges God to create. In these two conditions consists the divine, totally perfect freedom of creation. Granted that God is moved to this act of creation, its first and only fundamental object is object-being together with what abstraction finds in this object-being (in the way I have described). Nor can the abstraction be separated from a most

true wisdom. Hence, it admits no falsehood or error of any kind. Furthermore, the act is practical because it is creative and because, in God, it is one act with the act of Being. This act of Being (whatever it is called or whatever distinction we make) is unique and always being.

On the other hand, our human intellectual act is not an act of being for the reason that we are not being. It is an act of what is finite and real, terminating in being and, in so far as terminating in being, producing nothing in its object, which is *per se*, and is given us. Hence the act is purely *speculative* and must be so; it is a vision, the vision of something else, and its real subject has its existence and actuality continuously from the union with this other thing. But because the union is not a union of identification, as it is in God, it has diverse levels. The first level is that which gives existence to the finite real. The finite real has no power either to give itself this first level of union or to remove it, although the union itself comes about through a passive act of the real, but a necessary, totally created act. The other levels of the union must be formed posteriorly by acts of the finite, real, existing subject. The human being exists therefore as a power that must develop and perfect itself by strengthening ever more its union with being through its intellectual, volitive acts. Here we see the appearance of intellect and *practical reason*. The latter does not produce the object as an *effect* but simply *unites itself* more perfectly to the object given it, that is, to being. The practical therefore in us is truly distinct from the speculative.

1043. Because acts of practical reason are not given us by nature and we have only the power for them (this power is certainly constituted by a first, practical act which is necessary), we must investigate how we are determined to produce them. The finite real is a finite feeling and, granted it exists, naturally tends to feel more than it can. This tendency to increase its feeling to the greatest degree differs from the tendency to being, although the two can be reconciled. Hence the duality in human nature brings with it two tendencies, both subjective. One originates from naturally intuited being, and tends to union with being; the other arises from the nature of the real subject, and tends to the increase of the subject, which is essentially feeling. These two tendencies can from time to time collide with each

other. It can happen, and does happen, that we cannot unite ourselves to being in the way being requires without our losing for a moment something of our real feeling, a fact I have explained in several places (*TCY*, 395–416). This is the origin of bilateral freedom (*AMS*, 579–611, 636–642). If the intellectual subject, which operates with free will, allows itself to be led by the sense tendency (this is the name I give to the tendency that impels the subject to increase its own feeling at every instant), the tendency can collide with the moral tendency. In this case, the subject is continuously in an agitated state because its moral tendency is not only not satisfied but resisted and opposed. The result is a stimulus to avoid this disturbed state. But how will the subject do this? The moral tendency that the subject opposes comes from the knowledge of being. If this knowledge is removed, the agitation and upset cease. The subject therefore uses its free activity to free itself from the knowledge of being that causes the upset, and does so in two ways: 1. by willed ignorance, and 2. by counterfeiting truth, that is, by error (*Logica*, 225 ss., 139–241). In this second action the subject affirms what is not, which is a negation of the order of being and therefore of being itself. Consequently the real, the form, is in conflict with being. As we have seen, being, considered in its absoluteness, has the nature ‘of intelligence that understands and affirms itself with infinite feeling, and infinitely loves its affirmed self’. The real, on the other hand, although receiving existence and intelligence from being, is not being but simply a feeling. However, we are supposing it is posited in an action contrary to the action possessed essentially by being, because being tends necessarily to acknowledge and love being, while the real uses its energy to negate the order of being, to not acknowledge it, and substitutes an order in the real contrary to the order of being. The real (the human subject), however, has being in fact so united to itself that without it the subject would not be, and hence there would not in any way be either feeling or energy. Consequently, there are simultaneously two opposed orders in anyone who, as real, places himself in an order different from that of being: there are 1. the order itself of being, which manifests itself in him with the tendency I have called moral and is a necessary order existing in human nature in so far as this nature participates in the union of being, and 2. the order

produced by him in himself by his free activity. Hence the struggle. If the struggle is considered in relationship to the order of being *in se* (objective being), it is *sin*; if considered in relationship to the order of being shared by the subject (subjective being), the struggle is *bitter remorse*, and the unhappiness of the sinner. *Sin* is absolute evil, because it is the struggle with objective, absolute good. *Bitter remorse* is a natural, proximate effect of absolute evil in the subject because it is the real struggle of the finite form against its own being, against the being in which it shares, through which it is.

1044. *Sin*, which is the struggle between the fictitious, subjective order and the objective order of being, can be considered in itself, by prescinding from a particular subject and considering purely the absolute dignity of being. Seen in this way, sin is by its nature infinite. It can also be considered in a subject that, in a finite way, participates in infinite being. In this case, sin is proportionate 1. to the degree that the subject naturally participates in being and its order; 2. to the degree to which the subject of the same nature, as it develops, comes to participate more or less explicitly in being and its order, and 3. the degree of real activity applied by the subject to separate itself from being and constitute a contrary order in its own reality. Differences in sin arise from these three causes. However sin has always the nature of an infinite evil because the infinite, even when shared in a finite mode, always retains its nature as infinite, which can never be absent from it. But the finite participates in the infinite, and the finite can be greater or less, just as all the actions and things which issue from the finite and relate to it can be greater or less.

1045. It seems that *bitter remorse* must be proportionate to sin. But several observations need to be made about the phenomena of this remorse.

Feelable, bitter remorse is the struggle between the *sense tendency*, misused by the will, and the *moral tendency*. These two tendencies are naturally in us in an initial, habitual state, and we evaluate and actuate them in varying degree in proportion to our favouring one or other. But this favouring and development of these tendencies can initially be carried out in three ways:

1. We can use, and in using, actuate and favour harmoniously the two tendencies.

2. With our free activity we can abandon the moral tendency, without educating or developing it in any way, and let our free actions be directed solely by the sense tendency.

3. On the other hand, we can let our actions be guided by the moral tendency, and neglect to educate the sense tendency.

Even if one of the two tendencies in us is never in fact developed, we can still imagine such an extreme case so as to have a theory for more simple cases from which alone we draw elements to evaluate composite cases.

In the first case above, the harmonious development of the two tendencies would produce in us a *moral conscience* and a *eudaimonological conscience*, one as alert as the other, depending on how much the two tendencies were used and the education they received. But granted that the harmony and order were preserved, the eudaimonological conscience would always have in its favour the consent of the moral conscience and could not cause any bitter remorse because there would be no sin. The sense tendency might suffer sharp pain but the other tendency would compensate through approval and a moral content.

In the second case, only the sense tendency dominates in the human being, and because the moral tendency has not developed at all, it is very weak. Consequently, there would be continual sin but no keen remorse. A distinction must therefore be made between two direct effects of sin in human nature: 1. the *intrinsic deterioration* of our nature as a moral nature, and 2. feelable *remorse*. The first is proportionate to the sin; the second proportionate to both the sin and the degree of actual strength of our moral conscience. This strength diminishes in the proportion that the *myself* immerses itself through feeling in material and egoistic objects (*AMS*, 739–744).

In the third case, the *myself* would be so exclusively united to being that the pleasures and pains of the material, egoistic order would be, as it were, alien to it, not because the pleasure and physical pain of the real form (both of which would diminish in intensity) would cease but because the personal actuality of the *myself* would always be concentrated on the object of the moral tendency, that is, on *being* and its order. Here, the moral conscience would be most sensible and delicate to every least moral disorder. Dante says of it:

[1045]

O conscience noble and pure,
How bitter your remorse for such a little fault!¹⁵¹

1046. These three cases are specifically distinct, while all others originate from the gradations distinguishable in each species and from the intermingling of the elements constituting the three cases.

For example, in the second case we have supposed a person who from the beginning has immersed his personal activity in his real, subjective *form*, letting himself be guided by only the sense tendency, and has withdrawn all his personal activity from the *object-being* of the moral tendency. As a result, moral conscience is left almost as nothing, and remorse almost non-existent. I do not know whether such a pure case as this has actually happened among human beings but because it can be conceived and is therefore possible. Its elements, however, can be (and usually are) intermingled with the elements of the other two cases: first with the elements particular to each and then with those common to both, successively. We have therefore four cases of *successive moral states* in the following order:

1. The transition from the first case to the second with the modifications which this transition brings with it.
2. The transition from the third case to the second, also with modifications.
3. The transition from the first case to the third, and from this to the second. Again modified by the two transitions.
4. The transition from the third state to the first and from this to the second, also modified.

Because these four transitions all terminate in the second, we could of course use the same argument and make all the transitions terminate in the first case or in the third. Thus the elements of the three simple cases I have posited as foundation allow for twelve moral and specifically different sequences, which themselves have gradations and interminglings. No matter in which of the three fundamental cases a person finds himself, we can see that he changes his moral condition and passes to a moral state determined by the elements of the other two cases.

¹⁵¹ *Purg.*, 3: 8.

It will be sufficient therefore if we briefly consider the four transitions that terminate in the second case, whose characteristic element is a maximum moral deterioration of man's moral nature, with the least remorse due to the weakness and almost total abolition of moral conscience.¹⁵²

1047. All four transitions terminate in the second case. I will analyse the nature of this case and then discuss the four transitions which lead to it.

In keeping with the way I have posited this second case, we, upon being born, or as soon as we could use our personal activity, directed it all to promoting the sense tendency and increasing ourselves as real feeling or a finite form of being, without giving a thought to being and its order. As a result, the moral tendency remained very weak and came under the control of the other contrary, solely dominating tendency. It is probable that this case applies to certain human individuals, even if not in such a straightforward way. A first deliberation to do evil can, in the first age of life, be made by a child.¹⁵³ The deliberation is internal, unnoticed, made with a very weak conscience, with a conscience, I would say, that says nothing, because the moral tendency is very weak and not yet developed. In this state, remorse is more habitual than actual, it is a feeling of uneasiness and disdain, which the child does not apply to the internal errors of its spirit. This feeling manifests itself in a certain proud, cold and irritating behaviour pattern that colours all the child's ways of dealing with things and people that it does not find in harmony with the internal deliberation to increase its subjective feeling, without any other consideration. This dissatisfaction with itself is turned against everything different from it, as if it is trying to free itself from the irritation. The child is also driven by the sense tendency that wants to free itself from the indefinable distress and vexation.

¹⁵² I am speaking solely about the human moral state in the present life.

¹⁵³ St. Thomas says that human beings, reaching the age of discretion, are gravely obliged to order themselves to God. If they do not do so, they sin gravely. These very first internal sins are the most hidden, and they can be used to weave a series of evil dispositions, called an 'evil character', because their true, willed and free origin is not known. They lead the human being gradually to final perdition.

1048. We must also distinguish between *deterioration* of moral nature and moral *paucity*.

In a new-born baby, the absence of the development and reinforcement of the moral tendency is *paucity*, not *deterioration*.¹⁵⁴ Extreme moral *paucity* consists in having nothing more than the initial, habitual tendency of the will to being, where the will has not yet acted in any way to second the tendency. In this state the will and the human person have *least union* with *objective being*. This *union* with being increases with those acts of the will that aid the tendency that inclines us to unite ourselves more closely to objective being and share in its order. We, as moral persons, change from a baby and a child to an adolescent and become *adult* and grown-up. But we must remember that although *subjective being* can make both intellective and non-intellective real things exist as *entia*, only *objective being* makes intellective real things *complete entia*, with the result that things lacking reason are, as we have seen, simply *incomplete entia* and relative to complete entia. Hence, an increase in union with and participation in objective being is an increase in the *entity* of intellective entia. As *complete entia* therefore they change from being small to being big, in keeping with the increase of union and participation — entity can increase without the increase causing loss of *identity*.

But *deterioration* of our human moral nature is the effect of those acts (and is the acts themselves) that our will carries out in a direction opposed to the tendency to being. Our will's only concern is to satisfy the *sense tendency*, and in doing this we turn in on ourselves and terminate our activity in the *real form*; we are in fact trying to detach ourselves from being, from the being that makes us exist as intellective entia; in other words, it is an effort to destroy ourselves as intellective entia. The degree of wretchedness of this effort in which the essence of evil consists, will be seen by considering what I have said and will summarise again here in a few propositions. If these propositions are borne in mind, it will help us to understand the nature of evil and to measure its degree.

1049. The propositions are:

¹⁵⁴ Original sin is a true *deterioration*, but I do not wish to discuss it here so as not to overcomplicate the argument.

Subsistent, essentially infinite being understands and affirms itself, and loves its understood and affirmed self. Because the act with which it understands and affirms itself is infinite, infinite being replicates itself with this act. And because the act is infinite with which it loves its understood, affirmed self, which is its replicated self, infinite being triplicates itself.

The essence of being is thus simultaneously *per se* agent-subject and *per se* affirmed and *per se* loved; it is reality, truth and good, and each of these three modes includes the other two. But in so far as the three modes eternally proceed, and proceed from each other, they are three persons in whom the three categorical forms are contemplated as having infinite and absolute identity with being itself.

This reality, truth and good have no higher genus, because being is not superior to them but is each of them, and each of them is being. Therefore any concept whatsoever not found contained in this reality is not a concept of reality; any concept whatsoever not found contained in this truth is not truth, and any concept whatsoever not found contained in this good is not a concept of good — all these supposed concepts would not participate in the essence of reality or in the essence of truth or in the essence of good, because anything that is not an essence or does not participate in an essence cannot be called 'essence'; it means something different from essence whether in itself or shared.

Consequently, only being is essence, truth and good. All that is the opposite of these three things must be given another name. The three opposite names are therefore *emptiness*, *falsehood* and *evil*.

But if there is nothing outside being, how can there be *emptiness*, *falsehood* and *evil*?

There is nothing outside being in an absolute mode, but there is something in a relative mode, as we have seen. The creature exists relatively to itself outside Being but exists through being and united to being as a form truly distinct from being. Because the creature exists through being but is truly distinct from being, it can either wish being, or give itself priority over being and find satisfaction in itself. In the first case it wants truth and good; in the second, it rejects truth and good because it rejects being. With its activity, it settles itself into a form that it

separates from being and, affirming and loving this form as if it were being, feigns an object that is empty, false and evil.

1049a. We see therefore that the finite, intellective ens has an order similar to that of the trinity of absolute Being because it cannot perfect itself except by performing two acts which are analogous and abstractly similar to the procession of the divine persons: 1. it must turn its practical intelligence to being, which it must acknowledge and affirm, and 2. it must love this affirmed being. By 'being' I mean the totality of being, because being is always total and indivisible, which explains the moral adage: *malum ex quolibet defectu* [evil is present in any defect whatsoever].

With these two categorical acts, the finite intelligent ens perfects itself through a greater union with being in the two forms of truth and good. Through the principle of opposites, however, we lessen ourselves with opposite acts because we distance ourselves from being in those two forms. By placing ourselves in opposition to it, we oppose and *hate* it; this is what *evil* consists in. Hence, the *deterioration* of human nature and of the human person consists in the following: while we tend to and are ordered to good, that is, to being, through which we are entia, we use our free activity to oppose internally and resist good, that is, being. Thus we lose or destroy in ourselves the total quantity of entity that would come to us from harmony and union with being, which is object and love.

If our opposition and resistance to being, through which we exist, does not destroy us, it is because our activity is directed solely to union with being in the objective and moral forms. Hence only under these two forms can we separate ourselves from being. Because our activity does not involve being under the first form, we cannot separate ourselves from it and thus annihilate ourselves: our subjective existence is from God the creator, who preserves it. This highlights all the more the disorder that takes on the form of contradiction relative to the intellect, and the form of conflict relative to the will: we use being itself to oppose and hate being, and use it in all its three categorical forms. In fact, our reality would have no existence without our participation in being in its subjective form, and we use this existence of our reality to give our reality an aptitude contrary to being. We also use being in the objective form to

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conceive mentally our own real feeling and, in opposition to being, strenuously apply ourselves to increase the feeling we have conceived, understood and affirmed. And finally, we use being in the moral form (the form of love, the tendency we have to love being) in order to love what is contrary to and destructive of the order of being. Sin therefore, relative to us, puts — *attempts* to put — being in contradiction and conflict with itself. If this were possible, it would be the destruction of being itself, absolute annihilation.

1050. I now come to the second of the above-mentioned three simple cases. We can form the concept of a human being who from the start has followed solely and exclusively the sense tendency without ever listening to the voice of moral conscience. Such a person remains not only morally *small* (because the moral tendency, having no development, would not increase his natural energy), but in *this moral smallness* there will also be *wickedness*, that is, in an aptitude contrary to being. The degree of wickedness will be proportionate to the amount of willed opposition to being and its order.

I will now deal with the four transitions I mentioned. An analysis of the first will be sufficient for understanding the others.

Let us suppose that in a human being the two tendencies (the sense tendency and the moral) have been used with the due order that subordinates the former to the latter. Let us also suppose that both tendencies have attained a certain degree of development and actuality, and from then on the person has operated exclusively according to the sense tendency, thus placing himself in opposition to the moral tendency. In this case, the degree of bitter remorse would be equal to the degree of actuality attained by the moral tendency. But by a series of evil acts with which the willed, personal activity sinks ever more and more into pure real feeling, the person withdraws from the moral tendency and, concentrating his activity elsewhere, the moral tendency, which never ceases, becomes weaker. We must also note that when a human being perseveres in evil despite remorse, the determined will for evil conceives *hate* against the moral tendency and against the being which produce remorse in him. This hate can increase indefinitely because it is the opposite of a love whose object is infinite

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being. Consequently, just as the human love of being is 'a finite participation in the infinite' and therefore has the condition of things that can indefinitely increase, so the opposite of this love, that is, hatred of being, can also increase. Hence there are two phenomena in this conversion of the human spirit from good to evil. In one phenomenon, moral conscience gradually becomes more dulled relative to the impress of the moral tendency. In the other, the hatred of being, caused by the pique of remorse, increases indefinitely. To measure the remorse therefore, we must calculate both the circumstances that increase it and those that decrease it. The habit of withholding and turning our intellectual attention away both from being, which constitutes the law, and from the tendency to being, diminishes the remorse, while the continuously increasing gravity of the iniquity increases it. But to this is added the phenomenon of the hatred of *being*, the cause of the pique of the remorse. This makes the spirit more angry and sensible to the incessant pique from which it would like to free itself but cannot. This angry sensibility, while certainly increasing the remorse, gives it another form and nature so that it hardly resembles simple remorse — it is a total, abiding anger, a deep rage. As a result, the wretched person degenerates internally, habitually consumes himself and, on certain occasions, breaks out into a mania and frenetic fury which are now cruel, now desperate, now debasing, now derisory. Examples of these outbursts are seen in Voltaire and other wicked people. The force of conscience therefore, in this state, hardly makes itself heard, although it cannot be totally silenced (cf. *Saggio sulla speranza*, I: 6, 17–18, 22, 26; II: 1–14). Nevertheless, a habit of deep rage rules in the spirit. At moments this habit can be tranquil and benign, so that when the evil person is with people of similar kind, and their wickedness does not collide and meet head-on, the habit sometimes takes the appearance and name of philanthropy. The poor wretch tries to hide from himself and seek relief in spite of himself. His own rage with which he wants to free himself from remorse and from the being that is present to him and causes his remorse is a torment, and torment of a torment. He enjoys extravagance and is pleased to see external things in disarray so that he can claim to put them right and in the way that suits him. He is happy with anarchy, gives way to

blasphemy and enjoys the imagined triumphs of wickedness. However, the thought, sight or conversation of good people, of just and truthful people, especially holy people, engenders a great hatred in him. Even when this hatred remains hidden because suppressed by a stronger force, he desires and plots their death. Consequently, the truly wretched are naturally murderers. Of such a kind was the wicked angel as well as other wicked people like him. That is why the holy man could ask his enemies: 'Why do you seek to kill me[?]'¹⁵⁵ even though they denied it, as they usually do: 'Who seeks to kill you?'¹⁵⁶ Indeed, the desire to murder and destroy sometimes becomes so urgent in certain totally wicked people that in a paroxysm of this desire they kill themselves because they cannot rid themselves of the unbearable torment of bitter remorse and rage. Thus, pure wickedness is a sufficient cause of suicide.

1051. If a person at a particular stage of the harmonious development of the two essential tendencies applies his will totally to seconding the sense tendency and neglects the other tendency, his state changes from the first case to the second, with the following modifications:

1. At the start of the evil, the remorse is deep because the moral conscience has acquired a certain level of development. Although it cannot be destroyed, it can be less adverted to by the person who turns his attention and energy elsewhere.

2. On the other hand, as the person gradually grows worse, he becomes more sensible to habitual remorse stimulated by new sins.

3. This remorse, although less adverted to because of little intellectual attention, is more sensible. In evil people who do not want to be subject to it, it arouses anger and pride, behind which it hides so that it seems no longer to exist. Its strength to turn such people away from evil has gone, leaving behind only a continuous wrath born of remorse and setting them on the road to evil. It tends to the destruction of that which is, and continuously strives for this destruction. Because the object of this foolish effort is impossible, anger is not abated but continually increased. If the ideal of this state is

¹⁵⁵ Jn 7: 20.

¹⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, 20.

reached by thought, hell will spontaneously present itself to the mind.

The third case, which supposes the development of the moral tendency alone, is impossible in the order of nature. It supposes that being has so truly attracted and taken over all our willed activity that our will has always considered only being, not as *supreme good* (this pertains to the first case) but as the *only good*. This cannot happen however unless Being is taken hold of as subsistent good, which includes every good. It is precisely in this taking hold of Being that our supernatural state consists. But if in this state God allows us bilateral freedom, we can debase ourselves by turning from Being to our own form of being and exclusively following the sense tendency. A struggle can now arise in which the human being can so harden himself in evil that he comes to a state where remorse is no longer actually taken account of and is no longer a force inclining him to good (as it would naturally do). Instead remorse is dominated and conquered by the anger I have spoken about above. But here I cannot describe this struggle in detail because it would take too long and is not in fact required by the present argument; higher considerations would be needed, considerations which deal with God's communication to us through grace.

The other two changes, from the first case to the third and then to the second, and from the third case to the first and then to the second, can be understood from what has been said. Each is composed of the two simple changes I have discussed.

We need only note that in every act and every change we freely make from one moral state to another, some permanent effect remains. If the effect is evil, the evil can certainly be purged, but the resulting form of virtue receives and retains by that very fact a particular character and physiognomy.

1052. Summarising, we see that we have a natural union with being independent of our will and a union that depends on our will. The natural union is threefold: 1. with subjective being in so far as it exists, 2. with objective being through ideal intuition and 3. with moral being through a tendency towards this being. The willed union concerns *directly* only moral being, not subjective or objective being. It indirectly concerns objective being because a morally upright will guides thought uprightly to truth. Even more indirectly and posteriorly it concerns

subjective being, in so far as every moral, intellectual ens is more an ens in proportion to its greater willed union with an ens.

Because this willed union is a true increase of participated being, it perfects us. On the other hand, a moral, intellectual ens *deteriorates* in proportion to its withdrawal and distance from being, when with its free activity it places itself in conflict with being.

1053. This gives rise to the idea of *vindictive justice*. This manifests itself in two ways: 1. as justice that acts in our human nature and 2. as justice that comes from God. As being includes good, it also includes the need to punish its enemies. But on the one hand there is absolute Being, eternal creator, and on the other, being communicated to us in the various modes I have described. In both of these beings, justice must be manifested. I explain how.

In the order of nature, when a finite, intellectual ens does evil and thus places itself in conflict with being, it necessarily places itself in conflict with itself, because being is that through which it exists. This is the conflict of the real form that constitutes the finite subject. This form exists through being and tends by its nature to being in order to continue to exist, and exist in a better mode. Its conflict with being is thus the conflict between human nature and the human will. Nature however is invincible because it is sustained by being, which does not depend on the human will. Hence in the conflict between the human will and human nature, the will always loses, and as the conflict continues, the loss and defeat of the will continue. But the will, ever more frustrated and agitated and more obstinately perverse in proportion to its loss, returns to the struggle. Furthermore, the degree of frustration and fury with which it attacks, determines proportionately the effect of the repulsion and painful reaction it experiences. Turned in on itself, the will acts like a frenzied man who hurls himself against a rock intent on smashing it and making himself equal to it, but only breaks himself in proportion to the impetus with which he hurls himself against it. This can be correctly called *penal justice* on the part of nature. Considered in itself, it is simply the abstract necessity of being which neither in itself nor in its order can be changed by any will. Such punishment, which seems natural and physical, always follows sinful actions (these pertain to the moral order) and does so

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because they are sinful. We see therefore that fault and punishment are linked by an intimate, indissoluble bond of nature. This explains punitive justice. In fact 'justice is when a volitive ens receives and finds what follows naturally upon its volition'. Through a posited volition it obtains everything that the posited volition is capable of bestowing. Hence, sin takes place when we, with our free volition and by our own effort, come into conflict with being which is immutable and eternal, and try to destroy it. We ourselves, and of ourselves, bring on the sad consequences of this conflict; we choose evil and reject good, which being essentially is. We cannot reasonably complain about this. Thus, the nature of things is the foundation of justice. Here, the physical is not confused with the moral because physical nature is distinct from moral nature in this: moral nature pertains to the will, and the will is the activity proper to the intelligent subject in so far as this activity is directed to being, which is good itself, or turns away from being, in which evil consists; furthermore, the free activity of the intelligent subject, when turned to being, finds good and, when turned away from it, finds physical evil. This is physical necessity considered *in se*, and is justice considered in relationship to the moral state of the will. But these two aspects are not present when a frenzied man attacks a rock, because he acts through the force of instinct and imagination, not through free will. This physical fact results in a physical consequence, whereas natural, just punishment is a physical fact physically consequent upon a moral act, and hence has the concept of just punishment.

1054. In the sphere of nature, being shows itself to us as non-personal; everything concerning personhood remains hidden in virtuality. As such it manifests to us its own *justice*, which is also non-personal. But when we discover, in any way whatever, that being is living and intelligent (this gives us the concept of God), we immediately see that natural punishment, which the wicked bring upon themselves by sin, is not only absolutely and objectively just, but willed by being itself. Indeed, whatever follows from the essence of being is infinitely willed by being because the essence of being is not only nature but identically will and person. Here a personal *justice* is at once manifested, as if willed and even decreed by the absolute will that is identical with absolute being. This explains how we all pass easily from

saying, 'It is just', to 'It is willed by God'; we consider the transition natural and obvious.

These two manifestations of eternal justice must not be destroyed. Those who think themselves religious when they say that there is no concept of justice without recourse to God's will are as much mistaken as those who irreligiously claim that the only concept of justice is that which comes from the non-personal and objective nature of entia. This second mode of the manifestation of justice undoubtedly exists; indeed personal, willed justice could not exist without it. In fact there has to be something objectively just if a holy will is to be conceived that wills it. It is true that in God what is objectively just is God, and the will that wills it is God; thus there is identity of being. But there is no identity of form, only duality of form, which has its foundation and explanation in the procession of the divine persons. As we have seen, the Word proceeds by means of intellect, because the Father, knowing and affirming himself actually and eternally, generates the Word similar and equal to himself in everything, except that the Word is his affirmed self instead of his affirming self. This procession, however, is accompanied by the will through which he necessarily and, at the same time, willingly, affirms himself. It is therefore both a speculative and practical affirmation, which is the origin of the Word's faculty to breathe the Holy Spirit with the spiration of the Father. Hence, acknowledged Word is simultaneously object and person. As object, he shows what the Father is, or rather, is the Father manifest to himself from eternity; he is subsistent, objective justice. But in so far as the Father wills himself with the very act of affirming himself, the Word is personal, decretive and legislative justice. Consequently, anyone who removes these two forms of justice and leaves only the willed, decretive form (the two forms are, for us, two modes of manifestation), destroys the divine Trinity, to which they reduce and on which they are founded.

Consequently, the natural punishment we incur through evil behaviour, which makes us enemies of being, is simultaneously punishment willed by God. It thus takes on the concept of what I would call positive punishment.

Our human reason alone cannot say how far this punishment extends, because the only evils we experience are in this life. But which of us could know the lot of the soul that endures beyond

the present life, and what kind of torments will continue for it due to its struggle against essentially invincible being? We know only through revelation that these torments must be most exquisite, more than what philosophical reason, using most ancient tradition, can guess, and more than what the poets can imagine when they clothe this philosophical and traditional concept in sensible images.

1055. We must now consider the positive command of God. This is manifested as a norm coming from the command of a will. But in the case of divine precepts and because the divine will is being itself, to disobey this being is clearly to oppose subsistent being that wills, and, for the same reason, punishment of this disobedience must follow. But what is presented in a purely willed form does not lack the necessity of objective being, because the will which commands is identically the same will that posits and affirms itself. Hence, the precept that seems arbitrary, because we do not know the reasons for it, also has its absolute form in objective being, a form which remains hidden from us. Sometimes therefore an absolute, *objective* norm is manifest, while its personhood and the fact that it is willed remain hidden; at other times a willed norm is positively manifested, while its objectivity and absolute necessity remain hidden. When however we consider the objective norm which objective being is we find the willed norm through a deontological reflection because we understand that objective being must subsist as a person who wills. In the case of a positive manifestation therefore which reveals the willed norm whose objectivity remains hidden, we rise to its absolute objectivity by means of a similar deontological reflection because we understand that God who gives his precept is absolute, objective being. In the first case, we *see* the objectivity and *believe* that it is willed; in the second case, we *see* that it is willed and *believe* its objectivity. But we do not have to know the norm under both manifestations for it to manifest its obligatory force: one manifestation is sufficient because the other is implicitly contained in it. Thus the objective norm is such that a human being is debased and morally deformed when he does not adapt to it (*ER*, 1: 145–187); it manifests an absolute, moral necessity. Also, the divine will is so fully and *per se* respectable that it contains a clear title of obligation. Both forms of manifestation are infinite, although each, considered in itself, possesses the other

part only implicitly. Finally, no intelligence can oppose the infinite without degrading and contradicting itself and, by its own action, annihilating itself.

Those who place themselves in conflict with being, as conceived naturally in its order or as that which wills and positively decrees, necessarily experience the torment I have described above, except that the punishment also results as a physical consequence of the infringement of the natural order, whereas the punishment that results from a precept positively imposed by God's will has the positive, willed form. Just as natural punishment is willed by God who is just (this implicit, willed element however remains unseen), so positive punishment is a natural result of the immutability and invincibility of being, although again this naturalness of punishment remains hidden and implicit, at least temporarily.

1056. But I must explain a little more how punishment, positively united to a positive precept, can be a natural consequence.

Divine positive precept is not only of supernatural origin but is united to a supernatural state of the human being. However, the human race, after its fall, could no longer understand everything concerning the natural law with the certainty and light necessary for it to obtain its final end. As a result, God communicated some positive precepts through a positive revelation. These would have been obligations considered purely according to the light of reason. Moreover, some divine precepts, while providing for human moral dignity, also had the immediate purpose (although not the principal purpose) of helping natural human existence on earth. For the sake of method therefore, we can consider a divine precept as a precept first given to us in a natural state and then in a state of supernatural grace.

In both respects, the precept is the will of God, the will of being. Everything that being wills cannot not be, because it is very Being that wills and cannot be destroyed. Law therefore, that is, the divine precept, is, as the being itself that wills, a solid rock, of a solidity equal to that we have seen proper to objective being. We have therefore the same struggle, the same breaking of oneself against this rock, the same internal torment, essential in the creature who hurls himself against it by sinning.

This principle also explains the punishment encountered by natural and supernatural man when acting against God's

positive precept. By suffering this punishment we make restitution to God for the glory that we, with our will, deny him by disobedience — the punishment, by its very necessity, shows that God is invincible and insuperable.

But if we consider the positive precept relative to natural man, God who gives the precept receives glory in another way when the creature tries to deny the glory by despising God's precept and disobeying him. This is because the precept in question has its explanation in the order of natural things, an explanation hidden from us. God who created all finite entia, from which the world results in weight, number and measure, knows all the harm that the different forces existing in the world could do us whenever we came into conflict with them (*TCY*, 116–132), but we do not know this harm. God therefore imposes positive precepts without giving a reason for them. A reason is not necessary because he has full right to be believed and obeyed purely through the manifestation of his will. Indeed, his will is to our greatest advantage because of the act of higher virtue and merit we exercise when the concept of the Lord God is alone sufficient for us to give God obedience and renounce all other reasoning; we act for God only, not for any other end, and thus give him due glory. If we disobey the precepts, we do harm, from which the good God wishes to deter us by his precepts. The saying is therefore verified that 'the world fights the senseless sinner'.¹⁵⁷ In this way the creature vindicates the Creator and renders him new glory. This is precisely what happened in the first human being, according to the opinion I have given elsewhere (*TCY*, 216). Relative to this we must remember that the forces of nature which can harm us include the created powers and also wicked spirits; these, although invisible to us, have great power to harm us. But when human beings, who from the beginning received the precept of God, discover by experience and reason the advantages which obedience to God brings, they give to their lord, master and legislator a new glory, acknowledging once again God's wisdom and goodness.

Regarding the particular torment that comes to those who are in the supernatural order of grace, this is not the place to discuss it. I will simply say that this unspeakable torment is referred to

¹⁵⁷ Wis 5: 21.

in the words: 'And he who falls on this stone will be broken to pieces; but when it falls on any one, it will crush him.'¹⁵⁸

The foundation of eternal, penal justice lies therefore in the nature of being and of its order. Good is *desired being* (whether by way of beneficence, gratitude or enjoyable complaisance). Hence, the real subject, which is pure real form and not being, finds good in the measure that it seconds the desire for being and, urging itself to being with its will, strives to fill the abyss between the finite form and being. But if the subject opposes and withdraws itself from being, that is, attempts to oppose being and destroy all that it is *in se*, it finds evil, both moral and penal, because the real form needs being to exist as well as grow.

1057. This teaching is in fact the origin of the theory of sacrifice and the human race's instinct for it.

When the real form (the finite subject) directs itself with all its energy towards the absolute, living, personal Being, it carries out a movement by which the will moves from the finite form to the infinite Being. With this movement it acknowledges the supreme dominion of the infinite Being over itself and over every finite real thing. It also tends, out of gratitude, to give back the real form, that is, itself (a finite subject) and everything real united to it, to the creator Being from whom they all came. This movement involves the destruction of the real form in so far as this is separate from being so that only being and that which can exist in being remain, that is, that which can have the feeling of existing in being. But only person can have the intellectual feeling of existing totally in God (*Dottrina del peccato originale*, c. 2 ss.). In the state of life in this world, corporeal and animal things cannot take themselves back into God by means of this affective, willed, intellectual feeling we are talking about. They cannot do this either relative to themselves, because they do not have intelligence, or relative to us because we, with our will, do not dominate them sufficiently, do not possess them except as something different from ourselves; in fact, we are mostly passive to them. Hence those who with their intelligence and will want to take themselves into God but cannot bring with them all that adheres to them, try to rid themselves of this burden and encumbrance; in other words, they sacrifice it.

¹⁵⁸ Mt 21: 44.

Hence sacrifice extends to all animate and inanimate, corporeal things, even to human life itself; indeed, to prevent the human race from sacrificing life an express prohibition is necessary from God. This is the general nature of *latreutic* sacrifice and *eucharistic* sacrifice.

When human beings wish to give God thanks for special benefits through special sacrifices, they indicate their will to give back to God, out of gratitude, the benefits received: the victim is the symbol of this restitution. They are not content to acknowledge these benefits simply by thought and words and express this by acts of thanksgiving. They want to acknowledge them by destroying something of what they love, whether for the purpose of demonstrating the sincerity of their affection or because their gratitude, when intense, tends to return the benefits in the way it can. However, unable to return them to the one who has bestowed them (because he has no need of them), they want at least to deprive themselves of what they cannot restore as if they were able to restore it. Or finally, they destroy something they love because internal affection tends to complete and perfect itself by exterior action (*PSY*, 1574–1580, 1520 ss.), due to the dynamic connection that intimately binds affection with external operation (*ER*, 1: 108–112).

1058. But when we have sinned and wish to return to God, *propitiatory* sacrifice presents itself to the human spirit, on the same principle. We who owe everything to God know that we owe him even more after we have denied to him the gratitude we owed him. We are quick to make sacrifices to him to acknowledge and please him. But measured against justice, all external sacrifices are insufficient because we already owed God everything; such sacrifices can mean no more than a restitution of goods received, by way of gratitude.

Consequently, the only thing left to us as sinners is internal sacrifice, the acknowledgement of our own fault, the humbling of ourselves, and repentance. About these things we read: ‘The sacrifice acceptable to God is a broken spirit; a broken and contrite heart, O God, you will not despise.’¹⁵⁹

But a distinction must be made between sin in the supernatural order and in the natural order. When we sin in the

¹⁵⁹ *Ps* 50: 19.

supernatural order, God withdraws his supernatural grace from us. We cannot have this grace by nature; God himself, the absolute Being, communicates himself to us; we do not, with our natural strength, raise ourselves to God known and apprehended supernaturally. Consequently, in the supernatural order, it is impossible that a natural repentance of any kind (a purely human act) reconcile us with God, or that justice be restored, because the supernatural order is constituted and restored by an act of God. Therefore a mediator, an extraordinary, supernatural help, is absolutely necessary, through which God can, of himself, come back to us.

But if sin is to do with man in the order of nature, and if the acknowledgement of and repentance for an offence could be total and absolute, the equilibrium of justice could apparently be restored. In fact, such an act of repentance and self-abasement could not be given by an innocent human being; it is something over and above the glory which the innocent can and must give to God, and this extra compensates for that part of glory the sin has taken from God. But I believe that the state I have suggested is impossible: it is not possible that a human being who in the order of nature has once taken as end himself (a finite, real form) rather than being, can fully change this act of his will and begin to take being as his end and subordinate himself to it. By centring himself upon himself through sin and opposing being, all his moral strength is weakened. Having directed his gaze elsewhere, his understanding no longer sees with equal clarity the order and beauty of being — his will has been strengthened in evil by the affection he has wrongly applied. He can no longer, of himself, resolve to adhere perfectly to being in contrast to his first act, and do so with such sincerity and energy that he acknowledges in practice all the wrong he has done to being.

The offence however can vary in degree. Perhaps a series of misfortunes which left the guilty person providentially frustrated of all his hopes and constantly enduring pain and experiencing evil where he had hoped to find good could lead him to reflect on the destructive quality of his life. But if God did not add some extraordinary strength to his nature, or some light (even if only natural light), to his understanding, such a reflection would definitely lead him to greater desperation rather

than to a decision to be virtuous and to acknowledge all his iniquity.

1059. Returning to sacrifice, this simply expresses the restitution that the intelligent creature makes to the Creator out of gratitude for what the creature has received from the Creator. The creature acknowledges from God what has been received, attributing it to him and ordering it to the glory of the absolute Lord. But because this feeling is not sufficient to satisfy the justice that the sinner has violated, the sacrifice performed by the sinner cannot be *propitiatory*; only an innocent person can make propitiatory sacrifice, for the following reasons. The characteristic of the subsistent Being, the first person, is infinite beneficence, infinite communication. He is therefore naturally inclined to communicate himself not only to the Word but to his intelligent creature. This communication, which cannot be full because the communicative instinct must be fully actuated, makes the happiness of the innocent person necessary, otherwise the divine instinct, which is insuperable and most actual, would not be satisfied. Any opposition offered by the creature is not from God but from the creature, because the creature is not God, and has a relative activity of its own, different from God's activity. For this reason, the fact alone of sin is a decisive proof against pantheism. But if we suppose that no sin of any kind exists in a creature, the irresistible instinct of the Father requires that such a creature be fully happy. This is the ontological and theological foundation of the union between moral good and eudaimonological good, as a result of which the innocent person must suffer no evil at all.

Now, there might be an innocent human being who, due to the instinct of human nature, loves his species and therefore the individuals of the human species. If these individuals do moral evil, they lose happiness as their end and bring upon themselves the evil of unhappiness. But if this innocent person sees that the evil is not absolutely irreparable, he will have compassion and lament it. When I say 'if he sees that the evil is not absolutely irreparable', 'absolutely irreparable' means that the reparation is not opposed to the divine attributes. If it were opposed, the innocent person, loving God infinitely and not wanting his destruction, will not lament the evil but rejoice in it as something in conformity with the divine attributes. If however the

reparation is possible, the innocent person will be saddened by the evil of his fellows, and sorrow and compassion will move him to make this prayer to God, 'Father, if it is possible, forgive them. I offer you my life and will bear all the hardships you send me, but save them.' This offering and sacrifice cannot but be pleasing to the Father because it opens the way to his beneficence to which the infinite instinct directs him. Is this, however, propitiatory sacrifice?

We must recall the distinction between sin committed in the order of nature and sin committed when we are constituted in a supernatural order. I am not concerned here with the question whether the human being could be or not be created by God in a purely natural order, in the sense in which the Augustinian school maintains its impossibility — this is a question for positive theology. I simply posit the two hypotheses as an aid to the theory, although one of them must be rejected.

1060. I say therefore that if sin were committed by individuals of the human species constituted by God solely in a state of nature without an internal supernatural grace, it is not contradictory to believe that the sacrifice which an innocent person might make of himself would be propitiatory: it would be capable of restoring the equilibrium of justice but not of preserving justice among those redeemed by the sacrifice.

I came to this opinion through the following argument. It is contrary to divine instinct that the innocent suffer in any way. Nevertheless the innocent person I have supposed (whom God could certainly create and keep innocent if he wished) would suffer pain. Because the pain would not be an arbitrary pain but one arising from his human nature, common to his fellow human beings, he would suffer at the sight of the reparable evil to which those of the same nature are subject. This voluntary, beneficent pain leads him to undergo another pain, the pain of a cruel death in order to give honour to God. In doing this, he acknowledges the offence of his fellows who have not given back to God what came from him, who have not acknowledged God as he truly is. The first pain, arising from nature, comes to the innocent person from God, author of human nature. But neither God nor nature (which comes from God) can cause the innocent to suffer; this is contrary to divine instinct. However this first evil would not be sufficient to equal the part taken by

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divine justice. God could in fact abundantly reward such pain with a great quantity of good things not owed to the human nature of the innocent person. But prayer and willing sacrifice can be added: the innocent person prays and makes the sacrifice so that this honour, which is not owed to but freely given to God and acknowledges the wrong done to him, serves as compensation for the wrong. This act of acknowledgement that gives God glory and is accompanied by an undeserved pain (because the innocent do not deserve pain) can be total. It can therefore offset the act by which sinners turn away from God. In this state of things it seems that the Father's instinct of infinite beneficence had to listen to the prayer and accept the sacrifice as sufficient compensation for the dishonour done to him by sins. The remission of the debt had therefore to follow.

But even if this were sufficient to restore the equilibrium between justice and the sins committed in the natural order, would it be sufficient to change the depraved will of sinners and stop them continuing in their sin? The merit of the innocent person would certainly not be enough to bring him any supernatural grace. The merit would remain within the order of nature and would be a love and respect shown to God known naturally, but certainly not known by means of internal grace, granted the hypothesis I have put forward. We can also suppose that the innocent person has begged God to give sinners the benefit of the sensible misfortunes that I have mentioned and can dispose sinners to conversion. But, as we saw, all these external means, unaccompanied by a change of heart, have little value in making sinners love the being from whom they have turned away; on the contrary, such means would reduce them to despair. Furthermore, the natural light of the sinners' intellect and their natural will cannot be strengthened by God except by a supernatural communication. The natural light is, as such, the same for the whole species. Whether it is seen more or seen less depends on the corporeal organism, and the same applies to the strength of the will. Changing the organisation seems to be the same as destroying the human being, and this would require that, after the destruction, the human being rose again. Nor does a greater light and a stronger will necessarily rectify the will; indeed the will's evil inclination would be strengthened. Only a supernatural means can rectify the will,

that is, the infusion of a new personal will (*Dottrina del peccato originale*, cc. 106–117). But it cannot be directly rectified without either its identity being destroyed or violence being done to it, and this contradicts the nature of the will. The natural innocent person we are talking about may certainly be able to make a propitiatory sacrifice very pleasing to God through the merit of supererogation, and his sacrifice may certainly redress the injustice of sinners (whom we have supposed to be in the natural order). But he would not be enough for restoring the damage left behind by the sin in the wills of those who had sinned, and therefore could not be an adequate redeemer.

1061. But if we consider the case of human beings constituted in the supernatural order and given to evil in this order, the only conceivable redeemer is the one we know through revelation, the incarnate Word. The sin of human beings in this state sets them in opposition to God who has directly and personally communicated himself. No act of the creature in this world, even an innocent creature, can attain God and bring this personal God back to them as a friend. Consequently the very person of God had to assume by his own action an innocent human being. This human being, once assumed by the divine person, must offer a propitiatory sacrifice that would acquire an infinite credit for him. Hence, the Father, obliged to pay such great credit, is obliged to give to the son those gifts which will be distributed to human beings and be sufficient to redeem them fully and save them. In this way the desire and love of the God-Man for the eternal and complete salvation of the human species to which, as man, he belongs, is fully satisfied. But here I am treading on ground which is far more sublime than that assigned to ordinary ontology.

For similar reasons sacrifice cannot be *propitiatory* unless made by an innocent creature. When such a creature honours God by means of pain and the destruction of something valuable, God, who wishes the creature's happiness, makes restoration to him by granting what he desires, namely, the propitiation for which he makes the sacrifice. This is just, because according to the order of being, pain and the privation of valuable things is not required of the innocent. Hence the creature who suffers out of respect for God or through his will, has credit, and to pay this credit conforms to the instinct of divine beneficence.

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1062. Justice in God therefore arises from the diffusive tendency of good that cannot be stopped in its act before it has attained its final, possible term. By virtue of this tendency, we have the three supreme laws of eternal justice:

1. God desires and makes the innocent happy, that is, fulfils all the desires of their nature and condition.

2. If the innocent suffer, they are compensated for their suffering with a quantity of extraordinarily good things, that is, things which exceed the desires of their nature and state.

3. If the intelligent, free creature chooses evil, thus opposing being and refusing its benefits, it experiences pain and unhappiness in its foolish effort. This is a necessary result of both the essence of being and being's finite form created by God, who wills being and the nature of the things he has created.

These are the three supreme laws of eternal justice.

CHAPTER 10

Beauty

Article 1

Beauty consists in a relationship with what is intelligent, and has the nature of term — it differs from what is pleasant

1063. All that has been discussed so far concerning relationships presents us with all the elements that constitute the last concept to be discussed: *beauty*.

These elements are essence, truth, order and perfection. We need to see how they concur to form the concept of beauty, and what this concept adds to its elements, how it is distinguished from each of them, and what its origin is.

We have seen that relationships can be considered in both their principle and their term. *Beauty* is certainly a relationship, a relationship with the mind. A relationship is ‘an entity that cannot be conceived unless two entities are simultaneously thought’. Remove the mind, and beauty can no longer be conceived, nor indeed any object whatsoever. In fact, an ens that lacks intelligence is incapable of knowing or enjoying beauty. Therefore, beasts are granted what is *pleasant* but not what is *beautiful*. Clearly then, and common sense agrees, what is beautiful cannot be confused with what is pleasant, which is one of the crudest errors of sensism.

But if beauty consists undoubtedly in a relationship with intelligence, does it have the nature of *principle* or of *term of the relationship*? In this particular relationship, it is easy to see that the intelligent element has the nature of principle, while beauty or the beautiful that intelligence contemplates and enjoys has the nature of term. In common with *truth* therefore, beauty has the following characteristic: it is the term of a relationship with the mind.

I must therefore deal with beauty in so far as it is *term* of a relationship with the mind, because its nature consists in its being term. Once we know its nature, I will discuss what the

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term confers on its principle and, finally, discuss the *enjoyment of beauty*.

Article 2

The essence of beauty

§1. *The essence of beauty is objective — beauty differs from the good and the perfect*

1064. Because the mind's term is object, beauty, like truth, pertains to the objective form of being; this is the difference between what is *good* and what is *beautiful*. The *beautiful* is objective, as I have said, but the *good*, by its very essence, is subjective, although like everything else it can be considered objectively. The nature of the good however is not to be objective but to be the perfection of the subject, as we see from what I have said elsewhere ([1020] ss. — *PE*, 20–45, 69–113). If the good were simply known, it would be the object of the mind that knows it but would not necessarily be the good of the knower — it could be the good of another subject. But if it were not the good, not even of another subject, it would not be good, because that which is not good for a subject, is not good; good must essentially be the good of a subject. Good therefore has a subjective nature, and if anything conceived does not perfect a subject, it does not have the nature of good. On the other hand, the nature of the object differs from the nature of the subject as something else and as the opposite of the subject. But if the subject derives some delight or perfection for itself from the presence of the object, this subjective result cannot be confused with the object, which as such has nothing subjective in it.

Hence when we speak about *objective good* we do not mean that it is sufficient for good to be an object in order to be good, but that the subject receives a good, a perfection, from its union with the object, from its inexistence in the object. In this sense, the nature of good is attributed to the object, as to something that gives the subject the means of perfecting itself, because it is a perfection of the subject to inexist in and have a loving

awareness of the object. The act therefore by which the subject, inexistent in the object, perfects itself, is seen as an act on the part of the subject. Consequently, good, through its own essence, is always subjective, although the object is a condition without which there can be no certain good whatsoever.

However, to avoid equivocation, we must distinguish what is essentially subjective from that which, although not essentially subjective, is subjective in the way we conceive it in our mind that clothes it with a subjective form. As we have seen, the forms are present not only in *entities* but also in the *way* the mind conceives entities. This double appearance of the three forms arises from the double mode of being of each form, that is, in itself and as inexistent in the other two. Hence the mind can always conceive a form either by itself or in the other forms, where it is also conceived as existing. This means that everything that can have the form of a predicate, like *good, beautiful, perfect, best, true*, etc., is subjective in the sense that it is clothed with the subjective form in the way the mind conceives it — a predicate is always conceived contained in a subject. But it does not follow that the entities expressed by these predicates are essentially subjective. Certainly, good, perfect, best are predicates of a subject; they are entities that are essentially truly subjective, but when we say that something is true or beautiful, we are predicating entities whose essential form is the objective form.

Vice versa, good (and every other essentially subjective entity) receives the objective form, whenever the mind considers these entities as contained in the object, in which every subject and every subjective thing is contained.

In conclusion therefore, beauty is something objective, not subjective, like pleasure and good. This explains why something beautiful can be seen by an intelligent subject who does not share in the beauty; for example, a deformed person can contemplate the face of another very beautiful human being and also enjoy this contemplation.

§2. *Truth and beauty are different concepts*

1065. Beauty is essentially objective, but truth also is objective. Are they two concepts or one?

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I said that truth is the necessary object, that is, being, manifesting itself to the mind (*Logica*, 1047–1049). When the mind sees being, it sees truth. Truth is therefore being which simply manifests itself as it is *in se* to the mind. Every other freely thought object (which comes down to determinations of being) is true if it conforms to essential being.

Beauty however is not solely being which makes itself known as it is, to the mind, because we can know what is ugly as well as what is beautiful, we can know a face in so far as it is ugly. But our knowledge is true if the face is ugly in the way our judgment presents it to us. What is true therefore is not the same as what is beautiful.

§3. *Unity alone does not constitute beauty, nor does multitude without unity*

1066. One of the differences separating the concept of truth from that of beauty is that unity, simple and abstracted from everything else, is one of the necessary objects of the mind; it is therefore truth. Indeed, number and all arithmetical propositions are true only because of the abstract one from which they originate, and which as their first truth, serves as measure and cause of their truth.

No beauty however could be recognised in the one that abstraction has separated from every other element.

But if there is no beauty in the one (although there is truth), there can be no beauty in the *multitude* without the one. Multitude without the one has nothing that contains it and constitutes it one entity, it is simply one many times repeated, and each ‘one’ is separate from the others. Just as beauty is not in one ‘one’, it is not in another ‘one’, nor in any ‘one’ as long as it remains ‘one’. Beauty therefore cannot be in the multitude that lacks the one.

Nevertheless multitude, that is, plurality, is necessary for beauty.¹⁶⁰ If beauty cannot consist in simple one, much less can

¹⁶⁰ Giovanni Francesco Pico, one of Italy’s great but forgotten philosophers, says: ‘Although both simple and composite things are sometimes called “beautiful”, well-known authors (Platonists as well as Peripatetics) apply the word only to composite things. It consists in a certain small,

it consist in nothing. Also, it is certainly a *perfection*, and we have seen that the concept of perfection and of perfect essentially involves some plurality.

This explains why Plato, St. Augustine and those who followed these great masters placed the universal reason for beauty in ‘multitude and variety reduced to unity’.¹⁶¹ In this definition they considered *multitude* as the material cause, and unity as the formal cause of beauty.¹⁶²

§4. *Five abstract, undetermined elements must be distinguished in the concept of beauty: 1. truth, 2. unity, 3. multiplicity, 4. totality, 5. mental approval*

1067. We must also note that the plurality that concurs in forming the concept of beauty must not form any kind of one but a one that is complete and constitutes a totality from which nothing is missing. Even the parts of a person who is missing a leg form a unity for as long as the person lives, but do not form the unity that can correctly be called complete or total. Hence, the person lacking a part necessary for him to be a perfect totality is deformed.

Finally, we must also bear in mind that the word ‘beauty’ includes an approval and applause by the mind. Whenever our mind sees beauty, it is obliged to give this approval due to an ontological law governing the union between the intellectual subject and the object that has the characteristics of beauty. This is the principal distinction between the concepts of order and beauty. The concept of order is simply the conspiracy of many entities into one, but when we say ‘beauty’, we are, as I said, adding a mental approval and an applause to the order contemplated in the ens.

1068. If we now bring together the abstract elements of beauty that we have found so far, we see there are five, and all

elegant composition of different parts, from which beauty is forged and emerges’* (*De appetitu primae materiae*, 1: 3).

¹⁶¹ André, *Essai sur le beau*, and Gerdil, *Della origine del senso comune*, pr. 27.

¹⁶² ‘Unity is the form of all beauty’* (St. Aug. *Ep.*, 18).

are necessary for constituting the concept. They are: 1. objectivity, 2. unity, 3. plurality, 4. the completeness of the totality that the completeness must form through the unity that receives it, and 5. intellectual approval.

Truth, as we have seen, is objective being. Clearly therefore, beauty, which has objective essence, is something contemplated by the mind in truth. This is why the Scholastics considered *lucidity*¹⁶³ as the element of beauty, because if beauty were something that lacked intellectual light, it could not be a relationship with the mind nor have the nature of beauty. Sensible lucidity would not be sufficient for beauty — this lucidity on its own (as it is in an ens lacking intelligence) can be *pleasant* if it is moderate,¹⁶⁴ but the beautiful differs from the pleasant. Moreover, lucidity, in an intellectual ens, contributes to beauty in that it gives the ens a more vivid, clear knowledge of the object. Again, *intellectual lucidity* admits no excess whatsoever, as Aristotle observed;¹⁶⁵ it cannot even admit beauty. Consequently, in my essay *Idillio* and in *nuova letteratura italiana*, I defined beauty as ‘the order of truth’ and explained the definition.

Furthermore, because unity must be seen in plurality, all the parts that make up the plurality must concur in constituting the one. This concurrence of each part in producing the one I called ‘accord’. We see therefore how *accord* is distinguished from *beauty*: the former is proper to each part, the latter proper to *the whole* resulting from the parts.

When we then consider the accords of all the parts for constituting one (taking these accords as a composite), and note that the accord of one part does not in any way impede the accord of another but helps it produce the one out of the many, then we have the concept of *harmony*, which differs from the concept of both *beauty* and *accord*.

The fourth element that determines the kind of one required

¹⁶³ St. Thomas identified three elements of beauty: *completeness*, *due proportion* and *clarity* or *lucidity* (*S.T.*, I, q. 39, art. 8; II-II, q. 145, art. 2; q. 180, art. 2, ad 3). *Proportion*, of course, contains unity and plurality, and also the appropriate union of these two.

¹⁶⁴ Cf. St. Aug., *De Mus.*, 6: 13.

¹⁶⁵ *De Anima*, 3: 4.

for beauty (the one that has the nature of *whole*) is the proper seat of beauty, as St. Augustine wisely observed.¹⁶⁶

1068a. But the fifth element is no less essential to beauty. It is the natural energy possessed by this whole one when it is made object of the mind's contemplation. It demands and draws from the mind an approval, a praise, an applause, which is a primal, ontological fact, that is, it arises from the essential relationship between the mind and the object, as I have said. Although the act of this approval is a subjective act, the praise which is given and differs from the subject's satisfaction and pleasure is an act of *objective power* (AMS, 521–566). It is similar to an act of justice by which a subject attributes to another what belongs to the other, without reflecting upon itself.

In fact, the relationship of presence that the object has to an actually existing subject results from certain actualities in the *object as present*, and from certain other actualities in the subject in so far as the object is present to it. The *actualities* in the object as present are called *exigencies*. The actualities of the subject to which the object is present are called intellectual and moral *needs* or *necessities*. Thus, the object as truth present to the mind manifests to the mind the *exigency* for speculative assent; the object as moral law manifests the exigency for practical assent, and the object as beauty manifests the exigency for praise or applause. The actualities in the subject corresponding to these three things are the intellective and moral *need* or *necessity* to give that speculative assent, that practical assent or that applause.

These actualities are also relationships.

The actualities revealed in the subject through the presence of the object can be abstractly considered as effects of this presence (although, strictly speaking, they are not effects but constituents of the actual presence or, if preferred, *formal effects*). They are relationships whose subject is in the real subject, and whose term is in the object.

The actualities manifested by the object present are relationships that exist in the object present as in their proper subject.

¹⁶⁶ 'I was aware of and noted in these bodies something which was as it were whole and therefore beautiful, but also so fitting, because it so well fitted something else, just as a part of the body fits the whole or a shoe fits a foot, and so forth'* (Conf., 4: 13).

The first actualities are *subjective*; the second are *objective*.

The *second relationships* pertain to beauty, which is essentially objective; the *first*, which result from the second, do not.

Consequently, the element constituting beauty is neither the approval actually given by the mind, nor the necessity the mind feels of giving this approval; it is the *exigency for approval*, as a property of the object present, that is, as a relationship whose subject and foundation are in the object present, and the term in the mind. The subject of this relationship is a dialectical subject.

§5. *Analysis of the exigency which certain objects have for drawing praise or approval from the mind*

1069. Every entity that is one but results from many entities can be either necessary or contingent.

Necessary entities are subsistent Being (God) and ideal being (ideas).

Contingent entities are not being but realisations of ideal being, that is, of ideas.

Every necessary entity that is one resulting from many does not *in se* admit any possible change. Hence, the many that form this one are determined in number and in the relationships through which they conspire to form the one. The one resulting from the many is like an immutable fact: it has many elements, but neither one element more nor one less. Each of the elements has this immutable relationship of accord, and the accords of them all have that immutable harmony by which they form the one. Consequently, in the many there is a fixed *order*, and the one contemplated in this order is perfectly constituted, is *perfect*.

1070. Although there is always *order* and *perfection* in the sphere of necessary entities resulting from many, this is not the case in the realisation of those necessary entities that ideas are, as we have seen. In these entities (ideas), there can be imperfection, disorder and evil; for this reason they are called imperfect, distorted or wicked entities. However, to know what is imperfect and disordered in contingent things, the only ideas we need are of those perfect types which contingent things ought to realise and to which the real refers (*NE*, 2: 500–503, 648–652).

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I have already answered the question: 'How do we become aware of the idea to which the real pertains?' When we have intellectually perceived the real, we have the full idea of it through universalisation (*NE*, 2: 490–499), and in this full idea we find by abstraction the abstract idea which shows us the nature of the *abstract essence* of the real. This abstract essence is always realised, and the real can never lack this realisation; if it were lacking, the real would not be. The abstract essence presents to us the type of the real, stripped of its perfections as well as its accidental imperfections, because everything imperfect in the real pertains to the sphere of accidents.

The idea which makes known the abstract essence of the real also makes virtually known all the accidental perfections it ought to have, granted that the realisation of its *archetype* will be perfect. The idea makes these perfections known, not directly, but because they are all virtually contained in the *abstract essence*. That which is virtually contained in an idea, however, even if not directly seen, can be deduced and discovered, as I said, when the mind has been given the condition for carrying out the necessary, intellective operation. This condition is that there must be some base in the perceived real for carrying out the operation, and there is such a base: it is the perfections and the accidental imperfections perceived in the real. This is clear if we remember that when a perfection is known, the imperfection is also known, which is the opposite of the perfection. Consequently, when an imperfection is known, the perfection contrary to it is also known. Granted this, the first thing found in a perceived real is its abstract essence. We can also find some qualities that are accidental perfections, and when we have perceived these qualities in the real, we see that in the abstract essence they are perfections and appropriate to it. Thus, these perfections which at first were virtually in the abstract essence in a hidden state, are now rendered actual, because the abstract essence reveals them in itself. In the same intellectually perceived real we can also find some qualities that are imperfections. These also are referred to the abstract essence, in which we see that they are contrary and not appropriate to the essence. As soon as we know them as imperfections, we immediately know their contrary perfections, according to the principle of opposites. Thus, these perfections,

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which were at the beginning virtually in the essence, are now manifested actually in it. The essence is now perfected in our mind and approaches the actuality of the archetype.

1071. But in a perceived, individual real neither all the perfections nor all the imperfections of which its *abstract essence* is receptive, occur, especially because the perfections have many levels, and also their harmonious grouping differs and admits gradations. This explains why the perception of an individual real is not usually sufficient to reduce the abstract essence to a perfect archetype. To have this archetype in our mind, we must have before us many different reals corresponding to the abstract essence, and these reals must be endowed with the greatest possible perfections. Indeed, the thing directly contrary to an imperfection is certainly the contrary perfection, but at its lowest level. Hence, simply seeing an imperfection does not guide the mind to find the contrary perfection at its highest level or see what excellence of perfection the mind could give to the real. This explains why artists must choose the beautiful elements distributed in a large number of natural entia and discerningly unite them.

However, it is true that even the lowest degree of perfection is a kind of starting point from which the mind can move to the highest degrees. A grouping of perfections is also a starting point from which the mind can come to perceive a more harmonious grouping. But not every mind has the ability to make these movements; a sublime mind is required, the kind of mind called *genius*, and even the flights of this mind [have] their limitations. Consequently, no human mind can ever carry out all those intellectual operations for which the starting point would perhaps be in nature itself. By 'starting point' given to the mind therefore, I mean 'something *perceived* from which there is a dialectical movement by means of intellectual imagination in order to know positively something else not perceived'.

1072. Hence, when the mind sees in a real being qualities that are perfections, it makes the following judgment: 'This real ens, relative to these qualities, realises what is appropriate to its abstract essence and is virtually comprised in this essence.'

When our mind sees in a real ens qualities that are imperfections, it makes another judgment: 'This real ens, relative to these

qualities, does not realise what is appropriate to its abstract essence and is virtually contained in the essence.'

We must remember that *abstract essence* and archetype, or *archetypal essence*, are not two different essences but two modes manifesting the same essence. The abstract essence, however, is so shown to the human mind that it hides in virtuality all that the archetypal essence manifests. We are therefore obliged to use the *abstract essence* to judge in the way I have explained the perfections and imperfections of contingent entia. Although we lack the *archetypal essence* (NE, 2: 650), we can scrape together some parts of it from experience, from an induction and from a more or less astute integration. Great progress in this task forms the minds of great artists.

Hence, judgments concerning the perfection or imperfection of contingent entia simply declare that 'these entia realise perfectly or imperfectly their essence', that is, 'they are or are not what they *must* be'.

1073. But what does 'must be' mean? What necessity is involved?

There are two necessities, one of *fact*, the other of *what is due*. The necessity of fact is the eternal archetype of some particular finite ens. The necessity of what is due is that which makes the *realisation* of a finite ens to be of such a kind that the archetype is realised. What then is the nature of this necessity that makes the realisation of an ens to be of a particular kind?

To answer the question, I will express the nature of this necessity in three of the formulas most proper to it and then explain them. This will give us the meaning of the *necessity of what is due*.

First formula: 'Every contingent thing must be the realisation of its essence.'

Second formula: 'Every thing must have its own being perfectly.'

Third formula: 'Every thing must be what it is and what it is called.'

In the formula: 'Every contingent thing must be the realisation of its essence', contingent things are seen, even by common judgment, as *realisations*, not as *essences*. If therefore they are realisations, either they must be the realisation of their essence, or if they do not realise it, they are not realisations. Hence, they

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are and are not, which is impossible. They must therefore be what they are, that is, realisations. The first formula thus becomes included in the third that 'every thing must be what it is and what it is called'. If contingent things were not realised, they would not be. But they are, because they are perceived, and the *abstract essence* perceived in them is seen realised. Hence, because the nature of contingent things consists in their being realisations, they are by their nature *relative* to the essence. If they are relative to the essence, they have their entire, perfect nature only when they realise the whole essence, not only the abstract essence but also the accidental perfections that this essence conceals in its virtuality and manifests later when it becomes full or archetypal. The necessity therefore we are discussing is this: granted that the realisation exists, it has its full nature of realisation, and thus has 'all its proper being', which is the second formula. This *necessity of what is due* is therefore predicated of the contingent we perceive, and consequently exists. In other words: 'Granted that the realisation of essence *A* exists, the realisation cannot be a perfect realisation unless everything in essence *A* is realised.'

This *necessity of what is due* is founded on the hypothesis that the *realisation*, that is, the real, is. When we admit the existence of the real, we judge it and say, 'This real realises abstract essence *A*, because this essence is present in the perception of the real. But abstract essence *A*, seen fully by the mind, also contains certain other things not found in the real. Therefore this real is defective because it does not realise the whole essence that it manifests in itself and after which it is named', and we say the opposite if it realises it. Hence, the *necessity of what is due* lies in the realised abstract essence, which is not the whole essence. But when the abstract essence is accompanied by all its accidental perfections we have *necessity of fact*. On the other hand, when the real that manifests the abstract essence realised in it requires that the accidental perfections, which are in fact indivisible from the abstract essence, be also realised in it, this is a *necessity of what is due* or an exigency; in other words: 'If the real must be perfect, it must realise all that is contained in the essence it realises; if not, it is not perfect realisation.' This realisation is necessary in order that the real be perfect. The real, in order to be perfect and as realisation of the essence, *must*

realise all of it. To say that it does not realise the whole essence is to say that it is an imperfect real.

This *necessity of what is due* is therefore logical necessity applied to the nature of contingent things. Logical necessity is that by which we cannot accept that a thing simultaneously is and is not (*Logica*, 191); metaphysical necessity and every kind of necessity are reduced to it (*NE*, 3: 1460).

1074. If we apply the principle of logical necessity, we have in our case the following more restricted proposition: 'The realisation of essence *A* must be realisation of essence *A*', otherwise there would be contradiction, and contradiction is impossible. Let us see then if this real, *a*, is realisation of essence *A*. This presents us with an antinomy because we have simultaneously two contradictory propositions:

'The real, *a*, is a realisation of essence *A*.'

'The real, *a*, is not a realisation of essence *A*.'

The defect of the real lies in this antinomy presented to us by the real. This *antinomy* which the real presents to the mind that is making a judgment about it and in which the defect of the real consists, has a special nature. It is not absolutely *contradiction*, because an absolute contradiction cannot be thought and therefore cannot be realised. Let us see then how the antinomy is reconciled and how, although reconciled, it still contains the concept of defect and imperfection.

Speaking generally, the antinomy can be reconciled by saying that the real, *a*, realises essence *A* in so far as this essence is abstractly but not fully thought. This removes dialectical contradiction.

1075. But I must give the ontological explanation for this reconciliation.

We need to recall the nature of *essence*. Essence, while remaining identical, can be thought in two modes: either with limits to our gaze (*Logica*, 360), that is, *abstract* essence, or without these limits or any other limits, that is, *archetypal* essence. Its identity in the two modes in which it is thought lies in the fact that, although both the abstract essence and the archetypal essence have the same content, the abstract essence contains only virtually a certain part of what the archetypal essence displays. But neither would be known as identical if they had not displayed a certain part of themselves to the mind. This part of the essence,

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actually seen as identical in the abstract essence and the archetypal essence, reveals the unity and identity of the two essences; we give it the name we use for it, to which the definition also refers. Hence, although every finite essence (or at least the finite essences we are discussing) can be thought in varying degree of actuality, there is a part in them that can never be lacking. Knowing this part, we know the essence; not knowing it, we do not know the essence; it is a fundamental part of the essence, which alone is named and defined. But there is also another part which, although joined indivisibly to the first part, can be either known virtually in the first part or known actually. Hence, knowledge of it need not be displayed for us in order that we know the essence.

This distinction between the fundamental part and the accessory part of the finite essence under discussion is given in our manner of conception, but it is also given in the realisation of the finite essence. However, although the *realisation* corresponds to the way of conception proper to the mind that carries out the realisation (whether the divine mind by creating, or the human mind in works of art), the realisation involves another condition: the real must always be *determined*. Nothing can exist in itself unless it is fully determined — I showed this in the previous book and it follows from the nature of the first form of being. Consequently, the *abstract essence* cannot be realised *in se* in so far as it remains in the mind as something undetermined. On the other hand, it is possible for the mind not to think the rest of the essence, that is, the accidental perfections contained in the archetype, without thinking less the identical essence involved. Thus, the mind, in the realisation of the essence that it wishes to realise (granted that it does not wish to realise, or cannot realise, the archetype) must give to the real other determinations diverse from those present in the archetype. These determinations of the real, diverse from the perfections in the archetype, and imposed by the mind on the abstract essence to make this essence realisable, are a kind of *limitations* that differ from the perfecting determinations of the archetype and are called *imperfections*.

Imperfections of the real are therefore not a simple lack of *actual perfections*, similar to the lack we think in the abstract essence. They are 'various, limiting determinations and therefore contrary to the perfecting determinations' that pertain to

the essence. The perfections added to the abstract essence produce the full, archetypal essence; similarly when limiting determinations, which exclude the perfections, are added to the abstract essence, they produce *imperfect full essences* in our mind (*NE*, 2: 648–652).

In this way the imperfect real makes real that fundamental part of the essence which makes the essence known and constitutes its identity, and gives the essence its name and definition. But the rest of the essence is supplied with limiting determinations, excluding the perfecting determinations. If the abstract part, which is always realised, is the part that defines and names the real, this naming of the real followed by the failure to find in it the entire essence that is named results in a kind of contradiction. For example, if we take a real human being and ask, ‘What is this ens?’, the reply is: ‘A man’. In saying ‘It is a man’, we are giving it the name of the essence, because ‘man’ expresses ‘human essence’. So the being of this real human being is human essence. But human essence has perfections that pertain to the archetype ‘man’ because human essence and the archetype ‘man’ are an identical essence. Hence, if the real human being lacks the perfections of human essence, he does not fully possess the being proper to him. When we say, ‘It is a man’, we affirm everything without exception contained in the being of man; when we say, ‘It lacks the perfection of man’, we deny it has everything contained in the being of man. We can therefore fall into a contradiction by the very nature of the way we conceive and speak. Knowledge by predication is not the same as knowledge by intuition: for example, when we say, ‘This real is a human being’, we are saying, ‘This real makes real the essence of man’; our mind has the essence of man present as a term of the relationship whose subject is the real. With this presence of the essence of man, the mind sees that all the perfections displayed in the archetype necessarily pertain to that essence. This is a necessity of ideal fact, but the necessity lacks the contingent realisation. There is no contradiction in the contingent realisation itself because everything in it is determined and corresponds to an imperfect full essence. There is however contradiction between the definition of the contingent real (a definition which expresses its relationship to the essence) and the nature of the essence, which has a necessity

of fact, that is, it must be endowed with all its perfections. This *necessity of fact of the essence*, which the mind refers to the definition of the real, becomes a *necessity of what is due*, because 'If this real is the realisation of man, and man is an essence which necessarily has these perfections, then the realisation of man cannot be a perfect realisation of this essence UNLESS it has these perfections.' The defect or imperfection, therefore, is in the contingent real relative to the essence it realises.

1076. Hence, the *essence* of any real whatsoever can be considered as the *theme* of the realisation, because the real is named after and defined by the name of the essence. The real, because it is this thing, must be completely this thing, otherwise it lacks its theme; it is defective. This is not a necessity of existence but, granted existence, a necessity of perfection. I do not say: 'It is necessary, if the thing is to exist', but 'necessary, if it is to exist completely'. Defect or imperfection is not incomplete existence but the lack of the totality of its own being. If in fact a real exists, it exists on condition of realising an essence. Its act therefore, its tendency, its nature are directed to realising its essence; this is its theme. If it does not fully realise this theme, it fails in its tendency and in its realising nature.

When the mind compares the realisation with the theme to be realised, that is, with the essence, or when it compares a real, as manifested by its definition, with its complete, archetypal essence, it judges it either imperfect, if it does not realise this essence, or perfect, if it fully realises it. The first judgment applies a reproach; the second attributes a praise. Although the attribution of this reproach or praise is an act of the intelligent subject, the reproach or praise are always predicated of the perfection of the object. The reason is that the object has perfection in itself, and has an *exigency* that the subject predicate of it what is in it and not what is not in it. This origin of this *objective exigency* is that the object is essentially manifestative of itself to the *subject*. The subject and object are for each other: they mutually fit each other; the object manifests itself to the other, and the other's nature is to accept the manifestation which perfects and informs it. If the subject were to oppose the manifesting object, it would operate contrary to the eternal nature of things; it would be attempting the simultaneous destruction of the object and of itself (the subject). Hence, the *exigency* reduces to this:

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'being cannot not be; this is a necessity of fact. No one must seek to destroy it'. The first reason is evident: a subject that seeks the destruction of being, seeks its own destruction. The subject is an act that necessarily tends to preserve and perfect its being. Therefore the subject that would seek the negation or destruction of being would operate contrary to the act through which it is what it is. The outcome would be a struggle against itself, but a struggle within what is 'one' is disorder, is evil. And because being is the good of everything that is, anyone seeking its destruction (a mad and impossible thing) would be attacking the good of everything that is; it would be a struggle against the universal act, and once again the struggle is disorder, is evil. Consequently, there is a *moral necessity* for the subject to acknowledge and be at peace with being, and being, present to and manifesting itself to the intelligent subject, manifests to it this necessity. This manifestation is the *objective exigency* of being we are talking about.

Note however that the perfection of the *intelligent subject* lies in receiving the light of the object, and in enjoying perfect peace with the possessed object. The subject is a feeling principle. If it is a feeling principle, it must feel its own perfection. But this perfection comes from the full, willed acknowledgement of the truth of the object, because only in this way is the subject in full agreement and harmony with the object. To acknowledge fully the truth of the object is an act of perfection of the subject. The feeling which constitutes the nature of the subject is such that this act of perfection is accompanied by a feeling proper to it, a kind of exultation, varying in degree in proportion to the perfection and excellence of the object. This feeling of intellectual exultation completes the explanation of the *approval* I have spoken about as a fifth element of beauty.

This approval is not conceived by thinking of the object alone or of the intellectual subject alone but only when thinking of the object united actually to the subject, and united in a perfect union. The approval pertains to that *accordant relationship* between the subject and the object which makes one single subject out of them both, a subject informed and conditioned according to its own perfection.

§6. *The elementary beauty found in all entia. Beauty according to the common judgment of human beings*

1077. Everything said so far gives us a fuller concept of beauty.

The human being begins to see beauty in feelable things with which all his development initiates and from which all his positive knowledge derives.

Every feelable ens is both one and many at the same time. Its unity always has a certain totality, because a half ens cannot exist. As we have seen, the *abstract essence* must be realised in every ens, and this essence always has a totality because it is indivisible. If many parts form this total one, they always have some accord with it, otherwise they would not form it. These conditions are common to every ens, not only to sensible entia. Whenever our mind sees this union of many in one, it must approve the order and give it some applause. Hence, in every ens there are in some way elements which present beauty; in every ens, even a defective ens, there is some beauty. Every ens therefore cannot be an ens unless it has some part of beauty: every ens, as ens, has something which is agreeable to the mind contemplating it, and draws some praise from the mind.

But this beauty (which to me seems so essential even to an imperfect ens) is not the beauty commonly spoken about. When we distinguish entia by calling some *ugly* and deformed and others *beautiful*, we are speaking about a more elevated beauty. To determine this beauty, about which we generally make our judgments, it is not sufficient to have recourse to the five characteristics that I have ascribed to beauty and are found to some extent in every ens. We must turn to another indication of beauty, as follows.

In finite entia (I will limit the discussion to these in order to keep the discussion simple), the *abstract essence* is always realised. Consequently, we see in them all the *elementary beauty* without which nothing can exist. People generally do not give any thought to this, and their judgments about what is beautiful have no bearing on it. Furthermore, in finite entia it is possible for some part of their archetype that contains the accidental perfections to be realised, but this either with difficulty or never

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fully and perfectly realised. Hence, in so far as finite entia realise these perfections the entia are beautiful; in so far as they do not realise them but are determined in a different way, they are ugly. Generally speaking, in all finite real entia, a portion of beauty is normally mixed with a portion of ugliness. How then are these entia judged by people? I leave aside the judgments made by uneducated people or those who have little skill in the use of words; they believe or say they are judging the beauty of objects, whereas in fact they are judging or speaking about what gives pleasure or is extraordinary or rare, what is valuable or useful, or something else, confusing all these things with beauty. I am not speaking about these judgments but about judgments which truly concern the beauty of objects. In the case of objects which are partly beautiful and partly ugly, I believe that 'people generally judge as beautiful any object in which the beautiful part stimulates and holds their attention, while the ugly part does not'. As a result, they simply say the object is beautiful and, in the case of the opposite, is ugly.

1078. Moreover, many circumstances influence the attraction and stimulation of our attention and fix it on either the ugly part or beautiful part of objects. But these circumstances are foreign to beauty.

A particular beauty can be outside the ordinary, can be rare or extraordinary, or joined to sensible pleasure or to the useful, or is found in a subject that is loved for other reasons. Such a beauty attracts our attention much more than the same quantity of beauty accompanied by circumstances contrary to these cases.

The same can be said about ugliness. For example, in a people that has generally gross, misshapen forms, there is no case for ugliness because it does not stimulate attention and does not appear as ugliness due to a lack of comparison.

In such judgments about the beauty or ugliness of objects, personal taste and the education of the personal taste of those judging play a role. People who have formed ideals of beauty which approach more closely to the eternal archetype are not so easily satisfied; for them very few things in nature are beautiful. We all know how Raphael complained about the scarcity of good models, and how artists have to work hard to gather the beauties dispersed in many objects of the same species because

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they do not find one object that on its own corresponds to the ideal in their mind.

However, the following can be a rule for applying the above [teaching]: 'Whenever a real ens approximates to its archetype more closely than the majority of the entia of its species with which it is compared, it is called beautiful.' 'An ens which realises its archetype less than the majority of the entia of its species with which it is compared is called ugly.'

§7. *The difference between the concept of beauty and the concepts of perfection, order and accord*

1079. What has been said so far demonstrates that *beauty* is something akin to *perfection*, *order* and *accord*. We must see whether its concept differs in any way from these three concepts.

I said that *perfection* is predicated of 'one' when the one results from all those many parts from which, according to its essence, it must result, and which have the accord and harmony necessary for them to put the one into act.

I said that *order* however is predicated of many when they are all considered as conspiring into one.

Accord is that relationship of each element through which it concurs in the best way to produce the one that it must produce according to the archetype.

Beauty has something that distinguishes it from all these three concepts.

When we consider an ens to be *perfect*, our thought is directed only to the ens considered subjectively, that is, we predicate the perfection as one of its *absolute properties* and refer the perfection to it without any other relationship. Beauty however is not an *absolute property* of a subject but a *property of the object*, a property *relative* to the real, intelligent subject. Thus, beauty has essentially the same relationship to something else as the *object* has. Hence, because the object is essentially referred to the intelligent entity, I posited *objectivity* as the first characteristic of beauty. Although *perfection* can certainly be considered both subjectively and objectively, it is in concept always an absolute property of the subject of which it is predicated.

Order is certainly a concept involving objectivity. But its difference from beauty is more than that of the concept of perfection. The subject of order is the many gathered together by the unity of thought, whereas the subject of beauty can be only the one resulting from many. Here the concept of beauty fits with the concept of perfection, but perfection is predicated of 'one' as an absolute property, whereas beauty is predicated as a property relative to the thought enjoying the beauty.

Secondly, the concept of order gives us a certain distribution of the many that have accordant relationships with the one, but does not essentially involve any approval and applause by the mind. On the other hand, the objective one in the many is beautiful precisely because it requires and draws approval and applause from our mind. Hence beauty can also be appropriately defined as 'the splendour of perfection or of what is perfect', where an intellectual splendour is understood. Perfection certainly, and also order, exact and draw approval but they are not perfection and order through their exigency, whereas beauty lies precisely in this exigency in such a way that if the object's exigency and the subject's consequent moral necessity are removed, beauty would no longer be thought.

Finally, the *accord* between an elementary entity and the whole concurs in producing the order of the whole because it is already an elementary order. But this accord cannot appropriately be called beautiful or ugly because beauty pertains to the 'one' that is whole, as I have said. Beauty is not generated by beautiful things; if it were, it would exist before it was generated. Nor is there the danger, feared by Plotinus, that it is generated by ugly things. The elements of beauty are not its elements because they are beautiful or ugly, but because they accord in producing the one-whole they form.

§8. *Determination of the undetermined elements of beauty:
first, determination of the completeness of the one*

1080. All we have said is still not enough to give us the fully determined concept of beauty so that we do not confuse it with any other concept; what is needed is a concept that expresses the very nature of beauty. I have already put forward, as still

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undetermined, the five elements from which I said beauty results.

For example, among the elements of beauty I posited *unity*, *plurality*, the *completeness of the unity* resulting from this plurality, the *objectivity* of this complete one resulting from many, and the *approval* it exacts and draws from the human mind. With the exception of *objectivity*, which is something clear *per se* and simple, all the other four elements require further determinations. Rather than supply the elements of beauty, they indicate them and instead of submitting them directly to thought, they give abstract signs so that we can know when and where the elements of beauty are. To find in effect these elements and use these abstract indications as our guide, we must ask three questions:

1. What *completeness of the one* is required for constituting beauty?
2. What is the nature of the *union* of the many and the one from which beauty originates?
3. To what is directed the *approval* that the mind gives to beauty?

I begin with the first question: what completeness of the one is required by beauty?

1081. The completeness of the one required by beauty is the completeness of an ens. In fact, if an ens is not complete, it is not beautiful but defective in so far as not complete; it is not a perfect one, the one which, as I say, results from many. Nor does it have all the elements from which it must result — or, if it has them, they do not have the necessary relationships of accord with the one, nor the harmony of these relationships.

Hence, the true seat of beauty is a complete ens. However, each of the ones which the mind sees resulting from a certain number of abstracts can be called a *ray of beauty*, or a *fragmented* or *diminished beauty*, but not a complete beauty. Each may have all the other elements but lacks the element of the *completeness* of the one formed from the many. Our mind sees this kind of beauty in the unity of a science or of a theory or an algebraic formula. These species of abstract beauty can certainly exact and draw an eminent and enthusiastic approval from our mind, and I will explain this later. But their beauty, instead of being complete, consists of simple fragments or dashes of beauty.

But what is a complete ens?

It is certainly a subsistent ens, which is either Infinite or finite.

We have therefore an *infinite beauty* (that of infinite *Ens*) and a *finite beauty* (the beauty of subsistent, finite ens).

Absolute completeness of the one is proper only to infinite Ens and therefore *absolute beauty* resides only in infinite Ens.

A *finite ens*, relative to other finite entia, is a complete one because it exists separately from the others and they exist separately from it, in such a way that each is and is not the others. It is therefore one in itself, in itself alone.

Moreover, and for a similar reason, a finite ens is a complete one relative to itself because it exists in such a way that nothing of itself exists outside itself. That which is, is therefore all in itself, in its own 'one'. A one, we must note, is complete when what exists and is determined by its essence does not go beyond the one but exists as one. Every finite ens therefore, even relative to itself, is a complete one in so far as and in the way that it exists as one. Hence it can be a seat of complete beauty. But a finite ens is twofold: there is the *being proper to it* (this is its typical essence), and there is the *contingent realisation*, which is the real. In the human mind — I limit the discussion to the human mind simply to facilitate the matter — in the human mind the two forms, typical essence and the finite real, constitute *what is perceived*. So we need to ask whether the beauty of a finite ens resides in its typical essence, or in the real, or in the union of the real and the typical essence that our mind brings about and is called *perceived ens*.

1082. Because the pure *real*, separate from its essence, lacks objectivity, which is the essential element of beauty, beauty can exist only in the *typical essence* or in *what is perceived*.

1083. The *typical essence* of a finite ens can be conceived in two ways, either as containing all the finite ens (as in the divine mind) or as a purely ideal essence (as in the human mind). Purely ideal, typical essence contains a finite ens only as possible. But a finite ens, if not realised, does not exist in itself, because realised being means to have an existence of subjective form, the form which constitutes the existence in itself of entia. Consequently, if a finite ens does not exist in itself but only in the ideal, typical essence, it lacks the *real subject* of which *beauty* is predicated when we say an ens is beautiful. However,

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beauty predicated of a *subject* is one thing, the subject of which beauty is predicated is another. *Beauty* can be in the typical essence, but not the *beautiful*, that is, not the real subject of which beauty is predicated. In fact, beauty is an essence, and essences are conceived by the mind even without their determined, real subject (*Logica*, 334); indeed, we have seen that the concept of essence is precisely in the conception of an entity without a determined subject. Nor is the subject totally lacking in the typical essence, but this subject is possible, not real. This subject is also a *complete one* because it needs nothing else and cannot admit anything else except what it has (essence is always necessary and immutable); it results from all the multiplicity from which it must result and from the connections of accord that are fixed by the *necessity of fact*. This *complete one*, in the objective form, constitutes a dialectical subject, not a real subject.

Beauty can therefore be in the *typical essence*, and is also there when this *typical essence* is the *archetypal essence*. If it were an *imperfect full essence*, it would not present a possible beautiful thing but an ens where beauty would be mingled with ugliness, where the former could surpass the latter, or vice versa.

The typical essence present in God is practical and creative. Hence, because it is not purely ideal and speculative, it is an efficient cause of the contingent, real ens and has in itself a realisation considered as an absolute existence of the contingent and not as an existence relative to the contingent, because the very relateness of the contingent essence is in an absolute mode. Hence, in this typical essence (granted that it is an archetype, that is, a perfect, typical essence, like that of the world) there is *beauty* and also *the beautiful*, that is, beauty in the real subject. But the beautiful (beauty predicated of this real, contingent subject) is in an absolute mode because the subject, which *in se* is a relative ens, is a relative ens in an absolute mode. The absolute mode with which the relative ens is present does not constitute the relative ens but is a container of this ens and is essentially distinct from it.

1084. We must now investigate whether beauty resides in the perceived finite ens; this ens results from the real united to the typical essence in the intimacy of the mind. Let us suppose that this essence is endowed with beauty, and to simplify the case,

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the beauty is perfect; in other words, we are dealing with an archetypal essence. In a perceived finite ens there is certainly beauty in the intelligible part which is the archetypal essence itself. The other element, the realisation of this essence, is therefore the realisation of a very beautiful essence. As such, we say that the real also is beautiful because the beauty of its essence is predicated of it. The real participates in the beautiful in the way it participates in being; it participates in being because it participates in its own archetypal essence, and because beauty is in this essence, the real participates in beauty. Therefore, participation in beauty, which makes certain real things beautiful, is in the mind, where alone objective beauty is united with the subjective real.

Vincenzo Gioberti's definition of the beautiful applies only to the beautiful as perceived; it does not include all the beautiful. He defines the beautiful as 'the individual union of an intelligible type with an imagined element, a union brought about by the action of the aesthetic imagination'.¹⁶⁷ He has laudably acknowledged that an *intelligible type* must be involved in beauty. But because there are both ugly types and beautiful types, he forgot to say which types are required for constituting his definition of beauty. Consequently, having posited beauty solely in the union between the types and the imagined element, and not in the types alone, he was unable to make the distinction between beautiful types and deformed types. If he had said that by *types* he meant those which were beautiful, he would have found a beauty anterior to its definition, because the beauty would be anterior to the union between the type and its phantasm. Furthermore, because beautiful types in the same species can be many, he should have distinguished among them the most beautiful, which is the proper seat and supreme specific measure of beauty — I have called this most beautiful type archetype. But he could not do this after he had posited beauty in the union with the phantasm and not in the type. The union is the act by which the real participates in beauty; it is not the act by which beauty begins to be. Moreover, in turning to the *imagined element*, our prolific author apparently does not acknowledge the beautiful in the sensible real and, as I call it, in

¹⁶⁷ *Del Bello*, c. 1.

the *perceived real*. He simply limits the beautiful to the images of the phantasy. In this case, neither nature itself nor the skilled artist's statue would be beautiful; nothing beautiful would exist externally — all would be reduced to what is in our mind and imagination. And if that is all it is, everybody could enjoy it on their own but not show it to others. Finally, he says that the individual union of an intelligible type with an imagined element, in which beauty resides, must be carried out by the action of the *aesthetic imagination*. But we could not conceive this *aesthetic imagination* without our first knowing what the beautiful is. In this kind of definition what is being defined is in the definition. Logicians call it a definition *idem per idem* [the same by means of the same] (*Logica*, 705).

What is perceived therefore, in so far as a real, participates in the beauty of the archetype or in the type which approximates so closely to the archetype that it arouses praise and approval of what is beautiful.

Each of these things, the *specific archetypal essence* (or its approximation), the *affirmed real* and the *imagined real* are conceived as having a *complete one*. They are thus conceived as subjects of beauty except that the essence of beauty resides in the specific archetypal essence, whereas the imagined or affirmed real is beautiful only through participation in this essence.

1085. If we now consider the whole world of ideas ranging from the full specific idea to undetermined being, we will not find in any of them or in a group of them the complete one necessary for perfect beauty. Nevertheless we can discern an order and even many orders according to the different ways ideas are grouped. These orders can offer our thought many rays or lights of beauty or, as I have called them, diminished and fragmented beautiful things, precisely because the one is diminished. I explained how the one can be diminished in the previous book ([587]).

In the case of absolute being, however, we find not only a complete *one* but a one of an *absolute completeness* and therefore the seat of absolute beauty. In fact, every 'one' resulting from many is formed by a containing nature. If the many were not contained in what holds them together, they could never form the one we are looking for ([cf. the previous books]). Every

container must as such be simple and one in order to contain many and make them one. Hence, every container, in so far as one, is truly distinct from every other container. Consequently, there are as many ones formed from the many as there are containers which the mind can think. But these containers, formal causes of ones resulting from many, can be either real entia or possible or complete entia, or else exist purely relatively to the mind conceiving them. In this last mode the containers which contain the many exist only in a virtual mode, because what is virtual before the mind neither subsists *in se* nor can subsist while it remains only virtual. As long as the mind has the containers present to it hidden in virtuality, it sees only the container with an undetermined content, as in ideal being, whose indetermination is maximum. If an ens is undetermined, the one is undetermined and hence does not have the necessary completeness; it is a diminished one, which, as I said, is the state of all abstracts and of their different groupings. In all these, beauty is diminished, although it can be very attractive to the mind, like certain theorems in geometry and certain dialectical forms.

The *completeness* of the one required for total beauty, therefore, consists in this: 'The one is ultimately a container distinct from every other container, in which the content is present before the mind in a clear and fully determined way'.

1086. Because we now know in what the *completeness* of one consists and because containers can be of diverse kinds and sizes, we can see how there can be completeness of diverse kinds and sizes. In fact containers can be enclosed within each other. This is true not only in the world of abstractions where the one, as I have said, cannot be other than a diminished one, but also in the case of ones endowed with completeness and forming true totalities found only in real or fully determined entia. I will begin with lower entia, and from there move to higher entia.

The *material real* can be conceived as contained by its material shape. This shape (for example, a sphere) can be considered as a simple container of the material. In fact the spherical form itself is a simple concept to our mind, and cannot be changed or altered in any way. In a sphere of gold, the gold is the material contained in the container, that is, in the spherical shape that gives it unity. Thus, the material contained in a corporeal form is a complete one, the first kind of completeness of

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the one. *Corporeal beauty*, whether affirmed in the real or in the imaginary real, is predicated of this one.

If, however, we delve more deeply into corporeal nature, we see that it has the nature of term and could not be thought without our thinking (at least implicitly) the feeling principle of which the body is essentially term. In this case, the feeling principle seems to be a *higher container*, having as its content both the corporeal matter and the corporeal shape (*AMS*, 94–103). The shape of every external body is simply a circumscribed portion of the term of the corporeal fundamental feeling. In this way, the *container* that gives unity to corporeal matter is the *feeling principle*, not the shape proper to matter. The corporeal matter and shape therefore, contained in animal feeling, are a complete one, the second kind of completeness of the one. *Psychic beauty* is predicated of this one and consists in the harmony of feelings in the unity of the fundamental feeling present in the feeling principle.

Continuing this line of thought, we see that this second container is contained in a larger *third container*, the rational principle (*PSY*, 255–271). The fundamental feeling of animality which contains its terms, that is, the non-shaped, shaped and circumscribed forms which in their turn contain the material, all these are understood as content relative to the rational principle and, by means of this principle, understood as a complete one. This is the third kind of completeness of one, and *microcosmic beauty* is predicated of it. All this explains why rational ens is said to be superior in beauty to the two preceding kinds of beautiful things.

When we speak about the second of these kinds of *complete ones*, the first ceases to be a complete one and becomes, in our mind, a diminished one. Consequently, considered in this way, it is no longer a *subject of complete beauty* but only of diminished beauty.

When we turn our thought to the third kind of *complete ones*, the second ceases to be a complete one and a subject of complete beauty. For the same reason, only the third kind remains a complete one, a subject of *complete beauty*. Compared with this third kind, the first two disappear.

But most authors, when discussing these different kinds of *complete ones*, separate and consider them individually. They

speak about the beauty pertaining to them without comparing one kind with another, the lower with the higher. Thus, the many things they say about beauty, although in appearance opposites, are true according to the limited consideration restricting the discussion.

1087. We now come to the completeness pertaining to the *rational one*, which opens up a new field. But whereas the two kinds of *complete ones* appeared in only one form of being (the subjective form), in the rational one two forms appear, the *subjective* and *objective*. In the case of the subjective form, what I have said applies to human beings because *microcosmic* beauty pertains to them. On the other hand, the objective form of *being* is not the human being but the object of the human being as an intelligent subject, and in this object the other kinds of beauty are seen: *corporeal*, *psychic* and *microcosmic*. However we need to see whether the object has another beauty in addition to these.

Objective being which manifests itself to us shows only the three kinds of beauty mentioned above, and in itself is not a complete one but a diminished beauty, a container, in which the content is totally virtual and, for that reason, infinite. It is an element of beauty, intellectual light, but does not have the other elements and lacks visible plurality.

Nevertheless, because objective being has a virtual, infinite content, we discover through the noblest operations of our mind what it must contain, although we cannot define this content except by means of logical or ideal determinations that direct our affirmation. In this way, our philosophical thought brings us to the existence of God, understanding that God is absolute Being and that absolute Being must be understood as subsistent and identical in three inseparable but distinct modes or forms. Once we are aware of this, our thought clearly sees that the infinite, virtual content, necessarily present in objective Being, must be an infinite subsistent, and an infinite holy. Consequently, because objective Being necessarily contains these two entities, it is a one that has a maximum, essential completeness.

However, because this Subsistent must be infinite, it is clear that the content must also have the nature of Container: it must, as a living infinite Mind, contain the infinite object and the

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infinite Holy. Hence, here also, we discover a complete One of maximum completeness.

Furthermore, a similar argument makes us understand the necessity that the infinite Holy itself is not only content but also Container: the Holy, through love, unifies both the object and the subject in itself. Thus, for a third time, we find we have a complete One of maximum completeness.

If we then compare the One arrived at by the first argument with the Ones arrived at by the second and third arguments, we see they have an identical nature. Everything in the first one is in both the second and the third; in each, being is present in the three forms, except for the relationships of container and content. These relationships, when determined, reduce to relationships of origin, because only the origin shows why the containers are three rather than one and in that order.

Hence, because divine nature is one and is Being subsistent in three modes or persons, it is a complete one of a maximum completeness, of which absolute beauty must be predicated.

1088. But precisely because this nature is always complete and identical in three modes and persons, absolute beauty must be predicated of each of the persons.

The distinction between the beauty predicated of the divine nature and the beauty predicated of the divine persons needs no more than a different consideration by the mind. Our mind, when considering the beauty of the divine nature, does not decide that it is in one person rather than in another; it simply says, 'The beauty is wherever the divine nature is', without defining where this nature is. Hence, the subjects of absolute beauty remain undetermined or implied in our mind. On the other hand, when we consider beauty in each of the persons separately (in each of whom the whole nature dwells), we think it in its subjects. Although the *beauty* predicated of each person is identical in nature and in infinite magnitude, nevertheless the same beauty is in three modes in the three divine persons, because the order of the three forms of being varies in each person. Hence, although each person results from the three forms, these forms are, as it were, differently organated in each person, and it is this which distinguishes one person from another. The organation in fact always reduces to the relationships of origin: the Father is Father-container in so far as he

generates and spirates; the Son is Son-container as generated-spirating-subsistent object; the Holy Spirit is Spirit-container as subsistent-beloved-spirated by the first two with a single spiration. Thus, the different organisation is a different mode of the same absolute beauty predicated of each person.

But when we say that 'beauty is predicated of each person', the persons are considered as subjects of the beauty, distinct from the beauty predicated of them. Can there be a concept of beauty without any thought of the subject to which the concept pertains? We must distinguish. If we are talking about a finite, relative beauty predicated of finite subjects, the concept of beauty is one thing, the concept of the subsistent subject of which the beauty is predicated another, as I have pointed out. The subsistent finite is not, of itself, ens, but the realisation of ens, which is complete in the full idea it realises. Thus, in the idea-ens there is the possible subject, which suffices for the concept of beauty. The subsistent, finite subject is not therefore necessary for the concept of the beauty predicated of it. But this does not apply to the infinite, absolute beauty predicated solely of an infinite, absolute subject. This subject cannot be purely ideal, nor an ideal whose realisation is diverse from it and is contingent; there is no infinite subject that is possible in the idea and subsistent in reality. But the essence of this subject contains subsistence. We cannot therefore think the concept of this beauty without the subject of which it is predicated, because the beauty is predicated of the subject with an analytical judgment, not with a synthetical judgment. Indeed a complete one is necessary for beauty and is its subject: thus, the *complete one* relative to finite ens is present in the full idea, but the *complete one* relative to infinite ens is not present in the idea because reality is essential to it. The concept of infinite beauty therefore can be found only in the divine persons themselves, whereas the concept of the beauty predicated of finite real things is not found in these things but in their idea, which is then predicated of them by means of a synthetical judgment similar to the judgment of perception (*NE*, 1: 359). Perception adds the idea to the real, and once the idea is made specific, the beauty is a relationship of it; the relationship can be called an elementary concept of the beauty.

1089. I have distinguished the *idea* from the *essence seen in the*

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idea: I said that essence is the thing seen; the idea constitutes the means by which it is seen. This distinction between the *means of knowledge* and the *thing known* is always present in everything the mind can understand.

God is known not by means of the pure idea but by means of *objective being*. I have spoken about divine beauty as *essence* known as existing in each of the divine persons; I have still to speak about the *means* by which it is known. I have said that it is known through objective being. In fact, if a mind gazing at the divine persons sees infinite beauty in them, the persons must have been made *object* of this contemplating mind. Thus they and their beauty are seen in the *object* as in their container. This explains how objectivity is the first element of beauty and how nevertheless it resides essentially in all three divine persons. It resides in each of them as *essence*, but in the objective form, which is objective being, it resides as *essence known per se*, essence united to its knowability, undivided from the means, in which every mind knows it. This explains why beauty is intuited in the second supreme form of being and predicated of the other two. The predication would be impossible without some duality, at least dialectical duality. The three persons are therefore three subjects of which beauty, essentially in them, is predicated, but they and their beauty are seen in the *object*. However, none of the divine persons needs to go out of himself in order to know himself or be known, because each has the other two forms as content. Thus, the first and the third persons also have as their essential content objectivity (essential intelligibility), which is not person as content but the second person with the relationship of generated Container. Eternal beauty therefore, together with the subjects of which it is predicated resides, in the objective form. Hence, just as the subsistent *reason* for eternal Being is in the Word, so the subsistent reason for eternal beauty is also in the Word.

Note, I say 'subsistent reason'. The *reason* for a thing (which is the same as the *essence*) is conceived in two ways: either logically or ontologically. The logical reason makes known to our mind the ultimate *why* of the thing, but the ontological reason demonstrates this *why* as subsistent or founded in a subsistent. Thus, the logical essence of beauty is the *objective form of being in which beauty resides*, and this objective form is contained in

each divine Person. Each divine Person has in himself therefore the knowability, reason and essence of his beauty. But this reason, considered as subsistent generated container, is, under this relationship, the *second divine person*, that is, the ontological reason for the essence of beauty. In fact, there would be no contained objective form if this form were not generated as Container.

1090. Divine Being, subsistent in the three divine persons, is a trine one of maximum, *absolute completeness*. The ones present in *corporeal*, *psychic* and *microcosmic beauty* are complete ones, but of a *relative completeness*. The completeness of the 'one' follows the completeness of the ens so that the greater the completeness of the ens, the greater the completeness of the 'one' that contains it.

We have seen that the *one of the matter* contained by a form is a *complete one*, as long as the mind does not refer it to another superior 'one', such as the feeling principle containing the corporeal forms. We also saw that this second 'one' is itself a complete one, as long as the mind does not refer it to another 'one' in which the mind itself is contained, that is, to the rational principle. Each of these ones is identically content and container. As content, each is not a complete one but a constituent part of another 'one'. As container, each is a complete one. The law we saw in the constitution of being, 'the subject which gives an entity its name is always the container, not the content', applies also to finite entia. Hence, that which constitutes the subject and is the source of the name indicating an entity is a relationship.

If we follow the chain of these contents and containers, we can ask whether the rational principle, which is the greatest container known to us in the world, is itself contained by another container, and we see immediately that it is contained by the divine, intellectual subject, which continually creates it. Consequently, the rational principle also has the nature of container and content, identical in being and reality. But in the relationship of container, it exists to itself and *in se* and to all the minds that consider and affirm it in this relationship. As content, however, it does not exist *in se*, nor to itself, but in the practical mind of God, pertaining to God as object of the free mind. Therefore, every finite ens is a *complete one*, although not an absolute complete one but relative to itself and to the

minds that consider it this way. This relative existence makes it lose identity so that, as content, it pertains to the nature expressed by the name of its Container. Thus, there are relationships that cause the loss of identity of a thing because the essence of the thing is formed and determined by a relationship. The relationship I am speaking about, between container and content, is of this kind. For this reason, I have often said that the existence of finite entia is *relative*, that is, formed by a subsistent *relationship*.

But because the finite, intellectual, rational principle is contained in the practical mind of God as *object*, we must say that it is not only contained in God as in subject-Being but even before this, is contained in God as in object-Being, as I explained in the previous book. I said that the World is contained virtually in the absolute Object but, as determined object, is *ab aeterno* distinct from the free Mind in God. This object is the divine archetype of the World, not pure idea but real type from which the realisation results, that is, the relative existence of the world in itself. In fact, the logical order conceived in the creation of the world [shows] that the world could not be created if the Word were not already generated. Moreover, the generated Word virtually contains the world. But the Father, with the act with which he generates the Word, distinguishes *ab aeterno* in the Word the Archetype of the world, and this distinction means simultaneously to create the world. The World therefore is first contained in the Word through the action of the Father and, because the Word is generated in the bosom of the Father, the created world is also in the Father. Moreover, everything in the Word is loved. Consequently, the world must be contained in a third way in God, that is, contained in divine Love which, as subsistent and having the relationship of Maximum container, is the third person. Thus, the world and everything in it is contained in God in a triple mode. Considered in this way and not in its pure relative existence, it is not a complete one but something pertaining to a greater one, that is, to God who is the *absolute, complete one*, which is not contained in anything else through essence but solely through participation.

1091. The difficulty of finding adequate expressions for something that is far beyond human perception causes new objections to arise from the very thing that seems to have been

clearly stated. Among such objections, the following is not without importance:

'You said that the divine 'one' is the *absolute, complete One* because, relative to its essence, it is not contained in any other 'one'. But the forms of being are mutually contained. Therefore each is not a complete one, that is, at least an absolute, complete one.'

My reply is that it is one thing for a nature to exist contained in a higher 'one', that is, having greater entity, it is another for it to exist contained in an equal or lower 'one'.

1092. When a nature exists in a one that is higher, it is considered in the relationship of either content or container. In its relationship as content, it does not exist *in se*, but is a part constituting the higher 'one' in which it is contained. On the other hand, in its relationship as container, it exists *in se* but dependent on the higher 'one' in which it is contained. As a result, the existence of such a subject is not in itself a full existence so that when we think the subject *in se*, we also think its subsistence. In fact, the simple concept of the subject does not tell us whether it subsists or not, because its subsistence is founded in the nature contained in something else. Hence, the virtue by which it subsists resides in this other thing. On the other hand, if a nature is contained in another nature that is not greater or superior to it in entity, its virtue to subsist, that is, to be *in se*, must be equal in the two natures or entities. One nature therefore, relative to its being, cannot depend on the other, which means they must both have as proper to each an equal nature of container. So how can they also be content? — In this case, the relationship of Container is not based on the relationship of content in such a way that the Container is container because it is content, but it is Container *in se* and *per se*, independently of being content, even though it is also content. Consequently, if this Container is considered on its own, without the involvement of another Container in which it is contained, it is all that it is, solely *in se* and *per se*. This is the case of the divine persons. For example, if we grant that the Word is generated, he is generated by the Father. As Word however he has everything in himself. Only in his concept is there existence *in se* and the whole of being, and our thought has no need of anything else to conceive him complete and perfect. Thus, JESUS Christ says:

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‘For as the Father has life in himself, so he has granted the Son also to have life in himself.’¹⁶⁸ St. Augustine explains: ‘What is he in himself if not life itself?’¹⁶⁹; in other words, the Word is subsistent life. Hence, in order to conceive him as subsistent *in se*, our mind needs nothing else nor needs to conceive him in something else. St. Augustine therefore adds: ‘so that he does not live by participation’ (like creatures) ‘but unchangeably, and is himself life.’¹⁷⁰ The living nature of God therefore, in so far as generated through intellect, is the personal life of the Son, who of himself is complete substance, ‘because,’ as St. Hilary says, ‘he never needed help from without TO CONTAIN HIMSELF and is called substance.’¹⁷¹ In other words, the person of the Word (we cannot talk about this person unless we suppose he is already generated: he is second person precisely because he is always generated) is absolutely person *in se*; he is not person *in se* because contained in the Father, although contained in the Father by necessity of origin.

1093. It should be noted that I have distinguished the pure forms of being from the divine persons. The pure forms are abstracts that have no effective distinction in God but only in our mind. The forms are conceived as abstract containers and as contents reciprocally; under the opposite relationship of contents they differ from the forms under the relationship of containers. Both contents and containers have in common the most abstract, undetermined *entity* which remains when the mind prescind from this relationship. The persons themselves are also distinct in God, not only in our mind. But the distinction arises through those subsistent relationships that apply to origin. If we ask therefore how they are contents, the answer is that, whenever our mind prescind from the relationships of origin, it no longer has the divine persons before it but only being, virtually distinct in the persons and, through the action

¹⁶⁸ Jn 5: 26.

¹⁶⁹ *In Jo.*, vol. 22, 9–10.

¹⁷⁰ [*Ibid.*, 22, 10].

¹⁷¹ St. Hilary: *opp. Fragm.*, 2: 32 — St. Hilary defines essence as ‘that which always is’ (*essentia ex eo quod semper est nuncupatur (ibid.)*), and substance as ‘that which subsists *in se*’ (cf. *L. de Symod.*, 12). Understood in an absolute sense therefore, it was reserved to God alone.

of our thought, also actually distinct. We further distinguish in this being the reciprocally contained forms. But in being, the distinction is once again virtual and, relative to our mind, actual. If our mind adds the relationships of origin to these forms in so far as contents, it finds it has completed its concept of the truly distinct divine persons. Hence, saying that in each person the other two inexist (from which the relative form of being is extracted by theosophical abstraction) is not the same as saying that the other two forms of being, corresponding to the other two persons from whom the forms are extracted by the abstraction I spoke of, inexist in one person. The other two forms of being, as pure abstracts, inexist indistinct in the person, just as the divine nature inexists simple and indistinct. This inexistence of the two forms in the person can be called simply *inexistence* or, through the mental distinction of the forms, *insecession*. The other two persons inexist in each person as distinct, equal persons. This inexistence is therefore appropriately called *circuminsecession*, a word most suitable for preserving the distinction of the persons.

1094. We can say therefore that a *lower* 'one' is contained in a *higher* 'one' in such a way that the latter has the nature of all or of cause, and the former has the nature of constituent part or effect. But this is totally different from saying that an *equal* 'one' inexists in another *equal* 'one' and does so with such independence of the first that it has *in se* its full, subjective existence without participation in the existence of the first. Hence, a thing can be contained in another in two ways: the thing contained can exist with the existence of the container and not with its own, and exist with its own existence and not with the existence of the container.

Finally, a *higher* 'one' can exist in a *lower* 'one' but only through participation. This inexistence is purely relative to the lower 'one'. The higher 'one', relative to the lower 'one', is contained, not absolutely but relative to its own essence. Thus, if the human mind thinks God, God is contained in the human mind, but not through essence. In fact, through his essence God remains *in se*, independent of the human mind and absolutely containing all, including the human mind. But because he remains *in se*, he makes the human mind participate in him, that is, makes the human mind think and love him. This act of thought

and love finishes totally in and relative to the human being; it does not act upon God or modify him. Hence, the divine essence, receiving absolutely nothing (neither action nor passion nor anything else) is in no way contained, relative to itself.

We have therefore three modes of containership:

First mode: the being of an ens is a 'one' contained in another 'one' but is superior through a form of being. Here, the superior form of being is container. In the case of the *subjective form*, the container is a *subject*. *Finite real things* are of this kind.

Second mode: being forms a 'one' contained in another 'one' but is superior through its relationships and personal forms. Here, persons are containers, although their being is content. This is the case of the divine persons.

Third mode: a relationship of being is contained as a 'one' in another 'one' but being is superior. Here, being is container. Ideal being is of this kind, contained in the mind, or God communicated to human beings. Generally speaking, this mode explains the nature of *participation* in essences.

1095. Returning now to the topic of beauty, I said that *complete* beauty must have as its foundation a complete one. A complete one is present only in ens; in fact, form, separate from being, cannot constitute a complete one. Hence, in describing the various *complete ones*, I found three finite and three infinite.

The three finite 'ones' are three kinds of finite beauty: *corporeal*, *psychic* and *microcosmic* — each a *relative* beauty.

The three infinite 'ones' are the three divine persons united in nature and making a single 'one'. In God we found *absolute beauty*, unique beauty, but resplendent in three modes.

These different kinds of beauty are classified according to the completeness of a greater or lesser 'one'. We also found the following concept by which a specifically greater beauty can be distinguished from a specifically lesser beauty: 'Beauty is as great (that is, of a more excellent species) as the completeness of the one, the seat of beauty.'

§9. *The nature of the union of the many in the one,
which constitutes beauty*

1096. It is an undeniable fact that whenever the mind sees a unity resulting from a plurality, it approves the unity and experiences an intellectual delight in it. Indeed this is the primal fact from which human beings formed the concept of beauty. Although only the greatest philosophers like Plato and St. Augustine and their disciples formulated this fact in which they saw the first manifestation of beauty, nevertheless even those authors who did not completely understand it and sought a definition of beauty elsewhere always suppose and implicitly understand the fact unawares.

But I must try to explain the fact and find a formula that contains this explanation. Beauty is certainly not found either in the one or in the unconnected many. Why then does it appear as soon as these two elements unite, and the one and the many are no longer thought individually but the one is thought in the many?

One and many constitute an antinomy: one is the opposite of many, and many of one. Does our intellect perhaps experience pleasure in reconciling the antinomies, and does our approval of beauty and our intellectual delight in it consist in this pleasure? I have no doubt that an element of the delight and applause which the mind is naturally drawn to give to beauty consists in such approval and pleasure. The mind's subjective delight, which is an effect of beauty and not beauty itself, can be distinguished from the *objective exigency* of approval that results from the reconciliation of antinomies. In this case, the objective exigency can, as I said, pertain to beauty because in beauty there is certainly reconciliation of the many with the one. But although every reconciliation of antinomies [brings with it] approval by the mind, beauty is not always in this reconciliation; it is in the reconciliation of the particular antinomy manifested between the one and the many of the same ens. Through this reconciliation, the many appear to the mind not only as reconciled with the one but as cause of it.

We must remember that the proper object of the intellectual subject is being. Being informs the subject and, after informing it, perfects it. The intellectual subject, as a living feeling, necessarily

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enjoys being and all it finds pertaining to being's nature. Just as the infinite intellective subject is subjective being that seeks its other form (the objective form), that is, loves this form, so the finite, intellective subject is the subjective form that seeks simultaneously its being and the objective form; the three forms, which are necessarily forms of identical being, are in fact destined to be together. Consequently, it is an essential delight of the mind to know being and unite itself to being, to objective being. But because being is always in perfect agreement with itself, our mind rejects any antinomy it sees, as if it were afraid that being might fade away because the mind senses that the contradiction is the annihilation of being. On the other hand, when the reconciliation of opposite terms has been accomplished and the danger of contradiction ceased, the mind is reassured and rejoices to see once more, as in fact it does, being in its natural coherence and interior concord. But being's exigency of approval is not beauty's exigency: the former is the genus, of which the latter is only a species. Because being is manifested in different ways, not always as one resulting from many, we can say that beauty's exigency arises from the nature of being but not vice versa. We cannot say that every exigency of approval arising from the nature of being is beauty's exigency, for example, the exigency of simple truth is not beauty's exigency. Hence, beauty's exigency of approval and applause, which beauty reveals to the mind contemplating it, is a exigency of being in that being exists in an ordered way and without discord, even though multiple, that is, in so far as it exists as one resulting from the many.

1097. But our investigation must go further in order to determine the nature 1. of the one we are discussing, 2. of the many, and 3. of their reconciliation, which will be clarified as a consequence. In beauty, the one cannot be divided from the many, nor the many from the one. If separated, they would, as I have said, no longer be elements of beauty. The mind, when confronted with the beautiful, distinguishes in it by abstraction the one and the many without dividing them; it distinguishes the one in the many from the many in the one, and so knows them as elements of beauty. We must therefore look for the nature of these two elements in the contemplating mind, because they are not elements of beauty *per se*, but in so far as abstracts, in so far as seen abstractly, although they remain united.

We ask therefore: what is the 'one' that the mind sees in any entity whatsoever? This 'one' is always the *abstract essence* of the entity. Abstract essence is perfectly simple and one, cannot be confused with any other essence, and there is only one essence in every entity. This explains why essence constitutes the specific characteristic by which an ens is distinguished in species from every other species of entia, and why the words 'abstract essence' name the ens absolutely. On the other hand, when we name the individual thing, we do not invent a new name (proper nouns are an exception because they do not designate the ens but the real form of the ens); we use the name of the abstract essence and add something to express its terms.

The whole ens is virtually in the abstract essence but the many determinations of the ens are contained only virtually in the essence. Our mind therefore thinks an ens in two ways: 1. virtually in the *abstract essence*, and 2. as presented in the *essence actually* endowed with its terms. The abstract essence gives the concept of *theme*, the *terminated essence* the concept of *execution*. In the abstract essence is the 'one', in which the multiplicity is hidden because contained only virtually; in the terminated essence is the multiplicity visibly displayed in the 'one'.

Whenever our mind thinks an abstract essence, it does not see the terms of the essence. It understands that they must be there because to be there virtually is the same as saying they are there in a state of indetermination. But it does not know what will be added to the essence when this displays itself in its terms. Hence, our mind finds itself in a state of expectation and of wanting to know what it still does not know; it wants to know what is needed to complete the knowledge it already has but is truncated and without sense.

In this state, two full essences whose foundation is the same abstract essence, or two real individuals corresponding to the two full essences may present themselves. One of these individuals may show, as carried out in itself, everything the abstract essence virtually included pertaining to terms appropriate to the essence itself; in other words, it may show, executed in itself, the archetype of the abstract essence. The other individual may not realise in itself these perfections of the abstract essence but only some terms which, although certainly determining the essence, are contrary to the essence's proper and appropriate terms. At

the sight of the archetype or of its external realisation, the mind will immediately experience a feeling of pleasant surprise and will approve seeing so perfectly executed the theme it possessed in the essence. On the other hand, at sight of the full, defective species or of the real individual in which this defective species is realised, the mind will experience a feeling of disgust and say in disapproval: 'The theme has not been executed correctly. The abstract essence has not been realised in conformity with its virtuality.' As soon as the mind has experienced the first of these two feelings, it has acquired the concept of beauty. Beauty can therefore be defined as 'the perfect execution of a mental theme, that is, of an abstract essence'. But when the mind has experienced the second of these two feelings, it has acquired the concept of ugliness, which can therefore be defined as 'the imperfect execution of a mental theme, that is, of an abstract essence'.

I said that when the mind passes from seeing the abstract essence to seeing the archetype which executes the essence in all its perfection (whether the archetype is ideal or real or realised), it experiences a *feeling of pleasant surprise* or of admiration, and simultaneously feels the *need to give its approval*. The origin of the surprise and admiration is the following. The mind has only the *abstract idea*, it will not know what the *archetype* will be to which it aspires in order to complete its knowledge. Hence, when the archetype is present to it, it is like something new and such that the mind could not foresee what it might be; it implicitly loved and tended towards what it did not know. This discovery of what is loved, knowledge of it and at the same time the acknowledgement that it is precisely what was already virtually known, necessarily produces a pleasant surprise and admiration. This is all the more true when the actual knowledge is a new light whose vision exceeds expectation and the intensity with which it was desired. What is expected but not still seen cannot give as much pleasure as the actual vision and enjoyment of it. The consequent *approval* is a totally speculative exigency, the same exigency that truth makes. In fact, the approval is, as I said, simply a judgment we make that the theme has been perfectly executed.

1098. But how does the human mind come to see the archetype of the abstract essence we have supposed that the mind possesses?

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In two ways: 1. when the archetype is given to the mind in perception and 2. when the archetype is not given fully formed in perception, but piecemeal in many perceptions. In this second way, the mind gathers the parts and, uniting them, composes the archetype, or a type that approximates to it in such a way that the total of perfections outnumbers the total of imperfections.

If God communicated himself directly to a creature's mind, the creature would see the *subsistent archetype* of the *abstract essence* of God, because in the case of God there is no ideal archetype; he himself is his archetype. As I said, archetype is used solely in reference to that *abstract essence*, taken as theme, of which God himself is the execution.

If God communicated the world to us in the way it is contained in him, we would see the archetype of the world, the idea and simultaneously the perfect realisation of the world. This also is called archetype in reference to the *abstract idea* of the world, which would be the world's *theme*.

If we came across a real finite ens perfect in its species (for example, a human body endowed with all the perfections contained implicitly in the abstract essence of such a body), we would be pleasantly surprised and would marvel at the body's beauty because we would see executed in the body the whole idea, the total perfection of the abstract essence forming its theme. As I said earlier, the mind cannot discern the hidden perfections solely in the abstract essence. However, granted that these are given to it to perceive, it has the faculty to acknowledge that they are precisely those which lay hidden in virtuality in the essence.

Let us now suppose that the perfections of an ens of nature are given to the mind and that these perfections are divided among a great number of individuals of the same species. As I said, the mind has the faculty (which varies in degree in human beings) to acknowledge every perfection it perceives and to distinguish which of all the qualities are contained in the abstract essence as terms perfecting the essence. The mind therefore can certainly choose the qualities appropriate to the abstract essence that serves it as rule, and to reject the inappropriate qualities. Finally, after gathering the appropriate qualities, it will be able to unite them to form the archetype, or a type approximating to

the archetype. This is precisely what the artist does. A great artist is formed by the great ability to do this, an ability resulting from natural dispositions nurtured and mastered by study and habit: after assembling a type of outstanding excellence and beauty in his mind, he applies himself to expressing it in some feelable material. And the ability to offer to all the senses of other people the noblest type he has conceived in his mind is a second necessary function for deserving the name and characteristic of artist.

1099. I have distinguished two acts of the mind: one by which it sees the *abstract, specific essence*, and the other by which it sees the execution of this essence in the ideal *archetype* or real or realised *archetype*. Beauty is manifested when the second act takes place. As I said, beauty consists always in a comparison or mental reference of a complete ens to its specific essence. We must not think however that the two mental acts must follow each other for the thought of beauty to originate or that this thought exists only at the moment the archetype or the complete type proximating to it is apprehended and referred to its theme. For beauty to exist before the mind it is sufficient that the two essences (the abstract specific and the archetypal) are present to the mind and that the archetypal essence is acknowledged as the execution of the abstract essence. As long as the presence of the two essences endures and one is referred to the other, the concept of beauty endures. The concept can exist therefore in any perfect mind whatsoever, including the divine mind that contemplates and enjoys its own infinite beauty in reality. Indeed, the free mind of God sees in the divine abstraction I have called *virtual being*, the theme of himself and, referring the theme to himself as a subsistent *archetype*, approves the necessary and most perfect execution of the theme.

1100. We humans conceive the beauty of God, in so far as we can conceive it, in a similar way. *Virtual being* relative to God is *abstract specific essence*; it is the theme that in God is fully executed. We do not naturally see it executed in either of the two ways by which we acquire the archetypes or excellent types (through the proximity of these to the archetypes) of finite, specific essences. In fact, God does not naturally fall under human perception whether in all his totality or dispersed in fragments in the entia we can perceive. We do not perceive him in all his

totality because he is insensible to our corporeal senses, nor is he divided because, besides being insensible, he is also essentially indivisible. Consequently, we cannot naturally have the positive archetype corresponding to the abstract specific essence of God, which is the abstract specific essence of virtual being. All we can do is form a negative concept of God through logical determinations and finite relative perfections that we continually negate of absolute Being. Very abstract, logical determinations allow us to give the following definition of God: 'God is being that subsists identical as subject, object and holy one.' But these three forms given to Being are three containers whose content is hidden in a deep virtuality before the human mind. Instead of having the abstract specific essence of God executed and terminated, we have another essence which is not the full execution of the first, but a virtual execution. The abstract specific essence of God, that is, being, has acquired its perfecting terms but these also are abstract terms. It is not a case of the first abstract essence having the nature of genus relative to the second, because genus does not determine the unity of an ens; genus embraces many entia, each of which has its own different unity — in other words, genus admits many species. On the contrary, the unity of God is determined by the essence expressed by 'being' in such a way that the unity of the species is identical with the numerical unity of the ens. Hence, *being* is a 'specific essence of God', not a generic essence. But equally, 'being, subsistent in the three forms' is also a specific essence of God because it virtually contains everything that is in God and determines its specific unity identical with the numerical unity of the ens. Although both these ideas or essences have the characteristic proper to the *specific idea*, the second idea is 'the specific idea of God executed by the mind using some abstract terms'. If therefore we take the second essence as an execution of the first, we can see in it a divine beauty by means of the trinity we see in the unity. But if we take the second specific idea in so far as it is abstract, we have only another *theme* whose execution can be seen only through grace and glory.

If however we do not see the execution of this second theme, that is, we do not perceive it with our natural faculties, we can nevertheless have a negative knowledge in the way I have explained, because we have finite executions of each of the three

forms of being: in the real things composing the world we have the subjective form executed in a finite mode; in the objects of the mind we have the objective form executed also in a finite mode, with that finiteness that is suitable to the form; in the good things to which the will tends we have the moral form executed, also in that mode in which it can appear as finite. If we deny all these limitations, we conceive a negative idea of various infinite perfections pertaining to each of the three forms: to the subjective form, we attribute power, intelligence, wisdom, will and holiness, etc.; to the objective form, idea, truth, intellectual light, order, etc., and to the moral form, lovableness, the consummation of being and perfection, absolute unification, etc. If therefore we remove from all these perfections what is limited in them they are for us negative perfections, whose multiplicity also disappears if we abstract from the limitation of number. This negative concept of absolute, infinite perfection in each of the three forms is like something unknown that takes the place of the execution of being, subsistent in its three forms. In this obscurity we conceive the beauty of God; we consider him as executing the theme present in the second abstract specific essence expressed as 'Being, subsistent in its three forms'. This also can be considered as a mental execution of the first essence, which is its theme.

1101. If we take this third negative concept of God, we see that it can be expressed as: 'If we saw God, we would see that he is subsistent being with all perfections, and these are unlimited.' The ideas of *being*, *subsistence*, *perfection* and *unlimitedness*, contained in this proposition, are all abstracts. We compose them dialectically by connecting the *subject* (being) and the *predicate* (subsistence, perfection, unlimitedness). But because the concepts of subject and predicate are abstracts, the connection between subject and predicate is itself an abstract connection. Hence, we do not see the actual effects of their union. Nevertheless, we understand that they determine each other because united with the connections shown in the proposition. This determining of each other is such that there can be no indetermination in the totality, and this totality we see can be only being subsistent *per se*. Our very understanding that the result must be determined means a knowledge of this result not in itself but through an abstract concept, such as the concept of

perfect determination. But how can we know that these abstract ideas united by a connection, which itself is known also by means of abstract ideas, so determine each other that they indicate only one object inconfusable with any other? Through the virtuality of abstract ideas. This virtuality allows the mind that unites and compares abstract ideas to know abstractly the connections and their reciprocal determination.

In the proposition therefore, we have a kind of sign or natural code which can express only one object, God. Through it we do not know God, but simply understand that 'if we knew God', we would see that he is the execution of what the proposition expresses.

Hence the expressions I have discussed give us three *abstract specific ideas* of God. Each idea is the same idea enriched by an abstract term. This addition is not a specific difference reducing the first generic idea to a species, but the specific idea itself enriched by something that was previously only virtual. Much less is the addition something accidental or purely integral, as in the case of the abstract specific ideas of finite entia. To these, something, but not all the determinations, is added so that the abstract specific *idea* becomes a *semi-full specific idea*. The addition is an integral or accidental part of the thing, and does not pertain to the simple essence totally present in the abstract specific idea. However, the case is different when we are talking about the abstract specific idea of God. All these additions pertain to the essence of God and simply display what is virtually contained in the preceding *full specific essence* as something intrinsic and necessary to that essence, not as something different from it and truly added to it.

If we consider the nature of the abstract concept of unlimitedness, we clearly see that it alone fully determines subsistent being because anything unlimited is *in se* always one and distinguished from the multiplicity of limited things. Consequently, whenever we attribute a perfection to being, adding the predicate 'infinite', this alone gives us another negative specific essence of God, as if we had said: 'Infinitely powerful Being' or 'Infinitely wise Being', etc. Hence, there can be innumerable negative specific essences of God, and they will all have the condition of a mental theme, which in God must be visibly displayed and fully executed.

This therefore is the only way we can think about divine beauty in the order of nature.

1102. I now return to what I was saying about the nature of the one and the many which, united together, constitute beauty. The one that the mind contemplates in the many, when it sees beauty in the many, is always 'a most simple essence that pertains to abstract specific essences. This most simple essence is a theme to be executed and a rule with which to judge what has been executed'. The many are 'all the perfections virtually contained in the very simple, abstract specific essence and seen as executed and visibly displayed in the ens which executes the essence'. In this way, beauty results from the relationship and comparison between the two modes in which being is known by the mind: one mode is in being's one and simple virtuality, the other, in being's visibly displayed actuality: beauty is in an ens contemplated in this second mode and acknowledged as a perfect development of the same ens contemplated in the first mode.

Although the ens that appears in the second mode always demands approval and applause by the mind and this exigency is essential to beauty, many other accidents contribute to the increase of delight in it. These elements are not essential to beauty but, in us, mingle with the intellectual feeling proper to beauty. In fact the delight is increased in us 1. by our surprise at the beautiful that we did not expect and is rare in nature; 2. by our admiration when the multiplicity in the one is very large and surpasses our ordinary understanding; and 3. by the effort and the nobility of the thoughts we need to form and build up in our minds an archetype of an ens of nature, or simply by the difficulty seen in our creating an excellent type and executing it. Properly speaking, such feelings are not essential effects of beauty but accompany, intermingle with, increase and exalt the feeling of beauty.

There are also degrees in our receptivity of sensing the exigency essential and proper to beauty. As I said, these degrees depend 1. partly on the complex of our natural faculties that vary in suitability for *a*) conceiving the virtual wealth of the abstract specific essence, *b*) for comparing this with the ens that executes the essence in act, and *c*) for knowing the qualities appropriate to its theme, which alone are its perfections, and 2. partly on the education given to the faculties concerning beauty

or a genus of beauty. If *genius* (a very acceptable word given us by the French) depends far more on the first cause of natural aptitudes than on education in beauty, then *taste*, which is concerned more with judging than producing something beautiful, is particularly formed by education, by seeing beautiful objects and by study.

1103. This teaching also gives us a new criterion for judging the relative excellence of different kinds of beauty. I have spoken about the criterion derived from the *completeness of the one*, and we saw that the excellence of the particular kind of beauty is proportionate to the completeness of the one. I distinguished various kinds of beauty according to this criterion. But another criterion is given us by this element of the one contemplated in the many, and has two divisions: 1. beauty will be of a more excellent kind in proportion to the greater simplicity of the idea that forms its theme and hence in proportion to how more perfectly the one is one; and 2. it will be of a more excellent kind in proportion to the greater quantity of what is contained in the virtuality of the abstract specific idea. Considering the first of these two criteria, we see that there is only one abstract specific idea that is totally simple, and it is the idea of *being*. All other ideas are composed of the idea of being and of something added taken from the finite real form, but these two elements are so joined that they constitute the sole idea of whatever is in question. Hence, the composition of many ideas is one thing but the one sole idea resulting from many elements is another. Only being therefore made effective (and in God it is made effective) presents absolute beauty to the mind.

But the same result must be applied to the second criterion, which is that of the quantity of the virtual content. Everything is contained in *being*, taken as an abstract specific idea; nothing is excluded. Thus there is absolute virtuality. Hence, the visible display of that idea must offer to our contemplation *absolute beauty* infinite in every way.

Here, the *feeling of being* and the *feeling of beauty* unite and fuse into one, and both are absolute and infinite.

1104. We come now to composite specific ideas or essences. These are of finite things; all of them are being with a limitation. This explains their multiplicity, because being, without any

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limitation, is simply being and nothing but being; it is therefore essentially one. But when we add limitations to it, these can vary in degree and be unlimited in their variety. In fact the word 'limitation' is an undetermined concept that can be determined in diverse modes, that is, in all the modes that the idea of being can receive. Hence, the reason for these modes lies in the receptivity of being. We, who conceive being as an undetermined infinite, cannot in any way assign a term to the limitations which the infinite can receive.

Nevertheless, in the case of the abstraction that can produce types of entia, which I call 'typical abstraction', we see that an ens as such requires certain conditions, which I described in the previous book. Because these conditions include the condition that an ens must be determined in every respect, the number of limitations is restricted by the necessity of these conditions. Hence, the multiplicity of finite entia is explained by the nature of the limitation applied by our free mind to the idea of being. This explanation is not in the first element of the composite specific idea, which is being, but in the second element, the limitation of being.

Consequently, ideas of finite entia decrease hierarchically from the more extensive to the less extensive, because limitation, as an undetermined concept that can be determined, can be imposed by the free mind on being with a greater or less number of determinations.

But limited ideas can be fully determined by two causes: either by having the determination in the ideas themselves or, if they do not have it, by receiving the determination from other ideas. In fact, groups of ideas can determine each other reciprocally, even when the ideas taken individually would not be determined. For example, if I say: 'The number whose cube is three times itself', I determine the number three by means of a group of ideas, each of which is undetermined because the ideas of 'number', 'cube' and 'three times' are undetermined. But which are the ideas that have the full determination of an ens? Only those that contain, at least virtually, the sole act with which the ens exists in itself. The 'idea of being' is of this kind: it contains the necessity of a sole act of being. The idea of space is another example: we cannot think that space subsists divided into many. And there can be other ideas of this kind. Which are

the ideas that do not have in themselves the full determination of an ens? Those that do not contain, at least virtually, the sole act of subsistence. Of this kind are the specific and the full specific ideas of corporeal entia. Corporeal matter is not contained in its idea in such a determined mode that the idea requires the matter to subsist, not even virtually. This is due to the nature of corporeal matter: by its very essence it is undetermined, and is determined only by something else, by the place it occupies in space. Hence, the idea of a material ens cannot determine the act of existence of the ens except by recourse to other ideas, the ideas of space and local relationship.

But groups of ideas, connected in an ordered way, are of two kinds, because

1. there are groups united by ties that determine a perfect order in the union of the groups but do not determine any ens *in se*;
2. there are groups of ideas united by ties that they all determine an individual ens which exists or can exist in itself. These groups are not the type of an ens but indicate and determine it by means of negations, as we saw in the example of the negative ideal cognition of God.

1105. I said that beauty is objective, that is, is seen in an object that appears before the mind. I also distinguished *complete beauty* from *diminished beauty*. The first requires the *theme* to be completely executed right up to the fully determined ens. If the execution of the theme, either through defect of the theme or of its execution, does not attain its ultimate stage (the full determination of entia), the execution, that is, the object resulting from it, does not give complete beauty but a partial or diminished beauty.

Because there are two kinds of beauty for the same real, finite ens (the ideal beauty and the beauty contemplated in the realisation of the ideal), there must also be two themes, one for the *ideal beauty* and one for the *realised finite beauty*.

But the *realised finite beauty*, as simply the realisation of a previous beauty, is not creation of a new beauty but the *sensible manifestation* of the previous beauty. Hence, the *theme* of this finite beauty is purely the previous beauty, that is, the ideal beauty. Thus, when the creator, creating the world, made it

subsist, by the very fact of having made it subsist, he produced a beautiful thing but strictly speaking did not create beauty — this already existed in the archetype he had executed of the world. The real world was not beauty but participated in the previous beauty present in the divine mind; the world showed this beauty *in se* by realising that type. Similarly, an artist who executes an ensemble of magnificent beauty, for example the Laacon, simply realises or expresses for other people by means of a sensible material (for example, marble), the noble type he has in his mind and in which the beauty consists. The resulting work is beautiful in proportion to the fidelity with which he expresses the typical beauty he contemplates in himself. Properly speaking, the skill of the arts consists in this copying and external reproduction of the ideal beauty; it is a skill of execution. However, if a person could have in his mind some types of consummate perfection but was unable to realise them in a sensible material with total exactness and fidelity, he would certainly be a producer of *beauty* but not of beautiful, external works. He would not be an artist in the common meaning of the word.

1106. We should therefore consider as artists those who, although unable to conceive mentally ideal types of extraordinary beauty, are excellent in copying and expressing with colours, or with some other sensible material, natural bodies exactly as these present themselves before their eyes. This includes defective bodies, even the most bizarrely defective. The artist executes this simple imitation and reproduction of natural things by faithfully taking the type from them, and when he has received this ideal type, whatever it may be in his mind, transfers it from there into the material of his art. This ability to reproduce externally the mental type (even if taken simply from nature without any further mental effort) constitutes the artist as artist. To this essential characteristic of the artist we can add the other more sublime ability to produce excellent types of his own initiative, and in this case he is all the more the author of ideal beauty. But this second ability, despite being more noble than the first, does not form the artist if the first ability is lacking, because the artist is in the execution. This fact, that the artist is in the execution, explains one of the causes and signs of decadence in the arts: those who practise the arts

are persuaded that they can neglect the study of this executive part, or they consider it secondary — as if thought alone, but not the paintbrush and the chisel, produced the painter and the sculptor. However, when I said that the ability characteristic of the artist is to ‘reproduce externally and with the greatest accuracy the type in his mind’, I meant, even if I did not say it, that this type must in all cases be taken from nature, either by faithfully copying it in the artistic work or perfecting it with the power of the ideal. In fact, to be an artist it is not sufficient to express any capricious type whatsoever that might come into the mind: an arbitrary type, not conforming to nature, would make no sense to people, and no one could say whether it represented an ens that could exist. On the other hand, natural entia, faithfully copied, are understood, and we cannot doubt that, although such entia may be defective, they can subsist as entia because they subsist. The condition of what is beautiful is always that it manifests in itself a fully determined ens, one recognisable as such (otherwise it would lack light; its theme would not be known nor whether the theme could be executed). Natural entia in fact, precisely because they exist, can never be deprived of the order essential to existence. They always have therefore some beauty, in addition to being pleasing through the accord that every ens of nature has with the universality of things.

1107. For the same reason, works that fall short of this theme are not thought beautiful, no matter in what part they fail or whether the reproduction is imperfect or unfaithful, or because the artist, in addition to the material determined by his theme, uses another material as subsidiary, not as art material. In fact, no material assigned to an artist can be called art material if it does not execute all it can execute. If it fails to do this, the art, and therefore the beauty of the work, is defective. Art consists precisely in this: ‘A particular material is used in order to represent the natural object as much as possible’; this is the theme. This also explains why even diverse materials can be associated in works of art without any difficulty, but on condition that one material does not prevent another from doing what it is naturally suited for doing and representing. For example, it is possible to gild a statue or inlay various precious materials, like the Jupiter of Phidias, without distortion. But if the material,

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through its association with another material, is prevented from carrying out all it can in accord with its nature, the art has fallen short of its theme. This is the real reason why painted statues do not please. Colour is a material suitable for expressing, by chiaroscuro, the solid forms of bodies, backgrounds and reliefs and even distances. But applied to a statue, colour can no longer do what it could if it were used artistically. The solid material of the statue obstructs and impedes the colour's function by actually presenting the forms and solidity of the body. Indeed, a material can never be asked for more than it can give, and therefore it is not unbecoming that a marble statue lacks the life which a painted face receives from its colours, or that a painting represents only a single scene without any succession.

Artistic taste is very severe in judging whether the artist has or has not departed from his theme, or has taken to using means different from those determined in his theme. This is why poetic verses mixed with prose displease, although by themselves they can be very beautiful. For example, the following seem very beautiful to me:

Through billow of swollen sea,
Or through fury of scattered foam.

These, and many other verses, are found in the very beautiful prose of the prologue to the *Specchio di vera penitenza*, but they do not satisfy and are considered a defect in the prose.

1108. Among all art materials, undoubtedly the word has more force than all others. This explains the supreme difficulty in obtaining excellence in the arts of the word. The word, as art material, differs in many respects from the materials of the other arts, but a most notable difference is that in other arts the material is already determined. Strictly speaking, choice does not pertain to the art of the beautiful. For example, in sculpture, wood or marble can be chosen, because art can be displayed equally in both. On the other hand, the word, or better, language, any language whatsoever, is given to the artist, that is, to the poet or orator, in a state of indetermination. In harmony with his art, he can choose from the whole treasure of common language the part that best suits his argument and can be accommodated to it. Hence, he is partly the author of the material he uses to make beauty evoke feeling in others. In regard to the

object which this art is meant to express, it exceeds in vastness the object of every other art because the word expresses everything. Moreover, the poet and orator use the word to express themselves even indirectly because they represent the object accompanied by the feelings with which they perceive it and in the mode they perceive it. An example will help us to understand this. A comparison of the description of the same place given by two poets of different character shows that, if the feeling of one of them is benevolent, he will be inclined to describe colourfully even an unhealthy, unpleasant place in order to make it appear pleasant, a place where we would like to be. Virgil does this when speaking sensitively about the terrain over which the Mincio spreads in its flow out of Lake Garda:

Due to the water where the great Mincio wanders
in sluggish curves, covering the banks with gentle reed.¹⁷²

Another poet, of different character, will not use attractive words to conceal the disgust caused by the damp and the unhealthy nature of the same place. This feeling of the twisting, snaking river, like a living serpent, and of the dull, swamp cannae adorning its banks prevails over the other feeling. He will say, as Dante says, almost without embellishment and affectation:

Short is its flow before it finds a marsh
Where it spreads and swamps,
And murky may its waters be in summer.¹⁷³

1109. We have therefore a *realised beauty* which divides into two: 1. *natural beauty* — this is the work of the divine artist who made the world, and 2. *artistic beauty*, the work of the human artist who either imitates nature using sensible material and produces the *imitative beautiful* or realises an excellent type drawn by his thought from various parts of nature, producing what is *ideally beautiful*.

Let us now turn from realised beauty to essential beauty, which for finite entia is in ideas alone. I said that it is seen in fully determined entia. But many ideas, as we saw, cannot be

¹⁷² *Georg.*, 3: 14–15.

¹⁷³ *Inf.*, 20: 79–81.

totally determined except by connection with other ideas. Indeed, the idea of a tree does not in itself admit further determinations except those making it a *full species*. But the full species of a tree can naturally be realised an indefinite number of times because its realisation is equally possible in whatever locality of space the creator might want to realise it. I distinguished therefore between the concept of *objectivity* and that of *possibility*, which refers to realisation. As long as there is the *possibility* that an object be realised many times, that is, in many various and real individuals, and although the *object* as object is fully determined, the *subject* is not yet determined, and therefore the ens is not determined. To explain how a full species of such entia, after acquiring the final determinations concerning the possibility of its realisation, becomes the *fullest species*, I had recourse in the previous book to the archetype of the world. This archetype results from the connection of all the full ideas of all created things. But I did not find a sufficient reason for explaining how this matter, diffused in space, had to be located in one place of infinite space rather than in another. Furthermore, the location of the material mass in one part of the immensity of space rather than in another does not remove its identity, just as it does not remove movement from it. In the archetype of the world all worldly entia are determined with the fullest species because besides being full ideas, all their mutual relationships are also fixed. But, as I said, the relationship between the matter and the place in which, through creation, the matter must exist at the first moment of its existence has apparently still to be determined.

If we investigate this very difficult question further by considering matter and space not in themselves but as term-entia in that complex of finite entia we call the universe, the apparent indetermination which arose from a too fragmentary and limited thought will disappear.

1110. Space and matter are truly term-entia, as I explained in *Psychology*. Every feeling principle has the whole of space as its term (*AMS*, 161–174). Hence, the relationship of the feeling principle with space is fully and essentially determined because the term of the feeling principle is not just one part of space rather than another but essentially the whole of space. Granted this, the quantity of matter which a feeling principle has as its

term and which constitutes its body is also determined. If only one feeling principle existed in the world whose term was space and a certain quantity of matter, both the space and the matter would be determined by the feeling principle which is the principle of both. The feeling principle itself, however, would exist either 1. in no part of space, because as a principle it is, we must remember, simple, or 2. in all parts (which would not be parts) because what is simple is present as a continuum in all the points of the extended term it contains within itself, without any distinction. Where, in space, then would the limited matter exist which constitutes the body of the simple principle?

The only possible reply to this question would be: 'In that part of space which extends infinitely from all the borders of the matter', or if we prefer to speak figuratively: 'At the centre of infinite space'. There is no other way of determining this part of space: it is determined by the feeling principle of which both the part and infinite space are terms. This fact that the part is a term constitutes the foundation of the part's identity: because as limited, it is surrounded on every side by unlimited space, of which it occupies the centre. But illusion arises from the following reasoning: 'If an animate body, after its creation, moves to another place, it has changed its relationship with space — it occupies another place. Could not God have created it in this other place? There are infinite places where God could have chosen the place to locate the body when he created it. Therefore, the place is undetermined.'

1111. A decisive reply to this observation requires me to turn to the teaching about space (*NE*, 2: 820–830; *AMS*, 161–174; *PSY*, 1: 554–559). I distinguished an *internal, unmeasured and unmeasurable space* (*AMS*, 169) and an *external, measured and measurable space extending infinitely*. Internal space is a potential space (*NE*, 2: 827) in which neither borders nor any place is distinguished. It is therefore always determined through itself. Consequently, the question, 'Could God have created a body in one place rather than another?' cannot be asked about fundamental, potential, internal and measureless space, because places do not yet exist; there is only space as term of a simple, feeling principle which does not occupy extension, and this space is, as I said, also simple and indivisible, because it is space in potency.

Hence, our investigation is limited solely to actual, *external*

space. Could God have created a body in one place rather than another in this space? I have said that external space is internal space passing from potency to act. This transition comes about primarily through the feeling of our own limited body. But what levels of feeling are involved? First there is the fundamental feeling of our own body. I said, "This feeling is uniform and entirely simple. It has no shape because shape is given us by our external senses. It is not coloured because colour is supplied solely by the sense of sight. Lacking shape and colour therefore, it cannot have any surrounding limits to situate it in space" (AMS, 139). As long as the animal has only the fundamental feeling of its own body, no places exist that can be chosen in space; the feeling principle has potential space as term and in this has the actual space of the body as term. But between actual space and potential space there is no connection of place. Connection of place supposes many conceivable places, and the very nature of place supposes actual limits surrounding it, all of which are lacking and exist only potentially. If God had created only one animal, everything in it would be determined by corporeal feeling and potential space because the space of its body would be simply a partial actuality of potential space. The term of potential space imparts to the feeling principle no other activity than the potency to feel actual space which is the mode of the body. However, the corporeal term which is actual space imparts another activity (an active potency corresponds to every passive potency), that is, the potency of movement. But the movement of an animal is either produced by the animal itself through an activity proper to it or communicated to it. The former is active motion and felt in its cause, the latter passive motion. Consequently, the animal, when moving itself, feels within itself the effort it makes to move and also the series of internal sensations comprising the effort. But this feeling, totally internal, does not of itself give the animal any knowledge of place or change of place. Hence, if only one animal were in space carrying out the activity which was later called the activity of motion, it would not feel the motion in so far as defined as 'a change of place', nor be aware of changing place. All that would happen in its feeling would be the activity resulting from the efforts and internal feelings. If on the other hand the motion were passive or could be made by a change in its corporeal

organs, it would feel the feelings accompanying the change in its organs but not the motion itself; thus, it would still not be aware of any place. Finally, if it were moved by a simple communication of motion to all its body, without any change in the body, it would feel nothing at all, neither the motion nor its cause, because absolute motion is not feelable (*NE*, 2: 804–809).

The external motion therefore with which an animate body passes from one place to another is, without change in the relative position of the parts of the body, totally insensible. Hence, this motion does not pertain to the determination of the animal; there are as yet no places of any kind for the animal. How then does external movement become sensible so that the animal perceives places, and potential, internal space thus becomes more actual than the actuality given this space by the fundamental feeling of the animal's own body? This happens through the external sensations of touch, sight and the other sense faculties, as anthropology and ideology explain (*NE*, 2: 800–819). But an animal cannot have these sensations unless other bodies exist in addition to itself. As long as there is only one created animate body, the creator does not need to choose any place to locate it, because the determination of place is totally excluded for such an individual, which cannot feel any *place* but only potential, internal and partly actuated space. But let us suppose that animate bodies are created that are mutually perceptible by the feeling principles animating them through their external sense faculties. For each of these principles potential space would acquire a greater actuation through sensations. These sensations would give them 1. the feeling of the limits and shape of their own bodies (*AMS*, 154–180), 2. the shape of other bodies different from theirs, and 3. the concept of distance by means of relative motion measured by time (*NE*, 2: 800–819, 917–921). All this reduces potential space to actuality, so that by means of an abstraction and the concept of the possibility of always replicating the extension of our own or other shaped body, we arrive at the concept of an indefinitely measurable space (*NE*, 2: 821–823). I say 'indefinitely' because the potential term of space, no matter how limitedly actuated, always has the potentiality of actuating itself still further. All this is done through determined laws. The only investigation we need to make now concerns the places where the creator locates the different

animate bodies he has contemporaneously created and how these places could be determined in the exemplar. But we have already found this determination because we are dealing purely with a situation of bodies relative to each other, not with a situation relative to termless space, which is only potential and has no places of any kind. Places therefore do not precede the existence of bodies in such a way that bodies could not exist if the creator did not choose from the possible places of space. On the contrary, places are a result of the existence of bodies, arising from their mutual relationships and not from the relationships of each body with termless space. Hence, everything in the exemplar of the world is determined either by the nature of the objects or by their relationships with each other. Thus, when God has formed the exemplar and wishes to realise it, the realisation does not require him to determine with his free mind something that might remain undetermined. We have, therefore, 'a perfect equation between knowledge of intuition and knowledge of predication', which is the third form of the problem of ontology.

1112. The exemplar of the world therefore can be realised on its own, and hence does not lack the condition I stipulated for the essential beauty of the finite. I said that complete beauty requires a *complete one*. In the order of ideas, this complete one exists only when ideas are so determined that they can easily be realised. However, we still need to know whether the other conditions, the other elements of beauty, concur in the Exemplar of the world. The doubt initially arises whether in the Exemplar of the world (in which, as a result of what has been said, we cannot deny that there is the completeness of the one) there may perhaps be many complete ones instead of one only. If this were the case, there would not be only one beauty but many beauties brought together and united. This brings us to the question of the unity of the world and how to determine this unity.

1113. Knowing, as we do, only a very small part of creation, we cannot prove *a posteriori* that the world is one. However, we can safely argue to this from the perfections of the Creator, which is an argument that pertains to cosmology.

We still need to determine what kind of unity is to be attributed to the world.

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First, the world can be considered both in its absolute existence in God and in its relative existence *in se*, whether this relative existence is conceived only as possible or in its realisation.

If the world is considered in its absolute existence in God, it pertains to the divine essence and beauty. Its unity is founded in the unity of God who is one with an absolute completeness. It is not a beauty that is separate and has being *per se* but the single, totally simple, creative act that terminates in the Word and the Spirit. It separates itself, as a sort of part, from the whole, solely by abstraction — in itself the creative act is the divine essence, common to the three divine persons.

In the case of the beauty that can be in the world in so far as the world exists relatively to and in itself, the beauty is the world's realisation and, as realisation, and granted there is only one beauty, pertains to realised beauty. But this realised beauty is considered as possible in the Exemplar. I must therefore speak about this beauty and its unity.

1114. There are three supreme forms of 'one': subjective one, purely objective one and final one. But final one comes down to the other two because any means ordered to an end either 1. tends to obtain an end that has only the nature of object — for example, when the end is an order resulting from many entia bound together by relationships, or 2. tends to obtain an end that has the nature of subject or real; this real can be a substantial or accidental form, and can also be determined or undetermined. It is determined by the means used to produce it, as in the case of remedies applied to a sick person; here the determined end is to restore health. It is undetermined in the case, for example, of a mill where the resulting quantity of flour is undetermined, depending on the time the mill is in action, although the mill is determined to produce an equal effect at each moment. But the real end can be inherent in the person working to produce it, in which case the agent acts as means. It can also be some separate entity that has another existence, and the person working to obtain the end can be one entity or many entities that have a separate existence and an order. If therefore the end or effect is separate, its unity is not tied to the means that produce it unless there is a relationship between different entities, like the means and the end. This relationship is in the mind and pertains to the object; the end is therefore objective. Thus,

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because the ground grain is a different entity from the mill, this external end gives unity to the mill only through the operation of the mind's intention. It is thus an objective unity, contained in the mind's object where relationships are. But whenever there is this *external end*, and granted that it is a real 'one', the means used to obtain it must themselves have an ultimate act endowed with some unity. This act is the proximate cause of the attained end that is external and one. Thus, the ultimate act of the mill is to crush the grain, but because this act comes from the intimate contact of two surfaces and therefore from the conspiracy of several simultaneous agents, it has only a mental unity founded in the relationship; hence, it is still an objective unity. However, the end could be inherent in the person acting, as something perfecting the agent, in which case it is called an *internal end*. Again, the agent would either result from many separate entities and thus have the nature of a *content in the object*, which the end would also have, or would be a *subjective 'one'*, as the *final 'one'* would also be.

Every 'one' therefore constituted purely by one sole end reduces to a *subjective* or *objective 'one'*. As a result, any discussion about the unity conceivable in the exemplar-archetype of the world must deal with the nature of both the *subjective 'one'* and *objective 'one'* conceivable in the exemplar-archetype, because the *final 'one'* reduces to one or other of these two.

1115. We first note that the exemplar-World cannot have a totally external end separate from itself, like the mill for grinding the wheat. The World, because involving all finite ens, cannot produce any other finite thing outside itself. We can certainly conceive divine beatitude as an external end of the world because every work of God has as its mover and end his own beatitude or glory. But this beatitude is not an effect of the World considered in itself (as we are now considering it) but of the World existing absolutely in God, that is, of the creating act which is the divine essence. In the case therefore of the exemplar-World, considered as a possible realisation, its end can never be external but must be contained in it, that is, be proper to its perfection. When we say that the end of the World is the glory of God, 'glory of God' must mean 'the manifestation and communication of God to the creature' (*TCY*, 660 ss.). Because this manifestation and communication is contained in the

creature in which it is carried out, it is contained in the exemplar-World. Hence, God is in the Exemplar of the World as end of the World, not separate but communicated to the knowledge and essential will of the creature of the world. This act, by which this creature relates to God, and with all its activity fuses into God, is an act of the creature that has an essential relationship with God as something else. Although this does certainly deprive the world of the *absolute completeness* of the one, as I said, nevertheless it simultaneously restores a relative completeness to it, because the creature could not fuse into God if God were not accessible to it and the creature did not feel God in itself. Hence, if we were looking for *absolute beauty*, simply understood, in the world, we certainly could not find it because the world cannot be an absolute *one*. But we are looking for the relative completeness of the one and for the relative beauty which itself can also be a participation in absolute beauty, as I will explain.

We must also consider that the *external end* which makes a mental one together with the means, is the *theme* which must be executed, and the means in act are the execution of this theme. Hence, the beauty resulting from this mental one lies in the *means* considered in relationship to the external end which they obtain. These means have a certain beauty of their own when they are many and brought together so skilfully that they produce in the most perfect and simple mode the *end* proposed to the mind that contrived them. This beauty can be called *beauty of means*.

The *internal end*, on the other hand, does not pertain to the *theme* but to the execution of the theme, that is, to the archetype. The theme is always an *abstract* or at least an entity considered in an abstract relationship. If we suppose that the theme is man, abstract man, then the execution, which is where *beauty* lies, is an archetypal and hence perfect human being. In realising abstract man, the cleverest artist forms the perfect human being who, precisely as perfect, has in himself his *internal end*, that is, perfection. Perfection therefore does not constitute the *fundamental 'one'* of beauty, which is in the theme, but pertains to beauty itself.

We must finally investigate whether there is a *subjective 'one'*, or at least an *objective 'one'* in the exemplar-world.

1116. Relative to the *final object*, we see from what has been said that the World cannot in fact lack the *final objective 'one'*. The *final object* is God who is one considered in himself and one also in his communication to creation. The many intelligent beings who participate in God or in what pertains to God (for example, truth), feel so effectively the unity of the object to which they adhere that they simultaneously understand that no other object is possible for all intelligences, no matter how many. In other words they feel, at least virtually, that they have a common link, one object only, to which like bees they all equally crowd and cling. But in addition to this manner of *final objective* unity, there can be another manner of objective unity, independently of the objective end that is not an *external end* but is nevertheless an end as *something else*: there can be that objective one where the *exemplar-world* itself is a sole object.

1117. Is there in fact a *subjective 'one'* in the exemplar-World? An answer *a posteriori* to this question is certainly impossible for us humans who perceive such a small part of the World. We can apply only hypothesis and reasons of accord to the problem. Revealed knowledge tells us that the divine Word became incarnate. In this way God personally united himself to creation so that this creature in the incarnation forms a one with the Creator. Because this one is the most perfect that we can conceive, we can, by using what theologians call the communication of idioms, predicate of God what happens in human nature, and predicate of man as nature what pertains to the divine person of the Word. A divine person is made man and is the first permanent cause of all creation and its lord. Hence, creation has in itself only one subject or divine person in whom everything subsists. This subject can certainly be called a *subjective 'one'* of the universe. And because this *'one'* is real, it cannot be lacking in the eternal exemplar.

This *'one'*, however, which is the *Word communicated* and joined in person to human nature, is supernatural. It is not the *one of abstract completeness* proper solely to God and, in so far as the world is in God, proper to the world. It is always a *relative 'one'*, that is, relative to the existence proper to the world. But it is much more than the *natural 'one'* which the World could have. It is the *absolute 'one'* made *relative* to human

nature and consequently to all the world. But, as I said, the *absolute* 'one' can become *relative* by communication, with the result that the world is the *subject* of the relationship, and the Word is the term, because the Word was not modified when he assumed human nature — on the contrary, human nature was raised to personal companionship with the divine. But this relationship exists simultaneously with its opposite relationship, where the Word is the subject, and the term is the world. In this second relationship the world exists in God. Hence, the relationship does not pertain to the world *in se* but to God, author of the world, where there is the one of absolute completeness.

The incarnate Word therefore gives the supernatural 'one' to the world. This makes him the principle of the World's *supernatural beauty*, which brings everything together and depends on an individual of human nature, who is also a divine person.

Because JESUS Christ must be in the exemplar-World, as in the real world, and be there as head of the world, container and cause of the world, we have no difficulty in seeing the *theme* and its *ideal execution*. When the mind relates the execution to the theme, the beauty is in the execution. The theme therefore was 'the abstract concept of the God man'; the universe is its execution. Indeed, the wish to execute this concept means that all the rest of the world is virtually comprised in the concept by means of metaphysical accords, which must be 'part of the archetype of the abstract concept', an archetype that is the execution of the abstract concept considered in its possibility.

Even if we supposed that all the stars were inhabited by entia composed of soul and body, different from the children of Adam, to whom this planet has been consigned, and that the Word had personally joined himself to one individual of the race inhabiting each star, the supernatural 'one' of the world would be equally present, because the divine person would be identical in all of them. But in this case the theme of the supernatural beauty of the world would have to be expressed as 'the intelligent-ens-composed-of-soul-and-body God'.

The sublimity and grandeur of this unspeakable beauty of the world joined personally to the Word cannot be grasped by human thought, which can see only some rays. The authors who have tried to demonstrate how all the events of humanity are guided by Providence to the glory of the incarnate Word

and of his mystical body have put before us an historical presentation which was considered very beautiful. For example, the presentation given by the famous Bishop of Meaux in his *Discourse on Universal History* was judged as such. Beauty was found in these presentations because they were seen to contain a long series of facts that led back to the supernatural 'one' of the world, the Word incarnate. Nevertheless everything that the most eloquent and astute human being can say on the matter is simply a feeble spark of the immense, sublime [beauty] that the world receives from its union with the Word. This beauty can therefore be called *first cosmic supernatural beauty*.

1118. We must now see how the world has or can have a natural subjective 'one'.

If a created, powerful intelligence existed whose natural proper object were the whole exemplar-world and modelled world, and if this intelligence, supreme among created intelligences, concurred with its activity in the realisation of this World, it could be considered a *subjective 'one'* of the world that would be contained in it as its object and term of activity. In this intelligence the world would have an incomparable, unique, *natural beauty* because there would be in this case a first created thing in which the intelligence would subsist. And because the object informs the intelligent subject and determines its nature, such a subject would have a grandeur equal to that of the whole universe. To this would correspond an equal grandeur of will and activity, greater than all the other forces and powers of the world combined, which could in no way act upon so great an intelligence. There is nothing contradictory in the concept of such an ens.

But here we must distinguish substantial *natural beauty* from *final beauty*. In God, natural and final beauty are the same because God is the three perfect forms of being; he is the internal end of himself. The world, however, according to its nature, first exists in a state of potency relative to the attainment of its *perfection*, which is its internal end. The simple existence of the world *in se* does not completely execute the theme; the world has to pass through a long series of states before it reaches its permanent, perfect state. This final state, bound to all the preceding states, completes the theme, and only then is the archetype finalised. The powerful intelligence therefore we

conceived as possible would constitute the subject of the world's natural and substantial beauty, and when the accidental perfection to which the world is ordered had been attained, the *final beauty* would be attained. This final beauty, present solely through the supernatural order, reduces to the supernatural beauty I have discussed.

1119. We must remember however that the World includes a complex of persons. 'Person is an intellective subject in so far as it contains a supreme, active principle' (*AMS*, 769, 832–837). Because person requires this supreme, active principle, which is also intelligent, it is, relative to itself, a first cause of its actions, granted that it exists, although its existence can depend on another cause anterior to it. Another consequence is that person is essentially one, and hence incommunicable: its existence as person begins and finishes in itself and is separate from every other existence. Thus, if many persons exist in the world, each is an incommunicable, subjective 'one', and therefore the world has many, not just one subjective 'one'. As we shall see from what follows, none of this contradicts what I said about the supernatural subjective 'one' and the natural subjective 'one' we supposed possible in the world.

1120. If there were as many persons as subjective ones, there would certainly be many contemporaneous *beauties* in the World, each of them perfect.

These persons, existing in the exemplar and modelled world, can be considered in a natural or supernatural state. We will limit ourselves to those persons we positively know, that is, human persons — if there were some other nature (and the angels are certainly of another nature), the principles applied in the discussion concerning human persons could be applied to them in corresponding proportion. Each human person is a subjective, complete one; all of them remain identical in the course of the time passed in this life and, when this life is over, acquire their final state in which they permanently remain. If they are in a supernatural state, which consists in their being members of the mystical body of Christ, they either reach their final, permanent state of perfection in Heaven or are fixed in a state of imperfection in hell. Those who have reached Heaven have obtained their archetype — it is my belief that each is the realisation of a different archetype (*TCY*, 617–641) of the same

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abstract species, humanity. Considering human persons who have reached and dwell in the final state of perfection, they have two different, subsistent relationships. One of these relationships is with Christ of whom they are members, and because in this relationship they are a contained 'one', not a container 'one', they do not constitute the *subjective unity* of the world. Thus, they do not have the completeness of the one; they are terms of the relationship, not the principle which is Christ. He is the container and the complete one, that is, the Word united to them through his humanity which dominates absolutely in them. This is the unity that I called the universal, supernatural *unity* of the beauty of the World, and is absolute relative to the world. And because participation makes what is absolute relative, it is a unity of *participated absolute beauty*, while the Word remains absolute with a relationship of which he makes himself term.

The second relationship of these persons is with themselves. They can be considered purely in their personal principle which they naturally have and always have, because the personal principle is the first, radical subject of the supernatural gift (although this gift is added to the person personally, as a kind of increase of the person). In other words, they can be considered as supreme principles relative to themselves. As such, each becomes like a centre and end of the universe. Indeed, in the order of an ineffable Providence, the whole universe has co-operated and co-operates in making them such; as St. Paul says, 'To them that love God, *all things* work together unto good'¹⁷⁴ and '*All things* together with Christ are given to them'.¹⁷⁵ Hence, under this relationship, 1. they are containers of the world which is variously ordered to them and dependent on the concept each has, and 2. the world has as many subjective complete ones, and therefore as many *specific beauties*, as there are elect, and each beauty pertains to the kind I have called *rational beauty*.

Each elect person, in his final state, is a realised concept which includes the whole world. We can in fact say, with greater truth than Leibniz speaking about his monads, that each elect

¹⁷⁴ Rom 8: 28.

¹⁷⁵ Rom 8: 32.

represents the universe in himself. But the universe has a diverse series of relationships with each of these elect in their state of final perfection. The universe is therefore, for each elect, almost a diverse world, precisely in the way that although the visible World, when seen from each star, would offer the spectator another view, these diverse views would not stop the world from being the same. We need to bear in mind that beauty arises from relationships, and one ens can by itself have many relationships with diverse entia.

The subjective ones and the diverse beauties of the universe are therefore as many as the intelligent, personal finite subjects who have attained their final end, and each of them is a different centre to which everything is linked. But all these subjective *diverse beauties* of the World intermingle and in this state join together as the *first, supernatural, cosmic beauty*. This beauty has its foundation, that is, its subjective one, in the incarnate Word.

1121. As we have seen, the *material ens* constitutes of itself a subjective (that is, real) one and is the foundation of *corporeal beauty*. Considered, however, in its relationship with a higher principle to which it is physically joined, that is, considered as the term of animal feeling, a material ens constitutes neither a complete one nor beauty; the complete one is in the animal principle which, considered in itself, is the foundation of *psychic beauty*. But even this animal principle, considered in relationship to a higher principle which contains it, that is, the personal, *intellective, rational* principle, ceases to be both a complete one and the foundation and subject of psychic beauty; on the contrary, it becomes contained and an element of *rational beauty*. In the same way, the rational (or finite intellective) one can be considered in relationship with a principle higher than itself. In this case it ceases to be a subjective one of *beauty* considered in itself, and becomes an element of another higher beauty. This higher principle can simply be either *being*, the objective form of all finite, intellective principles, or the communicated divine Word. In the case of *being*, there is an *objective one* on which all intellects and finite persons naturally depend. But because this object lacks a subjective existence, it does not constitute a subjective one. For this reason, we cannot see in it a *complete beauty* but only a diminished beauty such as *undetermined* or

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abstract objective beauty. If, however, a higher 'one' means the Word, it becomes the seat of the first, supernatural beauty of the universe.

1122. The following difficulty arises: 'The fact that the corporeal one or animal one is contained in an intellective subject causes no difficulty because they are not complete subjects. But it seems contradictory that the personal principle, which is totally *in se* without needing another nature to make it complete, can have the relationship of element and part of another person.'

In reply, we must remember that a *finite ens* is a relative ens so that a *finite person* is a relative person. A finite person must indeed generally have the essential constitutives of person (otherwise it would not be person), but it has them in a relative mode. We need to look again at this relative mode of existence; it can never be explained too much because it is one of the most difficult concepts of the ontological sciences. The essential constitutive of person is, as we saw, the relationship of supremacy present in an intelligent, real subject. In this subject therefore (which by its essence is one and first and the cause of unity) there is an activity which is not exceeded by another higher activity. Person is essentially container and its nature is that of feeling. Let us suppose that this container is contained in a higher container and that, as container and *feeling*, or feeling principle, it either feels or does not feel its higher container. If it feels its higher container, this higher container becomes contained relative to the principle feeling it. This is how the participation of the absolute in the relative comes about (the supernatural order). Hence, there are simultaneously two relationships: one by which the greater container contains the lesser container, the other by which the lesser container, by feeling its greater container, makes the latter its content. As long as the lesser container feels and makes the greater container its content, it remains person, but is called relative person because it is a container thanks to the nature of a feeling principle, which contains what it feels. In the other relationship, where the greater container contains the lesser container, the latter is, in this respect, content and no longer person; it is felt and understood by the greater container that as such is not content. Because person consists in a *subsistent relationship*, this

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relationship does not obstruct the other equally *subsistent relationship*, but this second relationship excludes the first, just as the first excludes the second: both relationships exclude each other but exist contemporaneously. This does not mean, however, that they are of equal excellence because one can be the cause and condition of the existence of the other and not vice versa. But granted their coexistence, one excludes the other.

The human person feels the greater container in which it exists, in two ways: 1. as a natural object, and in this way I have already said that the intuiting agent contains what is intuited; 2. as divine Word, in the supernatural order.

If the content does not in fact feel its container, it still remains a container relative to itself, because relative to itself, it is as if the container did not exist, in which case the content is not content. This explains why I said that the *psychic principle* and the *body* are, considered in themselves, *complete ones* and the foundation of relative, complete beauties. They differ from the intellectual and *rational principle* precisely in this: the latter is a container that feels a greater container, but this greater container is, *relative* to the act of the feeling thing, content. In contrast, the *psychic principle* and the *body* are containers because they do not feel their content, which consequently does not exist for them.

1123. We can ask whether all or some human persons, in the natural order, constitute *ones* that are *subjects* of the beauty of the universe. But such persons are on earth and consequently are in a state in which the theme is not yet completely executed. Hence, they cannot be considered subjects of the beauty of the universe because the universe was created by God for a supernatural perfection, to which everything is ordered. We would also be wasting our time discussing another hypothetical world. In the natural order of the world therefore there is no *complete beauty*, nor *many relative complete beauties*, as in the World considered in all the completeness of its archetypal order, which includes supernatural perfection.

With all the more reason we have to say that human persons who do not attain their final perfection do not constitute *complete ones*, which are the basis of beauty. They are elements of the *first beauty*, and are only *contents* in the *second beauties* of the world. Therefore, as elements, they are in a servile state.

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1124. Someone may ask what is the nature of the *theme* of the work of the World. In my opinion, the first theme is *finite ens*. The concept of finite ens virtually contains the World, which is the execution of the theme. This execution, when considered as possible, is the *eternal archetype*, whereas the real execution is the *created world* existing *in se*. The beauty of this work is seen and judged by anyone who can determine 'how much the theme of *finite ens* has been perfectly actuated and executed by the eternal artist'. Cosmology explains this concept more extensively. If we consider this theme of *finite ens*, we find the World virtually contained in it. But the concept of *finite ens* can receive some determinations without revealing the plurality of the entia virtually contained in the concept. These determinations do not alter the theme, they determine it more (although the theme remains the same) and at the same time begin to operate. Thus, anyone who held that the perfect execution of *finite ens* requires everything to be reduced to feeling (taking *feeling* as the supreme genus of creation), the *feeling* will be a second theme giving the same result. There would also be a third theme involving *intelligence*, to which everything must be reduced. A fourth theme is that of finite ens assumed in one person with God, which would impose the most sublime end on the execution of *finite ens*. The theme therefore can be expressed in different virtual ways. However, the first theme virtually contains all the others and is the concept of finite ens, as I said.

1125. We have seen how the world is unified in certain subjective ones and thus radiates various splendours of complete beauties. All these are gathered, like light joined to light, into the first, supreme divine beauty. But we also need to see what is the objective one that can give to the world a purely objective and abstract beauty.

Every beauty is objective, but in *abstract objective* beauty, considered as object, we do not see a real subject which alone constitutes the unity of the many dependent on it. In this kind of diminished beauty, the execution of the theme does not produce one most perfect, sole subject but an order where there is no sole subject, but a *harmony* of many entities, whether these are subjects or not. Here, we need to recall the two series of abstracts I have distinguished (*Logica*, 423). Some abstracts

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virtually contain a complete *subject*, others do not; they contain parts of a subject, such as qualities, quantities, relationships, etc. which, although actuated according to the theme present in the abstract, never establish an existing or possible real subject. Thus, the fullest idea of an ens is a possible complete subject that lacks only realisation. The full idea contains the same subject but can be usually realised many times. This repeated realisation leaves it with some indetermination and abstraction from external relationships. The abstract species contains various full species and therefore contains implicitly also the complete subject in which these full species terminate. The same can be said about the genera of these ideas. Such genera constitute the first series of abstracts whose actuation terminates ultimately in complete subjects. The other series of abstracts is formed, as I said, from all the qualities, quantities and relationships incapable of subsisting by themselves as complete subjects, but only of being thought as dialectical and mental subjects. We have therefore two questions: 1. 'Do the *abstracts of complete subjects* constitute the theme of purely objective beauty?' and 2. 'Do the abstracts of *fragments* of a *subject* constitute the theme of purely objective beauty?' By 'purely objective beauty' I mean abstract, objective beauty.

Relative to the first question, the abstracts of a subject give the theme to a *complete, subjective beauty* when their most perfect development entails the necessity of one sole subject that contains all the others. But when the only result of their most perfect development is a multitude of complete subjects, the abstracts would result only in an abstract, objective beauty, because the different subjects arising from the development would be joined solely through the abstract idea that formed their theme and from which they were deduced. Thus, they would form an abstract or purely objective one.

Relative to the second question, all abstracts that are fragments of subjects cannot, considered as themes, provide any other beauty through their development and execution than abstract, objective beauty. Their unity cannot in any way be founded in a complete one, that is, in one sole subsistent subject.

The first and true theme of every beauty is always the most abstract idea, which contains its effective execution hidden in the greatest virtuality. Thus, in the case of cosmic beauty, I said

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that the first theme is *finite ens* because this is the most abstract, virtual concept of the World.

As a result of all this there are two kinds of *abstract, objective beauties*:

1. The first kind are those composed of many complete subjects, all of which together constitute the execution of a species or of a genus of subjects which embraces them all virtually and nothing more. This kind can be called *subjective, abstract beauty*.

2. The second kind are those composed of many undetermined entities, all of which together constitute the perfect execution of a theme that is an abstract, a fragment of a subject. This kind can be called *harmonious beauty*.

Let us examine these two kinds to understand their difference.

1126. We see subjective, abstract beauty in the perfect execution of a theme that is an *abstract of subjects*. The beauty exists only if the execution contains everything comprised in the theme and nothing more. The theme however can vary in degree of abstraction, and the more abstract it is, the more it virtually comprises. As a result, there are as many beauties of greater or lesser extension as there are these abstracts, which are distributed hierarchically in the mind. For example, the least extended abstract of the subject 'man' is the *abstract species* of man.¹⁷⁶ If we allow a perfect execution of this idea by the Creator, all the *full ideas* of man, implicitly contained in the idea, must be actuated. These full ideas manifest all the possible truth of human individuals. Let us suppose that God had in fact executed this truth in the human race. For reasons of wisdom the human race cannot have two individuals pertaining to the same full species; they must all differ according to the ideas. Simultaneously, however, all of the full species must be seen actuated and realised (*TCY*, 617–641). Now let us suppose that we are present at the moment the human race ceases and the whole race

¹⁷⁶ The *full species* is a universal, not an abstract. It is a universal relative to an indefinite number of real individuals thinkable as created according to that model as a common type, but it is not universal like an idea. As an idea, it is perfectly determined in itself and therefore one. The beauty we are discussing is in ideas, and, as I said, 'one' without variety is not sufficient to constitute beauty.

is drawn up before us, an undetermined number of individuals. All this immense multitude is *humanity*, whether contemplated in the full ideas or in their realisation; the multitude is humanity, one very simple idea, the abstract species, the theme of the great work. Those who see and contemplate this one very simple idea, that is, *humanity* changed into a family composed of myriads and myriads of full species, all different, all realised, all contained in this humanity in a hidden way, must experience a feeling of wonderment. They must see an ineffable beauty in such a perfect work, and admire the wisdom of the artist who could execute everything prescribed in the theme. This species, *humanity*, is the one of such a multiple, varied totality, but the one remains an abstract in the many; it does not become a single real subject but many subjects and is therefore called *subjective, abstract beauty*.

The World (and we can say the same about the human race) also has, as we saw, a *subjective real beauty*, at least through the supernatural order, but the mind can prescind from this beauty in order to contemplate in the world only *subjective, abstract beauty*. Diverse beauties are united and appear to the mind due to 1. the diverse way the mind sees the work executed, 2. the diverse endowments it sees in the execution of the theme, and 3. the diverse mode in which the theme is formulated. Thus, if the immense fecundity of the simple idea 'man' (or humanity or abstract species of man — they are all the same) is considered in the finalised human race, we have *subjective, abstract beauty*. This beauty pertains to the beauty I have called *natural and substantial*, to distinguish it from *accidental and final beauty*. In our example, where we suppose the concept 'man' executed in the most perfect mode, accidental final beauty is certainly contained in natural substantial beauty, but I am abstracting from the former and considering only the characteristic of *fecundity* of the abstract idea in the latter.

1127. If we consider that an individual of the species was assumed by the divine Word personally united to the species, we have *supernatural subjective real beauty*. This beauty exceeds the active and passive *potentiality* of the concept 'man', but not the potentiality present in *receptivity*. Man is receptive of this unification and supernatural perfection when God wishes to bestow it freely on him. If, in the finalised human

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race, we consider the *maximum amount* of good the Creator was able to extract in the execution of the theme 'man', we have another beauty. This beauty, however, can be regarded as a subordinate species of *subjective abstract beauty*, because it is considered as an excellence coming into act when the idea 'man' is perfectly executed; we can call it *teletic* beauty (TCY, 504–510). As I said, it can be regarded as a subordinate species of *subjective abstract beauty*, which consists in the full development of the idea 'man'. In fact, I am certain that the full perfect development, as such, brings with it the *greatest final good*. Hence, to find the *greatest amount* of final good, we simply need to see humanity fully developed in the greatest possible mode under the aspect of this good. In my opinion, *natural beauty* cannot conflict with *final beauty* — the latter is the means and condition of the former.

The concept of an individual as generator of all other individuals is also included in the execution of the theme 'man'. We see this when a universal and intrinsically pertinent determination is added to abstract man, such as the determination *animal feeling*, which forms the substrate, so to speak, and matter of humanity. This feeling has an organising principle, which gives rise to generation. In this respect there is a beauty in the final human race in so far as many individuals are seen to originate naturally from one individual, source of all descendants. This prolificity is a beauty proper to *animal feeling*, and hence pertains more to the *animal* theme, that is, a more generic theme, than to the theme 'man'. However, when limited to the *intelligent animal*, it constitutes a special beauty, which can be called *beauty of lineage*.

1128. *Subjective abstract beauty* is therefore distinguished from *subjective real beauty* in this: the former results from many subjects connected solely by an abstract idea that gives their theme, whereas *subjective real beauty* requires that *only one subject* results from the execution of the theme.

However, as we have seen, this one subject can include and contain within itself many others. In this case either we consider the beauty presented by the aspect of a subject which unifies many others in itself (*natural, substantial* beauty) or we consider this one subject brought to its final perfection, even accidental perfection, where we see *accidental final perfection*.

Nevertheless, if the one subject contains solely its multiple nature and no other subjects, the beauty it can receive is final beauty. This final beauty is proper to the complete, full species, that is, to the *archetype* and its realisation. The *natural beauty* of the subject is not referred to the subject as the execution of the theme of the *abstract species* but as the execution of a more generic theme, for example, the *animal* theme. Man, considered solely in his abstract species, is *beautiful* among animals, just as the animal is among vegetables, and the vegetable among material entia.

We must also consider the difference between the beauty of the *archetype* of an abstract species or genus and the beauty seen in the full execution of the species and genus. In the beauty of the archetype there is nothing deformed or unfitting, whereas in the total execution of the full species or of a genus (granted that all possible full species are involved, whether beautiful or ugly in themselves), what is partly ugly is involved in constituting the universal beautiful. What pleases us and what we admire is the total execution of the unique theme in which the beauty resides whether we restrict our consideration in this totality to the natural beauty¹⁷⁷ or extend our consideration to the *final beauty*. Even the deformed part concurs in the beauty of the whole, where it is no longer considered as whole but as part of the whole. The best philosophers always saw this; indeed some, exaggerating and excessively universalising the principle, claimed that each beauty resulted from the accordant composition of many deformities, concord resulted from discords, and generally, every unity resulted from opposites. But that this is the case in respect of the beauty arising from the total execution of a full, generic species is a philosophical truth, which we must value highly (*TCY*, 466 ss. [659 ss.]). St. Augustine argues: 'All things' (good and bad) 'are ordered to their tasks and ends so that universal beauty may result. Thus a person, of whom we see only a part, fills us with disgust, but pleases us supremely when seen totally. When we judge a building, we must not consider purely some attractive corner, nor simply the hair of a handsome

¹⁷⁷ Natural *beauty*, that is, the beauty of nature, resides also in those who have no final beauty, for example, in wicked people. Cf. St. Augustine, *De Vera Rel.*, 77.

person, nor only the hands of someone delivering a fine speech, nor only those views in the phases of the moon that we can see in three days'. He therefore makes the following judgment: 'Things which are for this reason inferior because they are totally perfect with imperfect parts, whether they are seen as beautiful at rest or in motion, are to be considered in their totality, if we wish to judge accurately.'¹⁷⁸

1129. As an example of *subjective, abstract beauty* I gave the beauty found in the execution of the theme 'man', which is an abstract species. The *genera of complete subjects* also have themes, and when fully and perfectly executed, constitute beauties whose unity is always the theme. To distinguish these beauties under this aspect, they could be called, according to their theme, *beauties of specific unity* and *beauties of generic unity*.

There are as many *complete subjects* as there are *entia*, whether the entia are truly complete in themselves or thought as such by the mind. Our mind considers as entia *in se*, *bodies*, *animals*, *rational beings* and *pure intelligences*, in addition to God, who is the absolute ens that admits neither species nor genus. All these subjective entia are genera, and can constitute themes of beauties of generic unity. Some, however, would be unexecutable by themselves because they are relative entia and must therefore be referred to others with which they have an essential connection and from which they receive determination.

For example, the genus *body* gives the theme to the creation of bodies. But the theme 'body' includes all possible diverse bodies of full species. Their number however is indefinite because their forms at least, and their size, have no limit essential to them that determines them. Now, that which has no determination *in se* cannot be executed if it does not first take the necessary determinations from other entities capable of giving these determinations. The reason is that bodies have the nature of *terms* and therefore refer to sensitive principles; they must therefore be determined by these principles, to which their beauty is relative. Consequently, the theme that can be executed is not the pure genus *body* but 'body, term of sensitive principles'. Hence, granted sensitive principles, that is, *animate entia*, the theme will be executed perfectly whenever all those

¹⁷⁸ *De V. Rel.*, 76.

bodies are created that are necessary for the better service of the sensitive principles.

But if we take the genus 'animate' as a theme, the perfect execution of this theme will also be impossible because here again we do not see how there can be a possible definite number of individuals in the full species of what is animate. The reason is that the determination of the feeling principle depends on the term, but because the term is indefinite, the determination is indefinite. Another similar reason is that the animator-principle is relative to and in the service of the rational principle. Consequently, the possible number of animate entia cannot as such be determined. All we can say is that they must be sufficient in number to execute fully and perfectly the other theme of the *rational* principle.

By rational principle I mean the principle which has two terms: *being* and an *organic body*. In my opinion the intuition of being cannot suitably be granted to an animator-principle of matter if the organism of the principle is not specifically perfect (*PSY*, 1: 672–675). Because such a theme is tied to these conditions, the full abstract species of rational entia are, in all probability, limited and determined. The number of possible full species of the abstract species *humanity* is certainly limited and determined. If besides the abstract species of humanity there were other abstract species of rational entia (as we would have to believe if other celestial bodies were inhabited, just as the earth is inhabited), these abstract species would have to have a determined number. Being, because one and the same, could not multiply abstract species except through a different degree of the force of intuition, and in my opinion this degree depends on the level of perfection of the organism (*Logica*, 66, 1021, 1109–1114). Relative to the organism itself, which must be one and moves about by means of the one feeling principle that must give it life, the abstract species cannot in any way be infinite. In fact, the unity required by an organism determines and limits the parts suitable for composing organisms and therefore determines and limits the number of specifically diverse organisms that are diversified by a specifically diverse fundamental feeling (*PSY*, 1: 215, 471–473). This therefore is a *theme* that can be executed in all its extension, and hence is the only theme receptive of the beauty we are discussing. The same

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can certainly be said about the other theme I mentioned, *pure intelligence*, but it would require too much discussion to show that the species that execute this theme must all be limited in number.

If from these generic themes we go back to the most general of all themes, a theme that includes them all and, as I have said, is *finite ens*, we will see that it also is suitable for execution, because it is limited in the intellective subjects that compose it and on which all other entia of a servile nature depend and by which they are necessarily limited and determined.

These diverse themes of subjective, abstract beauty, therefore, when executed, result in a work of a greater or lesser vastness. Although the beauty of the work lacks the completeness of the *subjective one*, because the only foundation of the themes is an abstract one, that is, an idea, nevertheless the beauty increases in proportion both to the increase of the quantity of entity embraced by the beauty and to the multiplicity and variety which contribute to the increase of the quantity. I have said that beauty increases precisely in proportion to the following two things: 1. the perfection of the one (this perfection includes the *simplicity* and *completeness* of the one), and 2. the number of entities that the unified many contain. Hence, in this second case, the idea that forms the theme of this beauty increases in proportion to its extension. In the first case, the idea increases still more through the simplicity of the one because the more generic the idea, the more simple it is. However the idea decreases relative to the completeness of the one because a more generic idea is a less complete one, unless of course the genus can be made a substantive and rendered subsistent, certainly not as a genus but as taking the place of a species, because the same idea can be genus and species under various relationships.

1130. We come now to the type of beauty I have called *harmonious beauty*. I make the following distinction between the concepts of *harmony* and *complete beauty*. Beauty is the perfect execution of a theme that results in the production of complete subjects (whether possible or subsistent). Harmony is the execution of a theme that does not result in the production of subjects but of a simple *objective order*. The theme is the abstract *rule* determining this order. This rule and theme is not an abstract of subjects but of fragments of subjects. Moreover,

this harmonious beauty, consisting in a simple objective order, was the beauty that mainly attracted the attention of philosophers. Hence, the many definitions of beauty attributed to them are generic and insufficient. For example, the definition, 'unity in variety or in many', is totally generic; it includes complete beauty as well as *harmonious beauty* which is a species of abstract, diminished beauty.

1131. Purely objective order is either *linear* or *circular*. Use of these words must not limit the order to things in space and time. 'Linear' means every series that does not return on itself and begin again; 'circular' means every series whose end is joined to its starting point and perpetually begins again from the start uninterruptedly. Both series can apply to any entities whatsoever, including feelings, thoughts and ideas.

Linear order is either definite or indefinite; circular order is always definite. A series of natural numbers, of even or uneven numbers, and all those series that mathematicians call infinite are always an indefinite linear order. Definite series, like a determined binomial formula, have a definite linear order. If, however, we draw an oval using a series of tiny dashes, no matter how small, it will always be a circular series, it will return back to itself and be completely definite. Indefinite order is never actually actuated but always remains partly in potency. Therefore this order and its harmonious beauty are imperfect, that is, essentially potential.

An order is definite or indefinite according to the nature of the *theme*. If a theme is such a simple abstract that it admits no variety in its execution, then the only plurality is in its repetition. Hence, because simple repetition is indefinite — it can be repeated once or an infinite number of times — the order is indefinite. Let us suppose that the theme is a simple numerical difference of 2. After writing two numbers that differ by 2, I can write as many numbers as I like, repeating the same difference without ever ending. On the other hand the theme may be a complex abstract idea, at least virtually complex, not a simple abstract idea. If this theme cannot be executed by repetition of the same mental operation, but only by changing the operation in the way indicated by the theme, we will have a definite order. An example is the series of a binomial or the series of very short dashes making up an oval or other circular shape whose

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equation is known. The rule according to which the terms of both these series are deduced is a complex, not a simple, abstract idea.

1132. We can therefore understand why people who have written about beauty considered that its foundation was always a *likeness* of parts, a likeness, however, whose precise composition they could not, for the most part, define and indicate in what it exactly consists. The likeness that accompanies beauty is not difficult to discover in the case of *harmonious beauty* to which strictly speaking it pertains. Harmonious beauty consists in a simple *objective order* without the presence of any subject. There is certainly likeness in order, so that Christian Wolff posited order in likeness with the definition: 'Order is an obvious likeness in the way that things are placed next to each other or follow each other.'¹⁷⁹ But *likeness* in the way that entities are arranged is not strictly speaking order but the rule and theme of the order; order are the things themselves arranged in that way. *Likeness* is present therefore in the beauty I call harmonious. In other words, we see that the theme is always kept the same in the various parts of the execution. Precisely for this reason, St. Augustine notes that we take pleasure in seeing equal things distributed at an equal distance, and if one of them is unequal, it should be moved to the middle because we like the equality of the two intervals that divide it on either side from the extremes. Thus, in a building, we like the divided distribution of the windows with the door and small terrace in the middle because we see a rule followed that our mind takes as a theme, constituting one in many.¹⁸⁰

¹⁷⁹ *Ontol.*, §472. — This definition seems to limit order to things located in space and time. Understood in this way, it would limit the notion of order too much. Order exists wherever there are 'many entities bound together by only one relationship, which itself can be the result of lower relationships'. These relationships can also be relationships of *anteriority* and *posteriority*, meaning every kind of anteriority and posteriority, not simply chronological (cf. *Logica*, 442–443, 812–813).

¹⁸⁰ 'These beautiful things therefore give pleasure by their number in which we have already shown that equality is to be desired — This is found not only in the beauty that pertains to sound' (the only beauty possible here is precisely the beauty I call *harmonious* or beauty of *simple objective order*) 'as well as in the motion of bodies, but also in visible forms where we more usually say beauty resides. Or do you think that there is something besides rhythmic equality, because pairs of limbs correspond like for like? But single

1133. Every time therefore we can find in any group of entities a unique rule which gives the reason for the total arrangement of the entities, this rule or principle of order, which is always a fragmentary abstract (and not an abstract of a subject), displays harmonious beauty. This beauty varies according to the nature of the entities in which it is manifest, and can be found in both the most abstract and the most concrete of entities. The diverse nature of the entities in which this beauty is present adds to the nature some qualities that, although foreign to its concept, are bound with the nature and easily confused with it. When the mathematician finds a formula expressing a law of nature, the formula allows him to see the beauty of the large number of events that obey the law. The formula itself, that is, the law expressed in it, is the *one*, while the theme of the beauty, the complex of the constant events, are the many in which the one is admired. An example is the law of astronomical attraction, or any attraction.

An example from concrete entities would be sensations. These cause pleasure which, although not beauty, is an element associated with beauty. Pleasure, however, can be not only the effect of beauty but also the entities arranged in the order that presents beauty. In fact the order of sensations most appropriate to human beings is found in the beauty of music, dance and other fine arts, which I discussed at length in *Psychology* (1537–1598), and to which I refer the reader.

The extent degree of beauty is, I said, proportionate to the degree of virtual entity in the theme. In the case of a purely objective order, that is, a harmonious beauty, this entity is as great as the number of parts forming the fixed order. Therefore, to form the most abstract of all harmonious orders, we must conceive the order of numbers. This explains why some people thought that all beauty was in numbers, as in the first elements of all order.

Finally, I note that *harmonious order* and every other order things have a midway position so that they are kept at equal intervals on either side** (St. Aug., *De Music.*, 6: 38). This *likeness*, however, or equality necessary for harmonious beauty, is not always understood in the same way by St. Augustine. For him, it sometimes means the *congruence* and aptness of one thing to another, for example, light to the eye (*ibid.*), or sometimes he sees in it participation in divine likeness (*De Genes. ad litt.*, L. imperf., 59).

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that does not present a *subjective real beauty* are always relative to an intelligent subject who derives joy from . The subject, in contemplating them and is a stranger to this kind of order which is present to him solely as a non fully determined object because it contains no real subject.

1134. If therefore we reflect on the different kinds of beauty that I have discussed, we see that there are as many complete beauties as there are *themes* assumed to be executable. The theme is any abstract idea whatsoever either of a subject or of a fragment of a subject. When we see this idea in its execution, we see it as the foundational 'one' of beauty. The abstract idea of both a subject and a fragment of a subject can be abstract specific or generic more or less. Its execution can be beauty in two ways: when the execution produces the only archetype virtually contained in the idea, and when the idea expends all its virtual fecundity in the execution.

§10. *The mind's applause of beauty. — Enthusiasm and other effects in the soul*

1135. The mind gives its approval to a multiple work containing many entities when it sees perfectly executed and actuated in it a very simple, abstract idea that hid the work in its virtuality. The approval consists in the following judgment: 'The theme of the work has been executed with perfection.' The more distant the theme from the work, the more wonderful the work seems. And when the mind's approval is joined to the sense of wonder, or at least to a great mental delight inherent in the approval, the approval becomes applause. The distance of the theme from its execution or actuation is proportionate to the theme's simplicity and to the number of entities that enrich the execution whether through the greatness of the act or through multiplicity. The approval and applause is a natural effect stimulated in the intelligent subject at sight of the *identity* between the two terms. The mind compares these terms which seem to be just as different as the *theme*, the idea and the *work* actually executed or actuated. By 'work' I mean not only what is done but what is always done, that is, most generally speaking, the ens or actual entity according to the theme.

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1136. When the magnificence of things exceeds and overwhelms the power of our imagination, we apprehend it with that feeling which is called *sublime*. The sublime is of many kinds because the things or natures that can be endowed with such exceeding magnificence are of many kinds. But when this magnificence that exceeds and overwhelms our imagination or thought is in the entity which the work presents when perfectly executed and actuated according to a theme, we have the *sublimity of beauty or of the beautiful*. If the work contains as actuated a small portion of being, or a portion measurable by the mind (the theme requires nothing more than this), the work can certainly have its own *perfect beauty* but not the *sublimity of beauty*, which this alone evinces an extraordinary applause in the human mind.

1137. The unmeasured quantity of being that is seen in the perfect execution of a theme, can be conceived in two ways:

1. It can be an infinite quantity, which is no longer a quantity. Such an *actual infinite being* is God alone, of whom the mind forms only a negative concept and by means of this concept feels that the ens in question exceeds all its knowledge.
2. It can be a non-infinite quantity, which however is so great that human thought cannot measure it in any way. In this case, the human subject sees an entity without seeing its limits; for him this entity is *indefinite*.

In both cases, if the thing is vividly and strongly apprehended, a very great applause arises which overwhelms us and is called *enthusiasm*. This word comes from θεός [god] and ἄγω, ἄξω [I bear, carry] and refers to that elevated feeling which comes from God who communicates himself, overwhelming and enrapturing the whole human being. Anything truly infinite and anything immeasurably great but finite, produce a similar feeling in us in the sphere of nature, because in both cases, we do not see the limits of the object we are thinking. Hence we confuse *what is immeasurable* with what is truly *infinite*. This enthusiasm produced in human beings by the indefinite is the principle of the *deification* of nature, as I demonstrated in *Frammenti d'una storia dell'empietà*. Moreover, because human beings, subject to the limits of their faculties and restricted development, find the finite *immeasurably great*, they are more disposed to divinising things in proportion to their lack of education and perspicacity.

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This explains why different peoples adore differed natural entia; primitive people have their fetishes but civilised peoples would not stop there. This excess of wonder which arises in them when they perceive finite things whose magnificence they cannot grasp due to the limitation of their thought, is however gradually tempered by the increase of knowledge. But history demonstrates that the human race has never been able, on its own, to free itself from this wonder, as long as God did not communicate himself supernaturally.

When we positively receive the touch of God and thus perceive the true infinite, it is impossible for us to confuse this one sole new feeling with any other caused by finite entia, even by entia whose magnificence we cannot grasp or measure. The feeling we have of such entia is produced by an imaginary, partly negative concept, whereas the positive feeling of God is brought about entirely by an infinite reality acting in us. This feeling has no likeness in either species or genus or efficacy with all the other possible feelings produced in us by the action of natural entia and by our own subjective action, with both actions working together. Only in this supernatural feeling can true enthusiasm be present and the sublime furore St. Paul spoke about: 'We are fools for Christ.'¹⁸¹

I leave aside both *fanatical enthusiasm*, which is a principle of idolatry in which this enthusiasm takes different forms, and *divine enthusiasm*, which concerns mystical theology. I must however say something about *natural enthusiasm*, which in itself is good.

1138. Natural enthusiasm arises from the sight and lively contemplation of exceedingly great and wonderful beauty, but not of every beauty, although every beauty evokes the *approval* of the mind. If the portion of being that composes the beauty is large, every beauty evokes *applause*, which this changes into *enthusiasm* when the portion of being seen ordered in the beauty is extremely large.

Two accessory circumstances contribute to the intense stimulation of this feeling: the *newness* of the unexpected sight and the *rapidity* with which the mind passes from seeing the great *work*, where the beauty is, to the theme and, with a sudden,

¹⁸¹ [1 Cor 4: 10].

perceptive gaze, sees the theme executed in the work. This is even more true when the mind moves rapidly and by mental energy in the opposite direction, from the theme to the concept of the perfectly executed work. This is proper to the best artists, who at the time feel themselves stirred, even, through the fatigue and the very noble effort, in their mind, with exquisite and unutterable delight, as if raised above themselves and taken out of themselves.

Moreover, for a beautiful work to be keenly and intensely perceived, and for the mind to pass from the work to the theme or from the theme to the work, a natural aptitude, supported by the habit of art, is necessary. This aptitude results from a complex of alert, bold and truly sublime faculties, which would take long to list, analyse, intermingle and fuse together. This is the origin of the *artistic faculty*.

An artist can be endowed abundantly with this faculty and be engaged in the happy act of conceiving, as if creating, the work indicated to him by the theme. For example, a poet can propose to himself the most simple and seemingly vacant idea of the theme, but nevertheless embrace the idea with the strength of his mind, cultivate it and, as if it were a desert without any traces of entia, magically populate it in his thought with countless entities, coloured, living, mobile and intermingled in a wonderful order, yet always contained in the unity of that first idea. At such moments, the state of the artist cannot be compared to that of all other human beings, because of the stimulation and euphoria of a feeling into which, as into one sole act, the acts of all his powers fuse. He is transported into another very actual world, which is his work, while the real world is an immense distance away. He no longer understands ordinary speech, and people no longer understand him.

The Greeks called this state enthusiasm, something divine; they called it madness or furore, words that are always elicited when human feeling, under the influence of a greater force and of the beauty of the concepts producing the feeling, is not in harmony with ordinary feeling. St. Paul and St. Francis of Assisi used such words in the supernatural order, as Plato did in the natural order.

In fact, the outstanding characteristic of the madness is that the person has thoughts, concepts and feelings different from

and the opposite of what people in general have. But this thinking and feeling, at variance with common feeling, can detach itself from common feeling either because it lacks the *order* that the generality of human beings maintain in their thinking or feeling, or because it rises to another order unequalled in excellence and extension. In the first case, the person's thinking and feeling become *disordered* and hence deformed — this is evil *madness and furore*. In the second case, we have artistic, good and divine *madness and furore*.

We must also bear in mind that because the object *informs* and perfects the subject, good enthusiasm also bestows a sublime perfection on the human being. Moreover, generally speaking, every contemplated beauty (whether subjective real or subjective abstract or harmonious) continually and frequently makes the souls it informs beautiful. This is the starting principle from which anyone must begin if they wish to compose a tract on the beauty of souls. Plotinus¹⁸² and the other Platonists said many things about this, although in a somewhat confused way. The soul in fact is made beautiful by nature, that is, by an aptitude for the beautiful, by habit, by frequent consideration, provided that the beautiful is not acquired at the loss of the contemplation of something more beautiful. Even what is deformed can be a part of the beauty of the whole; similarly the beautiful can be a part of the ugliness of the whole.

1139. We still need to ask whether applause and enthusiasm can be stimulated when beauty is not contemplated in something real. In my opinion the real is necessary because without it the work is imperfect. Thus, in the case of God, the real is essential to him. Hence, if the real is not communicated to the contemplating person, the contemplation is not perfect. For this reason the only perfect contemplation of God is supernatural contemplation. Nevertheless, God, contemplated in his negative ideal concept, evokes applause and stimulates enthusiasm through a kind of impetus towards the real on the part of the subject, even though the subject does not attain the real. But this applause and enthusiasm are infinitely less than the former, and of another nature.

Strictly speaking, finite ens does not require external

¹⁸² *Enn.*, 1, 6: 3 ss.

realisation for its completion, but it requires the divine real. Hence, there is no full contemplation even of the finite ens except by someone who might see the real in absolute existence, according to which it is in God, in the creator-act.

Ideal finite ens evokes a minor applause and stimulates a minor enthusiasm which is certainly incomplete. Nevertheless it has sufficient beauty in its actual execution in the mind that it conquers the human faculty through its extensiveness, multiplicity, profound essence and order. As a result, it evokes a ceaseless applause and stimulates a wonderful and enthusiastic mental love.

But we do not see this ideal order in which finite ens is unfolded and executed from eternity by the eternal mind, as Plato supposed we did before we were born. We have to acquire it from the realities of the world, using the instruments of our nature. We must move from the realisation to the ideal, contemplate the order in the latter, and in this order find and study the great *theme* so that we can see the great perfection with which the great theme is effectively executed in both the ideal and the real worlds. This is the progress of the kallosophical human mind. This mind first acquires the *ideal work* from the realisation, then examines this ideal work to find the *theme*, and after finding the theme, passes from it to the ideal, real work, of which it admires the unutterable perfection and beauty.

Here we must recall the wonderful things Plato says in the *Phaedro* about the souls who see the likeness of the eternal, divine beauty in corporeal things which last for only a moment, and contemplate and lose themselves in this beauty. Unfortunately he stopped at the ideas and took them for gods, and lacked clarity in rising to the source and only seat of beauty, the one, true God, although he was certainly not totally ignorant of him. He approached God with that fear which, before Christ came, all human beings first felt and held them back from approaching the divine majesty.¹⁸³

The beauty therefore that is more proper to human nature is the beauty realised in the world. We are entia composed of an animate body and intellective soul. The soul does not naturally intuit beauty but solely the idea of being, the *universal theme*

¹⁸³ *Phaedr.* p. 245 ss., 250 ss.

and most virtual of all. Moreover, it must acquire the work executed according to this theme from its own modifications, that is, from finite felt elements. Because the finite is the only real which is accessible to us by nature, we must take our determined ideas from it as well as the efficacious, real stimulation of our operations; we must take therefore the archetype of that beauty which we can come to long for. For the rest, just as the *ideal* gives light, which is not beauty but an element of it, so the *real*, generally speaking, adds to beauty multiform *feelable pleasure*, which also is not an element of beauty but wonderfully makes beauty act more vividly and efficaciously on the intellect. Beauty, intellective *per se*, unites, as it were, and reaches the whole human being, all his parts, even those inferior to his intellect but joined to it in the human individual.

CHAPTER 11

How the vicious circle is avoided in the three forms of subsistent being

1140. The theory of relationships which I wished to present would still be imperfect if I did not answer an objection which could come easily to mind and thus cast a shadow over all this teaching.

I said that the three forms of being mutually enclose each other. But they are not called subsistent *supreme forms* because they are enclosed and *contained* but because they enclose and contain; as contained, they are clothed with the containing form and pertain to the nature of this form.

The following difficulty immediately arises: granted the above, the three forms of Being would seemingly need to repeat themselves and mutually enclose one another *ad infinitum*. For example, if Being as subject encloses and contains Being as object and Being as beloved, each of these in its turn contains the other two forms. Consequently, the contents are also always containers, so that the number of contents and containers could never end. But it is absurd that absolute Being has in itself an indefinite number of forms and enclosures, because anything indefinite is imperfect and cannot subsist *in se* (*PSY*, 2: 1372–1380).

This very subtle objection arises from the failure to note that when I say *content* and *container* I am talking about the same identical nature, not two different natures. This nature, when indicated by *container*, is the principle and subject of a relationship, and the relationship subsists in this principle and subject, but when indicated by the word *content*, the nature is not the subject but only the term of a relationship. It is therefore false to say that the *content*, precisely as content and nothing more, is a container of other forms. For example, if I consider a given form (the subjective form, let us say) only in so far as contained in the objective form, and then consider this contained subjective form also as a container of the other forms, this second consideration has destroyed the first, because I

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have added to the first something contrary to it — if in fact I consider it a container, I no longer consider it purely as content. I cannot consider a form as purely content and say that precisely in this respect as content, it contains the other forms; in this case it cannot be considered as content. This would be sufficient to allow the conclusion [that] there is no place for an indefinite number of forms mutually enclosed in each other.

1141. But let us consider more deeply the nature of this enclosing. An entity contained in another can be considered in two modes: either as a term of the relationship of containership, in which case it is considered precisely as content, or as a principle and subject of another relationship of containership, in which case it is not considered precisely as content but as container. Nevertheless, the *identical entity* which is contained and as such is a term of the relationship of containership is not prevented from being a principle and subject of another relationship of containership; in other words it can be a container. The entity is identical and the nature is identical, but the relationships are different. On the other hand, if we were dealing with an identical relationship, the identical entity could not be simultaneously principle and term of the relationship. But because the identity in question is in the nature, not in the relationships, the identity, as term of one relationship, can without contradiction be a principle of another. This does not result in the circle of indefinite enclosure of the forms, as was feared — in fact, the only result is that the identical entity can be considered as content and container. We can also say that the contained entity is a container relative to another content. But the entity, in so far as content, can pertain to the nature of the entity that contains it. This will be the case if the containership is perfect, because the contained entity pertains inseparably to the container entity, which possesses it as its own nature. Hence, in so far as an entity is perfectly contained, it constitutes the nature of the container entity, except that ‘container’ expresses the principle, and ‘content’ the term of the relationship that is in the identical nature. For example, human nature is understood as *content* relative to the human person, which has the nature of *container*. On the other hand, human nature has identical nature with the human person, except that when we say ‘person’ we are considering the principle, and when we say ‘nature’ we are considering the term

of the relationship present in this nature (*AMS*, 832–837). But if the contained entity is itself considered as a container, that is, as principle of another relationship, it cannot be called content as identical to its container but content like any other entity, that is, as having its own mode of being, independent as such of its own container. This new relationship can be in the nature in which the previous relationship was, because a nature can have many principles of relationship. Revelation tells us that this is precisely what happens in a most mysterious way in absolute Being, without any absurdity: in absolute Being each of the three supreme forms contains the other two simply as content, and therefore as a nature identical to its own nature. In so far as these contained forms are themselves containers, each form contains them in itself as other forms, that is, as other principles and subjects of relationships. This is what theologians appropriately call the *circuminsession* of the three divine persons: each person inexists reciprocally in the others, distinct from each other, without confusion.

If the forms of absolute Being therefore, in so far as purely *contents*, constitute the nature of the container form, and the distinction between contained form and container is only conceptual and virtual, then clearly this does not multiply the forms; their organic structure is displayed solely by means of abstract concepts. And in so far as the forms that are contained are considered as *containers*, they are distinguished, but they always remain three. Consequently, the danger of the vicious circle of the forms as well as the danger that the forms (and hence, the persons) might increase beyond three ceases to exist.

1142. All these considerations give us some useful results which allow us to have, in so far as we can, a better concept of divine Being.

First of all, they help us to have a more precise understanding of the intimate and ineffable union of the three forms in subsistent Being. The identical form that exists as content, constitutes, as content, the nature of the subsistent form, but also inexists *in se* as container, and as such is in effect distinct from the first form. Consequently, the three forms are seen as rooted in, and are in, the same nature of identical Being. They differ from each other only in the *relationships* by which each is understood in the same nature as principle, container, and

therefore person. I do not say 'principle of the other persons' but 'principle in the same nature', which means the principle that contains and embraces all the divine nature as its own nature.

Secondly, we can better understand why each form considered as a person does not differ in effect from the identical divine nature; only the persons differ from each other. In so far as the three forms, conceptually distinguished by the mind, are contents, they constitute the same divine nature and not the persons, but in so far as they are containers (which implies the relationships of origin, that is, of generation and spiration, etc.), they are distinct persons.

It must be noted however that the form, as container, not only supposes but expresses in itself the relationship of origin, on which alone the distinction of the persons is founded: the absolute container-object, as such, is that which is generated by the subject. Because the subject has, by definition, the nature of first, it must, when it becomes object, have the condition of both *second* and generated; in other words, it has the condition of subject contained in the object. This explains both the title 'Son', because he has received everything from the subject, and the title 'Father', who has given him everything. The relationship therefore is not of concept alone, but is in effect and *in se*. This object is container-object of the subject precisely because the Father makes himself object through his intellective, generative act of the object in which he posits his whole self. The container-object in absolute Being is therefore such through the relationship of origin, through which it is generated as container-object. The same must be said about loved Being, which is the subject contained in the loved object and thus spirated by the identical container-and-content-subject with one sole spiration. But I must discuss this at greater length elsewhere.

1143. When therefore the most august Trinity is the subject of discussion, we must bear in mind the following.

Any discussion about the relationship between container and content concerns the relationship between the persons and the divine nature. This is not a relationship in effect but only a conceptual relationship, existing purely virtually in God.

Any discussion about the relationship between containers concerns the relationships between the divine persons. These

relationships are solely relationships of origin, relationships in effect, subsistent in God and constituting the persons.

The three forms of Being apply therefore to both the divine nature and the persons. But in the divine nature they are present as content and indistinct, fused into a very simple nature, and distinguished only by our mind. This distinction is conceived in the divine nature as virtual, in the way that theologians distinguish between knowledge and will in the divine nature. The three forms, seen however as containers and expressing in themselves the relationships of origin that distinguish the persons, are called precisely 'persons'.

CHAPTER 12

Oppositions

Article 1

Oppositions in general

1144. Before concluding the discussion on relationships, I must say something about the diverse oppositions that present themselves to human thought, because *oppositions* are simply relationships.

Aristotle's classification of oppositions into four genera: *contradiction*, *privation*, *contrariety* and *relationship*, was very perceptive. But although this classification was accepted, and investigated more deeply by the Scholastics,¹⁸⁴ it needed, as far as I can see, to be perfected much more and emended.

Oppositions can be studied through the opposition in their nature, which is the ideological method, or in their origin, where their first principle is investigated and, as it were, their birth witnessed. This is the ontological method. It presupposes the ideological (*Logica*, 389–395, 449–457), and is the method I must follow here.

Every *relationship* involves an opposition. There is in every relationship a duality, which our thought clothes with the form of 'one' because the two things between which the relationship exists are mentally seen in the 'one'-object; it is this 'one'-object that receives the two and presents them to thought. This is why I said that the object is the seat of all relationships. If therefore a relationship results from two extremes, one of which is certainly not the other (otherwise the relationship would cease), one extreme is the opposite of the other because it excludes the other. I define 'opposition' in all its universality as 'an entity which excludes the other entity'. Others defined it as 'that

¹⁸⁴ Aristotle, *Metaphysics*, 9 (10): 3. — To avoid reference to every treatise, I will make great use of St. Thomas' *De quattuor oppositis*, which contains excellent observations and is sufficient for the present purpose.

which prevents a potency from producing its act'; hence, that which keeps a potency from its act is called one extreme of the opposition, and the act from which the potency is withheld is called the other extreme.¹⁸⁵ This definition however, because it includes the concept of potency, is not universal and can apply only to oppositions found in finite ens where potency is present.

If, like all relationships, *oppositions* have their first seat in the object, their common *principle* is intelligence because the object is the term of the intellect. Hence, to establish the genealogy of oppositions and classify them, they must be deduced from acts of intelligence.

But because intelligence is both theoretical and practical, I will speak first about oppositions originating from theoretical intelligence and then about those originating from practical intelligence.

Article 2

Oppositions originating from acts of theoretical intelligence

§1. *Contradiction*

1145. Thought has two modes of operation: intuition and affirmation. This gives the two series of powers that I have called objective and subjective (*AMS*, 521 ss.). With intuition or vision the understanding sees the object, which is being. With affirmation and negation, it pronounces a word about the object, and with this word acquires a totally subjective *persuasion* that adds nothing to the object. This persuasion is of two kinds: it is founded on either the *affirmation* or *negation* of the object. All other persuasions are simply compositions of these elementary two and take place when, in the case of a multiple object, a part of the object is affirmed and another part negated.

¹⁸⁵ In chapter 1 of *De quattuor oppositis*, we read: 'Opposition exists only when a potency is distant from its act, just as heat makes the potency of its subject distant from cold, etc.'*

But if the object is one, or understood as one, only one of the two kinds of persuasion can take place, and this act by which one of the persuasions is posited in being is represented by the particle YES, and the other by the particle no. This is the first opposition and is called *contradiction* (*NE*, 2: 561–566, 604–605; 3: fn. 330; *Logica*, 112–118). No contradiction can exist in being, nor in any of its forms (*Logica*, 341). Hence, it is incorrect to say that there is opposition between being and non-being, or between ens and non-ens, because non-being is nothing,¹⁸⁶ which is solely a mental extreme. Non-being is therefore a purely dialectical ens and is composed of two elements: 1. conceived being or ens, and 2. the mental act by which the conceived being or ens is negated. What is left therefore is *negated ens* (negated by the mind), but not purely ens. Negated ens however is ens conceived by the *persuasion* that the ens is not. Thus, negative persuasion is understood as a disposition of conceived ens, whereas in fact it is simply a disposition of the intellect and intelligent subject, just as affirmed ens is. If, by reflection, the same conceived object-ens is thought on the one hand united to affirmation and on the other united to negation, it seems to be two different objective entities. But on the contrary, it is purely the same ens with two opposite relationships to the understanding, that is, to two opposite acts carried out by the understanding on the ens. But these two acts of the understanding concerning the same entity mutually exclude each other — one negates the other. The opposition therefore called *contradiction* can be considered 1. as two acts pertaining to the mind's faculty of the word and impossible to be together, 2. as two opposite relationships between the same ens and the faculty of the word, and only one of them can be actuated at one and the same time; and 3. as two opposite *dialectical objects* which mutually exclude each other.

If the contradiction is considered as the opposition of the acts of the affirmative faculty, it is expressed as Aristotle expressed it: 'Affirmation and negation cannot be together.'

If it is considered as a relationship of being to the faculty of

¹⁸⁶ 'In the opposition of contradiction one of the extremes is purely nothing and determines nothing for itself as subject, because its more noble extreme, ens, does not require any subject'* (*De quattuor oppositis*, c. 2).

the word, it is expressed as: 'Being cannot be affirmed and negated at one and the same time.'

If it is considered as the opposition of two dialectical objects, it is expressed as: 'Being and non-being are mutually exclusive.' This last form gave rise to many subtleties among the Scholastics, because they failed to see that they were not dealing with two true objects but with two purely dialectical objects produced by the mind.

For the same reason, contradiction is not correctly expressed when it is said to be between *being* and *nothing*. This would make us think that nothing was a thing with which another thing could be compared. But there is no thing that can be compared with nothing, nor anything with which nothing can be compared. What is compared is *negated being*, negated by the mind and called nothing. If nothing were present to thought, there would be no thought of contradiction in it, because a thought is not made with nothing but with something. A person who says nothing is not saying a contradiction, but the person who contradicts is saying something which he affirms and negates in the same statement.

1146. Contradiction is therefore not in ens or in the object, because ens does not contradict itself, nor is it in intuition, because this is an act, and an act is an entity that cannot contradict itself. Where then does it originate?

The *faculty* of the mental word has two acts: *affirmation* and *negation*, and as a faculty, is indifferent to both these acts. Hence, because each of the two acts can be done by the one faculty, a mind can reflect upon them, that is, can suppose that one or other is carried out. Furthermore, the same reflecting mind can make a third hypothesis that both acts are done at the same time. If the mind puts this hypothesis as a question, it replies to itself, 'The hypothesis is impossible, because one of the acts excludes the other'. To say that the two acts united together are impossible is to say that they present a contradiction, that they constitute an absurdity. But we cannot see absurdity unless the acts are compared in their possibility and found to exclude each other. If we do not do this, we can think that they can coexist and that, because each act by itself is possible, we can carry them out when separated from each other. This possibility causes us to fall into absurdity (*Logica*, 116–118, 128, 422, 508).

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The *impossibility* in a contradiction is not that the two acts, occurring in the same intelligent subject, are contradictory in their nature, but that an intelligent subject posits them *knowing* that they are contradictory: in short, it is impossible for the understanding to take contradiction (not its extremes) as the term of its act, and the reason is that the term of an act is always an entity considered *in se*. There is then no contradiction in the entity. Thus, contradiction cannot be term of an intellectual act because it cannot be an entity considered *in se*.

Consequently, the contradiction into which the human understanding can fall is solely objective and, I would say, elementary, but it is not subjective and formal. An objective contradiction consists in two separate acts, and anyone who performs these acts does not advert to the contradiction between them. A subjective contradiction would have to consist of only one act of which the contradictory element would be its object, but because this element is not an entity, it cannot in any way provide the act with its object. Thus, the impossibility of formal contradiction comes from this: 'Every intellectual act must have an entity as its term', and an entity does not admit contradiction in itself.

1147. I have said that contradiction occurs between an *affirmed* and a *negated object*. According to this formula, the object must be *identical* in the two extremes of the contradiction. If what is affirmed and what is negated must be an *identical object*, the affirmation and negation apply to the *whole* the object and not to parts separate from the whole. To negate and affirm the object in its totality is to affirm and negate it in so far as it is *one* and undivided.

Furthermore, the object of the affirmation and negation can be any object whatsoever. Acts of affirmation and negation are equally possible whatever the object, even an unknown object. Hence, *contradiction* could be fully defined by using an *x* to indicate the affirmed and negated object. If these opposite acts can be applied to any object whatsoever, the acts affirm and negate in the object what is common to all objects: *being*. Hence, 'contradiction is a judgment which simultaneously affirms and negates *being* in any object whatsoever.' In other words, an affirmative and negative act is expressed by two simple monosyllables: *yes* and *no*. These two words involve no

object and prescind from every object because they can be applied equally to any object whatsoever.

In a contradictory judgment therefore, the *predicate* is always being that is affirmed and negated;¹⁸⁷ the *subject* is any object whatsoever. Hence, in the proper formula of contradiction the affirmative and negative expressions must be placed before *being* as predicate and not before any other predicate or subject; we must say, 'The white man is and is not', not, 'The man is and is not white', where white appears as predicate. Such an imperfect expression caused the ancient sophists many useless disputes.¹⁸⁸

Thus, the ontological reason therefore why the being of any ens whatsoever cannot simultaneously be affirmed and negated is that *being* is one, totally simple and identical with itself; ens is also one in that it does not admit duality in its being. Therefore, a contradictory judgment that lacks a term is impossible.

¹⁸⁷ 'From what has been said, it is clear that contradiction, as such, denies nothing in the genus but is simply outside the genus,* that is, *being*, which is outside all genera (*De quattuor oppositis*, c. 2).

¹⁸⁸ This is evident in the *Protagoras* and in other of Plato's dialogues. For example, the sophists said that the two propositions, 'The man is white' and 'The man is not white', which they considered contradictory, could both be true: the whiteness of the man could be simultaneously affirmed and denied — contradiction was therefore possible and both propositions could be defended. But their sophism had no value if it was pointed out that the contradiction was not in denying and affirming the whiteness of the man but in affirming and denying the being of the *whole* ens to which the affirmation and denial were applied. If this ens had been 'the white man', the contradictory proposition in its proper form would be, 'The white man is and is not', where the impossibility becomes obvious. Consequently, the author of the work I have quoted says: 'When we say, "Sortes is white" and "Sortes is not white", there is no contradiction absolutely but a contradiction shared in contraries, that is, in white and black. Thus in all such propositions, both extremes are in the genus' (that is, it is not being, which is outside genera, but some quality involved in the genus): 'in absolutely contradictory things however neither extreme is in the genus. *Being* and *non-being* are of this kind'* (c. 3).

§2. *Logical contrariety*

1148. Another opposition arising from theoretical understanding in so far as this has the faculty of the word is the *contrariety* of propositions. Contrariety results from two propositions, one of which negates something but not everything of what the other proposition affirms. Or if it negates everything, it also negates something extra or adds an affirmation of something else.

The *contrariety* between two propositions can always be broken down into two elements: 1. the element constituting the *contradiction* and 2. another added element. Their opposition is therefore a participation in *contradiction*.

But for our present purpose I have sufficiently discussed the *contrariety* of propositions in *Logica*, 107 ss., 449, 454, 504–506.

§3. *Considerations concerning the nature of oppositions arising from theoretical understanding*

1149. In themselves, what is *contradictory* and what is *contrary* are not *in se*; they are purely *dialectical entia*. They do not consist in the two extremes of *contradiction* and *contrariety*, in so far as they participate in contradiction. They consist in the identification of the two extremes (affirmed being and negated being) in one sole dialectical entity. Reflection clothes with the abstract form of entity even that which does not have this form and knows that it does not have it. But after clothing it with this form, reflection negates it.

From this we can deduce that the faculty of the word can never have as its term what is *contradictory* or what is *contrary*. These do not constitute *oppositions* existing in the order of being, but only in the order of hypothetical thought, which considers that what is *truly* impossible is *hypothetically* possible. In fact, in order to judge it impossible, it first conceives it as hypothetically possible.

There are, however, *oppositions* in being itself, and it finds them in being considered dianoetically and anoetically. From these oppositions, it extracts by abstraction other abstract

[1148–1149]

oppositions that reduce to those that are in being, and I must now speak about them.

Article 3

The oppositions seen in the *order of being* and originating in the perfect, practical intelligence of God

§1. *Origins of all the oppositions present in the order of being*

1150. The divine intelligence can be considered as *principle* and *cause*. Some *oppositions* originate from the divine intelligence considered as *principle*, others originate from it considered as *cause*.

These are the two supreme sources of all the oppositions occurring in the order of being.

But because there are some principles and shared causes also in finite ens, two subordinate sources of oppositions can be observed in the world. The oppositions which arise solely from the faculty of the human word (like the two I have discussed: contradictory propositions and contrary propositions) reduce to these subordinate sources. Thus, all oppositions without exception go back, as to their remote universal source, to the divine intelligence as principle and as cause.

§2. *Oppositions arising from the divine intelligence as principle*

1151. The oppositions arising from the divine intelligence as principle are:

I. The oppositions of *divine begetting* and *divine begotten*, and of *divine spirating* and *divine spirated*.

I call these two oppositions *primal oppositions*, to distinguish them from all the others.

By abstraction they reduce to the 'opposition of principle and what has come from the principle'.

[1150–1151]

II. Two oppositions present four terms: *begetting* and *begotten*, *spirating* and *spirated*. The spirating term is both begetting and begotten because the begetting principle, by the very act by which it is, begets and spirates, and the spirating actuality passes into the begotten by generation. Consequently, only three subsistent things remain, which are the three divine persons: the first is *spirating-Begetting*, the second *spirating-Begotten* (here the spiration is identical with the first), and the third *Spirated*. Each of these three persons is, as such, incommunicable. Each therefore necessarily involves the negation of the other two, in that the Begetting is *neither* the Begotten *nor* the Spirated, and the same for each person relative to the other two.

This *exclusion* of the other two is an opposition I call *opposition of modal otherness*. There are three oppositions of modal otherness, but each is double. Hence, in all there are six oppositions of modal otherness:

1. the Father is other than the Son,
2. the Father is other than the Holy Spirit;
3. the Son is other than the Father,
4. the Son is other than the Holy Spirit;
5. the Holy Spirit is other than the Father,
6. the Holy Spirit is other than the Son.

III. These six oppositions of modal otherness are not six subsistent things in God. Only the three terms subsist, that is, the three persons — the six oppositions are between these. Hence, these six oppositions are *aspects* seen by the mind that compares each of the three subsistent terms with the other two (*Logica*, 360, 404).

But the abstracting mind carries out another operation and discovers the three supreme *forms* of being. These are abstract *forms* whose concept differs from that of the divine persons. The divine persons are distinguished solely through their relationships of origin, but the forms, also relative concepts, do not manifest their origin. They are first found by normal abstraction by considering *finite ens*, which subsists as *subject*, and is *object* of the mind and *subject loved in the object*. In infinite Being these *three forms* certainly suppose the relationships of origin but do not manifest them. Their connection therefore with the three persons is that of logically preceding *conditions*.

The Father can beget only as subject, and because he begets by means of intellect, he can beget only an *object*, which he makes subsist. The subject in the begetting and the begotten can spirate only the beloved, which the subject also makes subsist. Hence, the *diverse modes of origin* imply as their abstract conditions the *diverse modes of being*, which are the supreme forms of being. In this way, the supreme forms of being can be acquired through both *common abstraction* and *theosophical abstraction* when, by abstracting from the modes of origin that constitute the subsistent persons, only the modes of being their condition, which do not subsist in themselves but as abstracts in the mind, are retained. But these three modes or forms of being retain the six oppositions of modal otherness we saw between the divine persons.

IV. These six oppositions of modal otherness that are in the persons through diverse relationships of origin remain in the three supreme forms because these forms are three diverse modes of being. But the oppositions are also shared by finite entia, all of which reduce to the three forms. When these are understood as the foundation of the supreme classification to which all finite entia can be reduced, they are called *categories*, and in so far as the six modal oppositions are shared by finite entia and are thus common to all entia, they are called *categorical oppositions*.

§3. *Oppositions arising from the divine intelligence as cause*

1152. I. The practical divine intelligence produces other entia different from itself. This gives the opposition of cause and effect. The difference between *cause* and *principle* is that the former, not the latter, multiplies ens, whether as a cause producing other entia or producing new entities in other entia. The opposition between cause and effect can therefore be called 'entitative opposition of cause'.

II. As cause of the World, the divine intelligence limits ens and in doing so, creates it. Because of this limitation the identity of ens ceases, and the opposition between *infinite* and *finite ens* begins.

[1152]

Because the finite cannot be Being, and the infinite can be only Being, we have the two extremes of contradiction, but there is in fact no contradiction as such because these extremes are not present in the same subject; they are the two extremes of contradiction in the object of the mind. Moreover, in addition to the contradiction there is something else, because one of the extremes is not solely the negated other extreme, but in addition to negating the other extreme, that is, the infinite, the finite is posited, which is something and not nothing. There is therefore *opposition*, not simple contradiction. I call this opposition between the infinite and the finite 'opposition of transcendent contrariety'.

Finite ens, which is not being but participates in being, is the limited *real form* of being. It is a relative ens, a pure limited form which has a relationship of unity with being. Hence, the opposition between infinite and finite ens is 'opposition between relative ens and absolute ens'.

If instead of taking absolute, infinite being as one of the terms of this relationship, we take undetermined, infinite being, as it stands before human intuition, we have the opposition 'between being *in se* and what participates in being', between essence *in se* and what participates in essence.

The oppositions between infinite and finite ens, between absolute ens and relative ens and between being and participation in being are one and the same opposition considered from three different points of view. It is always 'opposition of transcendent contrariety'.

The reason for this opposition is found in *limitation*, and the cause is in the limiting, creative divine intellect.

III. When limited things are compared, the limitation can vary in degree. Consequently, the diverse *relative measure of limitation* gives rise to the multiplicity of the entia that compose the universe and are objects of the divine mind. This explains the opposition between one limited ens and all the other entia, which it excludes from itself. I call this kind of opposition 'opposition of entitative otherness'.

The oppositions resulting from *limitation* are therefore: 1. the opposition of cause and effect, 2. the opposition of finite and infinite ens, and 3. the opposition between finite entia themselves.

Finally, because 'the opposition of cause and effect' is one of those resulting from limitation, we have the ontological reason for the two following universal principles: 1. an effect cannot be greater than its cause, and 2. an effect as such is in some way always less than its cause.

Article 4

Oppositions arising from finite ens

1153. Finite ens also produces oppositions, in addition to those that it has *in se* and are the effect of creation.

§1. *Three supreme genera of opposition:
logical, primary ontological, and secondary ontological*

1154. We see straightaway therefore the entire classification of all possible oppositions into three supreme genera: *purely logical oppositions*, *primary ontological* oppositions, which originate from the divine intelligence in so far as it is principle and cause, and finally, *secondary ontological oppositions*. These last arise from created nature and could also be called *physical oppositions*, if we prefer modern usage (which I do not think is good) and limit the word φύσις, *nature*, to created ens.

§2. *The question whether secondary ontological oppositions
proceed from intelligence*

1155. The complex of finite entia, as first presented to us phenomenally and known with direct knowledge, appears composed of 1. entia without feeling, 2. entia with feeling, and 3. rational entia, and in all these entia we find activities which produce oppositions. However, on further reflection, we learn that activity can be attributed only to feeling principles and intellective principles, the former supposing the latter, at least as their continuously assistant cause. Consequently, all activities must finally and truly proceed from some intellective principle.

[1153–1155]

Thus, through the connection that created substances have between them, secondary, ontological oppositions also have, in the last analysis, their true origin from intelligence. But it is enough to have pointed this out; I will enlarge on it elsewhere.

§3. *Some primary ontological oppositions are shared
by finite ens*

1156. We must first note that some, but not all, primary ontological oppositions are present in finite ens through sharing in finite ens. There are the *categorical oppositions*, and the oppositions of *entitative otherness* by which a finite ens excludes from itself all other entia. In addition to these, there are finite entia that also share in the opposition ‘between a principle and what has come from the principle’ and in the ‘entitative opposition of cause’.

On the other hand we do not see in finite ens the ‘opposition of objectively contradictory things’, nor the opposition ‘of absolute ens and relative ens’, because one of the terms of these oppositions is infinite ens, which is lacking in what is solely finite. These can be called ‘transcendent oppositions’.

§4. *The oppositions proper to finite ens and produced by it*

1157. There are therefore four primary ontological oppositions in which finite ens shares: 1. *categorical* oppositions, 2. oppositions of entitative otherness, 3. the opposition of principle and what has come from the principle, and 4. the opposition of cause [and effect]. The first two are only received in finite ens and do not, of themselves, produce other new oppositions. But the second two, as active and imperfectly shared, produce others that have something proper to them through the imperfection of their proximate origin.

Let us consider which oppositions with their own character are produced by the finite principle, and which by the finite cause.

§5. *Potency as the principle of secondary ontological oppositions. Potential principles — Privation — Contrariety in the finite*

1158. I. The *principle* in infinite Ens differs from the *principle* in finite ens. The former is totally most perfect act without any potentiality; the latter is a mixture of *act* and *potency*.

The principle therefore from which all the oppositions *proper* to finite ens come is solely the *potentiality* of finite ens. Hence the generic opposition is that of 'act and potency'.

II. When the act is executed it leaves in the ens an habitual actuality, which is lacking if the act is not done. This gives us a second general opposition, that of 'habit and privation'.

Therefore *privation* is not a simple lack or negation. Simple lack can be lack of all the ens, in which case it is nothing; this is purely dialectical ens that is brought about by the total negation I have spoken about. Simple lack can also be the lack of what finite ens is lacking through its *essential limitation*. Neither of these two deficiencies which give rise to two negations by the mind are privations. Privation is 'the lack of that habitual actuality of which the potency, present in an ens or entity, has not yet come into act'.

These generic oppositions divide into many species because the principle of a finite ens, in so far as it must have an act in order to exist, is one, but its potentiality is distinguished into many potencies in the way I have described in *Psychology* (2: 735–740). However, the act of these diverse potencies can be lacking so that *privation* can be present in an ens in many ways. But because we are investigating the diverse species of privation, we cannot simply divide these species in the way potencies divide; in many potencies privation can have the same nature and the same characteristics. Consequently, the basis for the diverse species of the *privation* possible in a finite ens must be the degree of efficacy with which the *privation* renders the ens imperfect. In other words, the diverse species of privation must be distinguished according to the specific levels produced by privation in the ens.

If therefore we divide privation on this basis, it has three classes:

[1158]

A) A *privation* arising from the limitation of ens. In this case an ens has the potency to have diverse actualities, but when it has one of them, it cannot simultaneously have another. For example, a body has the potency to receive diverse colours, but when it has one, it cannot simultaneously have the others. I call this 'privation due to limitation'.

B) A privation which is the simple lack of the accidental acts of some potency. I call this 'privation of development' or 'simple imperfection'.

C) A privation consisting in a disorder and a struggle. In this privation, either a potency is struggling to carry out its act but due to some obstacle cannot do so, or the acts of the potencies, instead of functioning in harmony, are contending against and impeding each other. Or the acts of the supreme potencies which have a transcendent term like truth or absolute good, oppose and struggle against their own term. I call this generally 'privation of order' or 'privation of order of being'.

Strictly speaking, *evil* is found in this last privation. Evil can be generally and simply defined as 'a privation, in an ens, of the order of being', that is, 'a privation of that actuality which comes from the act of the supreme potency that governs the order in an ens'.

III. Another opposition arising from the potentiality of finite ens is called *contrariety*, which Aristotle somewhere confuses with *privation*.¹⁸⁹ They differ in this: the two extremes of *privative opposition* are habit and the lack of habit, whereas the two extremes of *contrary opposition* are two entities, one of which prevents the existence of the other. In *privative opposition*, one extreme is positive, the other negative; in

¹⁸⁹ According to Aristotle privation, that is, habit and the lack of habit make *contrariety* (*Phys.*, 1). But this does not seem correct to me, as I said in the text. The Scholastics correctly distinguished *privation* and *contrariety* and tried to justify Aristotle, even in this inexactitude of language, an inexactitude which is not constant in the philosopher because in other places he avoids it. *De quattuor oppositis* acutely and wisely states, 'Privation and habit make *contrariety*, as the first book of Physics says. Hence all contrarieties are reduced to habit and privation as to a first opposition in the genus. But every contrariety is reduced to the opposition of contradiction, as to a first opposition absolutely'* (c. 2).

contrary opposition, the two extremes are positive and as such are thought.¹⁹⁰

1159. When, in the opposition of contrariety, the two entities are two *habits*, there is always *privation* because one habit excludes the other. But there is something else in addition to privation, because one of the terms is not only the lack of a habit but is another habit which prevents the existence of the first. Thus in the first species of privation that I have called 'due to limitation', either a habit is considered in so far as it excludes every other habit — this is simple privation — or two habits are considered which exclude each other, like two colours. This is the concept of *contrariety*, which I call 'contrariety due to limitation'. But we must note the diverse degrees of contrariety. One habit is said to exclude another because, when the first exists, it prevents the potency acquiring other habits that cannot coexist with it. This impediment can be great or small; the habit can distance the potency from producing another act with which it posits in being another habit of greater or less degree. This depends on whether the potency that has taken on a habit has a greater distance to go, that is, has to put out more activity to move from the habit it has to the other habit. The further a habit distances the potency from another habit, the more contrary a habit is to another. Common speech calls contraries only those habits that are the most distant from another habit. For example, in the sensations of taste, sweetness is said to be the contrary of bitterness but not the contrary of saltiness, because sense cannot pass from the sensation of sweetness to the sensation of bitterness without having to take a longer route, without having to follow a longer series of elementary acts. We can therefore distinguish the

¹⁹⁰ The work I have quoted lays down this difference between contradiction, privation and contrariety: 'In the opposition of contradiction one of the extremes is purely nothing and determines nothing as subject for itself, because its more noble extreme, ens, does not require any subject' (because ens itself is the subject) — 'In privative opposition the less valuable extreme is purely nothing because it belongs to the genus of non-entia. However, it does determine something as subject for itself. This is clear from the other extreme that requires a subject, which is the habit itself. — In contrary opposition both extremes are something in reality, although the more imperfect one is greatly defective relative to the concept of ens*' (c. 2).

two extreme degrees of this opposition of *contrariety due to limitation* as:

- A. Contrariety of first degree, or of diversity.
- B. Perfect contrariety.¹⁹¹

The second species of privation produces the contrariety of *activity* and *passivity*, and of *giving* and *receiving*, which I call 'contrariety of activity'; I will discuss this in the next paragraph. The third species, the privation of order, involves a struggle in ens. This is the supreme contrariety found between *good* and *evil*, whether physical or intellectual or moral evil. I generally call this *contrariety through disorder*.

Note however, not every *contrast of forces* is contrariety of disorder. Harmony can come from contrast, when the contrast is natural. Natural contrast is purely an exercise of forces, where the contrariety is only material not true contrariety.

The opposition of contrariety is found not only among diverse habits which exclude each other in varying degree but also among dialectical entities and among entia, as we have seen. Summarising the supreme genera of the opposition of contrariety therefore, we can say that there are three:

- I. *dialectical contrariety*,
- II. *transcendent contrariety*, between infinite ens and the finite, and
- III. *contrariety in the finite*. This is either
 - A) due to limitation, which is either *a*) of first degree and simple difference, or *b*) perfect;
 - or B) contrariety of activity;
 - or C) contrariety through disorder which is *a*) physical, for example, health and illness, *b*) intellectual, for example, error and truth; and *c*) moral, for example, *good* and *moral evil*.

§6. Potential causes. Contrariety of activity and of action

1160. Finite ens is not a full cause because 'cause is that which

¹⁹¹ For Aristotle contrariety lies in the *greatest difference* possible for things that admit degree. Cf. *Metaph.*, 9 (10): 4. This is *perfect contrariety*. However, properly speaking, *difference* is not *contrariety*. Difference is a concept arising from the objective consideration of objects, whereas contrariety arises from the *predication of different things*.

contains the reason for the subsistence of other entia'. [Neither] finite ens nor any of its acts contain the reason for other entia. It does not produce their matter or reality; it simply *acts* on already existing matter or reality. The sole consequence of this is to change the forms up to a certain point.

This explains the oppositions of *active* and *passive*, and of *giving* and *receiving*.

The first opposition produces a modification in passive ens without the active ens giving anything of itself. In the second, the donating ens gives something of its own material appendages to the ens that receives.

Article 5

Comparison between *relationships* and *oppositions*

1161. I said that every *relationship* involves some species of *opposition*. Vice versa, we can say that every *opposition* is a *relationship*.

Nevertheless, the concepts of *relationship* and *opposition* differ. In the concept of relationship the mind is concerned solely with what 'an entity is to another'. In the concept of opposition the mind considers how 'an entity excludes another entity from itself'.

Hence, each extreme of an opposition is not a relationship, nor involves a relationship; only the two extremes of oppositions constitute 'a relationship of opposition'.

Thus, if we take the first extreme of contradiction, *being*, it does not, on its own, imply a relationship to *non-being* which is formed by a negation on the part of the mind. On the other hand, the other extreme, that is, non-being, includes the 'relationship between negation and being'. The same must be said about *transcendent contrariety* and *privation*. In the former, the infinite, understood *in se* (and not according to the way we name it), does not involve in its concept an immediate relationship to the finite, but the finite does involve an immediate relationship to the infinite. In privation, habit, which is the positive extreme, does not involve *per se* relationships with the other and negative extreme, which is privation of the habit.

[1161]

The two extremes of a *dialectical contrariety*, as well as the two extremes of *contrariety in the finite*, directly imply a relationship with the other. But when the mind compares them, each has the relationship of contrariety to the other. The same must be said about *entitative otherness*.

Finally, each of the extremes of *primal oppositions*, of oppositions of *modal otherness*, and oppositions of *action* and of *giving* involve a relationship with the other extreme.

If we consider all the genera of opposition I have listed from the point of view of relationships, we find the following:

1. Three genera, *dialectical contrariety*, *contrariety of the finite*, and *entitative otherness*, are such that each of their extremes, taken in separation from the other, has an absolute existence without a necessary relationship to the other. Hence, the relationship arises from the simultaneous presence of the two extremes.

2. Three other genera, *contradiction*, *transcendent contrariety* and *privation*, are such that their more noble extreme has an absolute existence without a necessary relationship with the other extreme. But the less noble or negative extreme has an existence relative to the first and therefore involves a relationship.

3. Finally, the three genera, *primal oppositions*, *modal otherness*, and *action* and *giving*, are such that their two extremes are equally relatives.

If we make two genera out of *action* and *giving*, the last three become four.

Thus, the supreme genera of oppositions number nine or ten.

Article 6

The triple ontological, ideological and dialectical foundation of oppositions

1162. Every actuality of being is one, but the actualities are many. If *unity* is an essential property of each actuality, then each actuality excludes all the others. This is the ontological foundation of *oppositions*.

But we could not know that an actuality of being excludes the

[1162]

others unless the actualities were considered together and compared with each other. They cannot be considered simultaneously, however, if they are not all considered in one object of the mind. Thus, the *object* is the ideological foundation of all relationships and oppositions.

The actualities of being that reciprocally exclude each other because each can be only one are considered by the mind in two diverse ways:

Either 1. they are considered objectively as objects distinct from the mind (whether these objects are real or ideal or mental).

Or 2. the faculty of predication is applied to them. The mind investigates what each will admit or exclude, that is, it predicates one of another reciprocally, or both of an identical subject.

In the first way, the mind does not see the opposition between them because it does not compare them; it considers them individually, in juxtaposition in the mental object containing them all.

In the second way, the mind sees an opposition but finds that:

1. each object excludes the negation of itself, because the actuality (or what is taken as an actuality, including nothing, which is given the form of a dialectical ens) is the negation of its own negation;

2. as a natural consequence each excludes all that involves the negation of itself such that if it admitted what is excluded, it would simultaneously admit its own negation.

When the mind sees that each actuality excludes its own negation, it has discovered the opposition called contradiction.

When it sees that each actuality excludes all that the actuality could not admit without admitting its own negation, it has discovered all the other genera of opposition.

Clearly then, *contradiction* is the dialectical foundation of all the genera of opposition and is the first, essential opposition, founded in the positive nature of being, which is the negation of nothing as a dialectical ens.

All oppositions are therefore reduced to an impossibility of *predicating* an entity or an actuality of the being of another entity or actuality.

Article 7

The measure of opposition

1163. This explains why the ancients considered *contradiction* the measure of all oppositions. In their opinion, each opposition is as great as its participation *in se* in contradiction.¹⁹² But I must explain this.

In any opposition, the two extremes reciprocally exclude each other. One involves a negation of the other so that we can say, 'One is not the other'. Hence, every opposition is either a contradiction or participates in the contradiction present in the opposition between affirmation and negation.

But every entity is negated whenever we negate anything essential to it. An entity is *one*, and if something of this one is taken from it, the entity is no more, it no longer exists. Consequently, we see that one extreme of an opposition can negate some great or small part of the other extreme, but negation of only the smallest part of what makes the other extreme 'one' is sufficient to exclude the extreme totally.

The measure therefore of opposition is to be taken from the amount by which one extreme negates the other: if one extreme negates more to the other, the opposition is greater; if less, the amount of opposition is smaller.

1164. We can use this principle to measure the amount of opposition between the various genera I have listed.

1. The opposition between *being* and *non-being* is such that one extreme negates the other totally. Hence, *contradiction* is a *maximum opposition*. But, as I said, this opposition is only *dialectical* because there can be no opposition whatsoever in being. Being does not have two real extremes but only one that the mind simultaneously affirms and negates.¹⁹³ *Negated being*, that

¹⁹² 'Clearly, being is not in the genus, nor is it its opposite. Hence, just as all things that are in the genus are to be reduced to being which is not in the genus, so all the oppositions of things existing in the genus are to be reduced to the opposition whose terms are not in the genus'* (*De quattuor oppositis*, c. 2). This is contradiction, whose extremes are being and non-being outside every genus.

¹⁹³ 'In absolutely contradictory things the extremes are not in reality different because non-being is not a thing'* (*De quattuor opp.*, c. 3).

is, nothing, has no potentiality at all which might allow it to draw close to the other extreme.¹⁹⁴

2. The opposition I have called *modal otherness* does not include any opposition of being. It concerns solely the modes of being, either the personal or formal or categorical mode. This opposition is *maximum opposition of the modes of being* because each of these modes of being totally negates the other two, nor does it conform with them in any genus or species — being is in fact identical in all the modes. Primal oppositions are also reduced to this *maximum opposition of mode*; they must not be conceived in an incomplete act but in an act that because it is always being done, is always done and completed *ab aeterno*.

3. *Transcendent contrariety* is *maximum opposition* in the order of entia because infinite ens totally negates the subjective existence of finite ens *in se*. Vice versa, existing finite ens negates and excludes from its personal subjective self the infinite which is maximum negation. However, the extremes of this opposition converge subjectively in the *real form* of being, abstracted from being, and also converge objectively in undetermined *being*.

These three are therefore the *maximum oppositions*:

The first is *maximum*, because in *being* — but it is purely *dialectical*.

The second is *maximum in the forms of being*.

The third is *maximum in entia*, between the pure real finite form and the infinite real form indistinct *per se* from being.

As Aristotle said (and I have repeated many times), what is first and maximum in each genus is the cause¹⁹⁵ and measure of everything in the genus. We can therefore consider these three maximum oppositions as three causes and measures of three genera of opposition, that is, dialectical, ontological and ideological genera.

1165 I. *Dialectical maximum opposition* (contradiction) has

¹⁹⁴ 'A potency can be distanced from act in a double way. One way is by removing the potency itself, so that nothing of it remains. In this way, it is distanced from act in a contradictory opposition because in non-being there is simply no potency for being'* (*ibid.*, c. 1).

¹⁹⁵ *Metaph.*, 4.

no degree whatsoever, because what is affirmed and negated is the same identical being. Consequently, all that is affirmed is also negated. Hence, Aristotle defined contradiction as 'the opposition in which, relative to itself, there is no middle term.'¹⁹⁶ Dialectical opposition differs from others because it alone is made by predication. The first predication predicates one extreme reciprocally of the other: '*Being* cannot be *non-being*', '*Non-being* cannot be *being*'. Contradiction can therefore be defined as 'pure opposition in predication'. I say 'pure opposition' because in certain dialectical oppositions there is no pure opposition. Instead, something else which, understood on its own, makes no opposition, is affirmed or negated. I have called these oppositions 'oppositions of dialectical contrariety'.

Although these oppositions contain an *implicit contradiction*, pure contradiction is not apparent. For example, if I predicate 'non-one' of 'one' by saying, 'One is not one', I have pure *contradiction*. But if I say, 'One is two', I have *contrariety*, in which there is an implicit contradiction because the statement implicitly denies that one is one. Contradiction is simple and admits no middle term. Hence, we see exactly how it can be the *cause* of the oppositions found in *contrary propositions* but not how it can be the measure of the amount of opposition. And we cannot truly say it is the direct measure, but we can say it is the elementary indirect measure in this way.

In contradiction, there is only one object affirmed and negated. In contraries there are two extreme objects of the contrariety. These two objects can, as I said, be thought objectively or by means of predication. This gives rise to expressed or implicit exclusion and contradiction. Thus, if we think two objects objectively, without predicating one of the other or both of an identical subject, we can compare them and find their difference. For them to be contraries, this difference must be essential, otherwise one would not exclude the other — by *essential* I mean that the difference is considered in the subject of which they are predicated, whether this subject is itself or a third subject; by *essence* I mean what is thought in the idea or concept (*NE*, 2: 646). The difference therefore between what is

¹⁹⁶ *Poster.*, 1: 11; *Metaph.*, 10: 4.

thought in the concept of the subject of which one of the extremes is predicated and what is thought in the concept of the same subject of which the other extreme is predicated must be essential, that is, it must, whether added or subtracted, change the thought essence into another essence. The difference can be great or small; in fact, not only is two contrary to one, but so is three, four and every larger number. Moreover, the difference between one and two is less than the difference between one and three, or four, etc. Thus, the contrariety is greater in the proposition, 'One is three or four' than in 'One is two', although contradiction is equally implicit in both. Hence, the direct measure of the amount of *contrariety* in contrary propositions is the amount of the *essential difference* between their extremes objectively thought and compared with each other and not considered by means of predication. We can say therefore that contradiction is the measure of contrariety in the following way: the *essential difference* between the extremes of contrary propositions is as great as the implicit contradictions they contain, and the amount of contrariety is measured by the greatest number of contradictory propositions deducible from the contrary propositions. In fact the contradictory proposition is:

One is one and not one.

In the contrary proposition, 'One is one and two', an implicit contradiction is contained at least once because it can be reduced to this other contradictory proposition: 'One is one and not one because two is not one.'

In the contrary proposition, 'One is one and three', an implicit contradiction is contained at least twice because it reduces to the two following contradictory propositions:

1. One is one and not one because it is two.
2. One is one and not two because it is three.

The same can be applied when a greater number is predicated of one, and the number of implicit contradictions equals the number predicated of one.

1166. II. Ontological maximum opposition is what I have called 'transcendent contrariety'. I have expressed it in three formulations:

1. opposition of infinite ens and finite ens;
2. opposition of abstract ens and relative ens;

[1166]

3. opposition of participant and participated, or of essence and participation.

The reason for this triple formulation is the triple concept in which we think a finite ens: 1. we think it as an existing thing, abstractly, without considering its nature, in which case we consider it simply as *finite ens*, or 2. we think about its subjective nature, in which case we consider it as having subjectively the nature of something relative, or 3. we think not what it is but what it has *in se*, in which case we consider it as that which participates in something as its cause.

Transcendental contrariety is maximum in all three of these ways. In the case of the first, to be either finite or infinite means an infinite difference, or rather a total diversity without difference and there is no transition possible from one to the other (*PSY*, 2: 1381–1395). This contrariety is simple and one, and admits neither degree nor replication, which we saw is possible in the contradiction present in contrary propositions. Indeed, transcendent contrariety is not dialectical but pertains to the order of being, and infinite ens as such is one, as also is finite ens as such. And relative to the infinite, a finite ens is no more finite than another — differences can certainly be found in the degrees of finitude among finite entia, but not between finitude and infinitude.

The same must be said in the case of the contrariety between absolute ens and relative ens. The latter, as pure relative, substantially excludes the former and does so without any kind of possible degree.

These two contrarieties are therefore perfect but cannot be measures of other contrarieties in their proper genus because these genera do not contain other contrarieties.

1166a. We must now examine the third formulation: ‘the opposition between the participator and the thing participated in’.

Participation is expressed as: ‘When *nature* A, known by an idea abstracted from ens B, is present in the nature of ens C, then nature C is said to participate in ens B.’

Participation always has its levels, whether 1. through the diversity of the mediating abstract, which gives the participation diverse category or diverse genus or diverse species which is more or less noble, or 2. because the nature known in the

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abstract idea can have quantity and be present in greater or less abundance, or present with varying intimacy in the ens participating in the nature. These two circumstances change either the level of participation alone or even more.

The finite can thus participate in the infinite and does so in varying degree and in diverse modes. The expression, 'the opposition between the participant and the thing participated in', includes, in the most universal mode, all modes and degrees of participation. The other expression, 'the opposition between the finite that participates and the infinite that is participated in' indicates the first participation, the cause of all other participations.

1166b. Being is the first thing participated in. If we apply the above definition of participation, then 'being (that can be shared in) is a nature known by means of an idea abstracted from subsistent infinite ens and present in the nature of every finite ens'. But to determine the measure of participation in being by finite entia, we must turn to the forms of being, because finite ens is only a form of being and not being itself. This measure therefore, by which finite ens participates in being, is the measure by which it participates in the forms of being. But because the eternal mind conceives entia in the object as containing also the other forms, and produces finite entia by limiting infinite ens as pure object, the degree of limitation of objective being determines the amount of participation by finite ens in the ens abstracted from infinite ens. And because this objective, abstract ens pertains to the categorical form, so the oppositions between genus and genus, species and genus, and species and species are subordinate to it. So are all those oppositions included under the title 'entitative otherness', together with the oppositions subordinate to these, those 'of privation and contrariety in finite things'. Again, just as there is maximum opposition between objective abstract ens and the fullest species, so the opposition becomes proportionately less as various ideas become more extensive. But if the subsistent finite individual is compared with objective ens, there is categorical opposition, whatever the idea in which the individual is thought.

However, this gives only a certain measure of the participation by finite ens in infinite ens by means of abstract ens, when ens is considered as abstract. If we want to measure this

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participation in the case of each of the three forms that can be participated in, we have to turn 'to the oppositions of modal entity', which is the maximum opposition not of being but of pure form. Hence, we should also consider the participation of finite ens in the individual forms.

The third formulation therefore expresses participation in general. In this genus there are diverse levels, and the genus is the measure of these levels in so far as it is the principle of our knowledge of them, because 'comparison between the most general and the least general is the principle of the knowledge of the least general'.

1167. III. Opposition of modal otherness. There are three phenomenal classes of finite entia: non-feeling entia, feeling entia and intelligent entia.

How do non-feeling entia participate in the first cause?

They do participate neither in the subjective form nor the objective form nor moral form. To find the element in which they do participate we must mentally abstract the concept of *reality* from the subjective form, of which the concept is purely an abstract element. In fact, in the general concept of reality there is no subjective principle, still less an infinite subjective principle. However, the concept of *reality* offers our mind a very general entity, present in the *subjective form* as one of its mental elements and also in purely material non-feeling ens. If therefore the first cause gives being to the abstract generic concept of reality, which is a concept determined by its own limits, we have material non-feeling ens (extrasubjective). Among all entia, this ens has the maximum opposition to the first cause because it participates at the lowest level not of the cause but of its abstract.

How do feeling entia participate in the cause?

These also do not participate in the subjective form of being but only in the abstract of reality, in another mode however and at a higher level, as follows. *Abstract reality* is the most extensive genus, which has two species, that is, two specific abstracts: 1. the generic abstract determined by pure limits, and 2. the generic abstract determined by sense life, which adds a positive difference to the generic abstract determined by pure limits. This second abstract is a living, *simple real*, which I have called *principle*. The other abstract is an *extended real*, which cannot

receive being except as *term*. These two abstract reals, through their natural relationships, form one abstract feeling ens, to which the first cause gives the act of being, of which this ens is receptive. Purely feeling ens cannot participate in the three forms in absolute being, the subjective, objective and moral forms; it participates only in an abstract element (but a wider embracing abstract element) of the subjective form, which non-feeling ens could not do. The opposition therefore of this feeling ens to the first cause is less than that of the previous ens. It participates at a higher level in the abstract reality that is a mental element of the subjective form.

We come now to intelligent ens. This is the ens that participates in the forms of being. It participates in the objective form not in such a way that it itself is subjectively this form, but by simple intuition. Hence, between the intellectual subject participating in the objective form and the objective form which is participated in, there is not only *categorical opposition* but the opposition of *transcendent contrariety* of the first formulation, that is, the opposition 'between the finite and the infinite'.

But this opposition is not of the same degree as in the two previous cases of non-feeling ens and purely feeling ens. Relative to these the opposition is absolute because they do not participate in any way whatsoever in the infinite. However, in intellectual ens, the opposition is lessened by *participation*, where an essential relationship unites the finite with the infinite through intuition. The participation can be limited, but the objective form itself cannot be limited (if it were, it would no longer be infinite). Consequently, the *objective form* appears only initially to the finite intellect, that is, it has in itself an absolute virtuality of the other forms and of their elementary abstracts.

1167a. Intellectual finite ens participates in a finite measure in the infinite objective form. Participation in the infinite has degrees that can always be indefinitely greater, because 'the indefinite is simply the possibility of the finite participating in some measure in the infinite'. Hence, an indefinite sequence of degrees can be conceived in which an intellectual ens can participate in the objective form of being. As the degree of participation becomes higher, 'the opposition between the participating ens and the participated thing diminishes in equal proportion'. I say 'the thing *participated in*' and not the thing that *can be*

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participated in because the latter, unlimited by the measure of participation, and infinite in every way, cannot have any finite thing commensurate with it. Thus, *wisdom*, participated in by a finite ens, can always be indefinitely increased.

Participation in the objective form makes the real principle intellective, makes it an intellective subject. A finite, intellective subject participates in the *abstract subjective form* and not solely in some abstract element of it. I say 'in the abstract subjective form' because the finite intellective ens is a finite subject, and the subsistent, subjective form is infinite and is being itself. On the other hand, the finite, subjective form cannot exist *in se* if the first cause does not add being to it and the determinations of measure.

The finite, intellective subject also participates in the *abstract moral form*, or rather the *virtual form*, in so far as through its own intellective activity it unites itself to being and to everything contained in participated, objective being.

In addition to all this, there is a supernatural participation in infinite ens, which is the realm of theology and supernatural anthropology.

In the measure therefore that finite ens participates in the three forms it participates in the exact same measure in being; without being, these forms cannot exist, except in an abstracting mind.

Moreover, because the finite participates in the three forms abstracted from being, it must also participate in the oppositions which abstraction draws from the *primal oppositions*. Hence, finite ens has principles and terms. It also participates in the opposition of cause and effect. All these oppositions, participated in by the finite, are called oppositions 'of activity and passivity' and of 'giving and receiving'.

In the case of oppositions 'of modal otherness', we must remember that the three forms in finite ens are not three subsistents. The only subsistent form is the real, subjective form; the other two are present to the nature of finite ens as participated in, but are not finite ens itself. Although these oppositions certainly exist, they exist between the three abstract concepts of the categorical forms, not between real persons.

1168. We have seen that opposites can be thought 1. objectively and 2. by predicating one of the other or both of a third. When they are thought in this second way, we see their *opposition*, which consists precisely in their not admitting this predication. Thus, they take the form of contradiction or dialectical contrariety, and as such are irreconcilable, that is, they cannot coexist.

But when they are thought in the first way, that is, objectively, they can coexist and indeed have a bond between them that reconciles them.

This *conciliatory bond* of opposites is of three kinds: it is either 1. a relationship, or 2. a *common nature*, or 3. a common, objectively considered subject.

In the bond of relationship one opposite, because it is a *relative*, has as its condition the existence of the other opposite. This relative can either be reciprocal and form a synthesis, or be unilateral.

The opposites which have this reciprocal and bilateral bond are those that have a reciprocal relationship. They are 1. primal oppositions, 2. oppositions of modal otherness, whether personal, formal or categorical, and 3. oppositions of activity and passivity and giving and receiving.

The opposites that have the bond of unilateral relationship are those of transcendent contrariety, because finite ens is relative to the infinite, but not vice versa.

The bond of a *common nature* unites and causes to coexist all the opposites 'of personal modality' and 'of entitative otherness', genera and species.

The bond of a *common, objectively considered* subject unites 'privative opposites, and the contraries of finites'. The words, 'common, objectively considered subject' mean an ideal subject because the opposites in question cannot coexist in a subsistent subject; the mind thinks the subject as a species and sees it as equally but not simultaneously receptive of two opposites. Hence, two subsistent subjects in which the opposites are, are one specific subject for the mind. Thus this kind of bond is a mental

bond, which the opposites borrow from the objective form of ens.

The second and the third bonds can be called *middle terms* between the opposites. But the bond of real relationship is not, properly speaking, a *middle term*; it is an *inexistence* of one opposite in the other.¹⁹⁷ In my opinion, these bonds do not seem to be (as Aristotle claims) the measure of the *quantity of opposition* but the *conciliators between opposites*. The quantity of opposition must be taken 'from the impossibility of predication between two opposites. The predication can be multiple or simple. It can also be total, that is, of every element composing the opposite, or partial, of some elements but not all'. Hence there cannot be a greater opposition than that of *modal otherness* because the forms of being are infinitely and absolutely distant from each other. Nevertheless there is a maximum reconciliation between them, there is the greatest bond possible, because the *common nature* binding them is *common being*. Thus, opposites can have a maximum distance between each other but also have a maximum conciliator. The *quantity of opposition* therefore must be distinguished from the *quantity of reconciliation* of the opposites.

Article 9

The words: 'other', 'diverse', 'different', 'contrary'

1169. In every day speech these words are not understood in all their strictness, but used interchangeably. Nevertheless, Aristotle and the Scholastics gave each its own definition, which ought to be followed in philosophical questions where the meaning could be important.

¹⁹⁷ 'In relatives, there is no accord in either mode. They do not accord in the subject: a father and son are not the same in that the father is referred to the son. They do not accord in a middle term of their genus because there is no "greater" or "less" in relatives. However they have a certain particular way of making accord because one of them, due to its nature, depends on the other. According to the Philosopher, relatives mutually include and posit each other' (if both opposites are relatives) 'and obviate each other'* (*De quattuor oppositis*, c. 1).

In fact 'other' seems to mean the most general variety observable among entities. It can therefore be taken properly to mean 'entities that vary only in simple relationship but not at all in being'. For example, if the ens were identical and the relationship under which it is considered were not identical, it could be called 'other'.

'Diverse' means an entitative variety and is properly applied to distinguish 'two entities' without indicating that they differ in some way or totally.

'Different' is properly used of an entity that has something in common with another, but also has something proper by which it differs from the other. This property is called *difference*.

'Contrary' is understood by Aristotle to mean an entity which, compared with another, has a *maximum difference*.¹⁹⁸ For him this difference is the *difference of genus*, because *genera non habent ad se mutuo viam* [genera do not have a path to each other]. In other words, potencies are diverse in such a way that a potency constituting a genus can never carry out the acts of another potency constituting another genus.

¹⁹⁸ *Metaph.*, 9 (10), 3–4.

Appendix

1. (760)

[Suarez and the meaning of ‘formal concept’]

Some authors have called the mind’s act with which it conceives something, ‘formal concept’, and have distinguished it from the ‘objective concept’ which they understood as the thing conceived. These expressions, however, allow infinite equivocations whenever their exact meaning is not precisely defined. Francesco Suarez defines formal concept as ‘that act, or (equivalently) word, by which the intellect conceives some thing or a common concept’* (*Metaph. Disput.*, d. 2, s. 1, 1). I make the following observations:

1. ‘Word’ should not be confused with ‘concept’. The former always implies some affirmation but not the latter which is a simple intellective vision without affirmation or negation.

2. The mind’s act is certainly expressed by ‘conception’, but not so appropriately by ‘concept’, as can be argued from Suarez’ next words: ‘It is called “concept” because it is a kind of offspring of the mind.’* But if the concept is an offspring, it is not the act by which the mind conceived it; concept means *conceived*, not *conception*.

3. To say that the concept is the act by which the intellect conceives *rem aliquam seu communem rationem* [some thing or a common notion] confuses two entirely separate things: conception and the real thing. The real thing is the term of affirmation but not of simple conception. Indeed, the simple concept is always a *common notion* because all ideas are called ‘common notions’ when they refer to real things known through them.

4. In the definition, ‘formal’ is used with great uncertainty. Suarez is hesitant in the way he defines it: ‘It is called formal either because it is the ultimate form of the mind or because it formally presents some known thing to the mind, or

[*App.*, 1]

because it is truly the intrinsic and formal term of a mental conception where it differs from the object conceived.'

Before I examine these different explanations of the word 'formal', let us see how he defines what he calls the 'objective concept': 'Objective concept is that thing or notion which is known or presented precisely and directly through the formal concept'.

1. In these words, he clearly anticipates a whole system of knowledge. He supposes the formal concept as something evident in itself without any need of proof. This concept presents precisely and directly an objective concept, in other words, two concepts, one of which presents the other!

2. Furthermore, the objective concept is the thing itself or the notion (here we see the same confusion between the real thing which is not the term of a concept but of an affirmation, and the notion or idea which alone is a term of knowledge and intuition). Here again there is confusion. If 'concept' (as he first said) means 'offspring of the mind', then the thing and the notion, called objective concept, will be offspring of the mind. This is precisely hegelianism, that is, the system which extracts all things both real and ideal from the mind itself.

3. If the mind knows things or notions precisely and directly, how does it know them by means of the formal concept: knowing them by a means is the opposite of knowing them directly. We have here a contradiction *in terms*.

4. If the thing or notion is known directly and precisely, why is a formal concept necessary to represent it? I know a thing through representation when the thing is not present to my feeling. If it were in no way present to the intellect, there would be no sign or anything else to represent it. The thing could not impel my mind to the thing represented if my mind did not have the power to attain it. If, on the other hand, my mind has the power to attain it, it can know the thing immediately it presents itself. Hence, a concept representing the thing is not necessary for explaining human knowledge if the thing itself can be present to the intellect. Many other observations could be made, but let me briefly explain the true teaching.

Being has, through its own property, its presence to minds. Reflection considers it either

[*App.*, 1]

1. in itself in so far as present to the mind, and calls it object, or
2. in so far as through this presence it is received, as it were, into the mind, and calls it concept, or
3. in so far as it makes known real, possible realities, and calls it idea or something else, or
4. in so far as with its presence to a subject it produces in the subject intelligence — here reflection calls it the objective form of intelligence and, relative to the subject of this intelligence, calls it cause of its form or form of its form, or
5. reflection considers being relative to material knowledge, and calls it formal concept, e.g. the formal concept which makes human beings known is that which [being] makes known in the definition of human being.

In all these cases we are dealing with one and the same subject under various relationships which give being different names. Thus, a concept is always objective, and is called 'formal' relative to both the mind and to things, in the way I have explained.

2. (762)

[Secrétan on Spinoza's starting point of philosophy]

[Secrétan states:] 'I said that Spinoza fleetingly seized this necessary antecedent of all thought and that some trace of this intuition is found in the way he defines substance. But I added that Spinoza did not stop there; the real starting point of his philosophy is not the potency of being but existing being, determined being. Thus, the expression 'cause of itself' does not have, for him, any positive sense, inherent in substance. It expresses nothing living, nothing speculative, only an exterior circumstance, indifferent, so to speak, to even the essence of being, to knowledge that has no cause outside itself. The result, for Spinoza, is the impossibility of attaining finite existence. Spinoza's substance is purely an object without subjectivity, existence without power. For this reason, it is unlimited, the infinite which excludes the finite'* (*La Philosophie de la Liberté*, Leçon 11).

[App., 2]

Various observations could be made about these words but for brevity's sake I will omit them and be content to note that the origin of Spinozism is correctly attributed to them. Spinoza confused being with subsistent ens and instead of starting his reasoning from being began from subsistent ens.

I must also point out that in the quotation from M^r. Secrétan there is a kind of contradiction. When developing his thought, he adds that *cause* is not included in Spinoza's ens. But what he calls potency of being, which he would posit as the starting point of philosophy, cannot contain in any way the cause of itself, as he claims it does: that which not yet is, cannot be cause either of itself or of anything. He had in fact previously (Leçon 5) and too systematically distinguished the teaching of Scotus from that of St. Thomas: 'The key to Scotus' system is the idea of cause, to St. Thomas' system the idea of being', and places me among the Thomists understood in this sense where he says: 'Leibniz and Spinoza, M. Cousin and in some respects Hegel are all Thomists as well as the Abate Rosmini. Kant was of Scotus' party' (p. 76).

As regards myself, I protest against this systematic classification. I admit that absolute ens is alive and is essentially cause, but I maintain that in totally undetermined being, which is the starting pointing of philosophy (as M^r. Secrétan agrees), the concept of cause is not included, except virtually, because to be cause is already a determination, and if being had this determination, it would no longer be totally undetermined.

3. (783)

[Hegel's erroneous concept of objectivity]

Because Hegel conceives objectivity in a very confused way, he errs in its conception. In his *Encyclopedia of philosophical sciences* (§40 ss.) he says that *objectivity* is used in three senses. If we examine these three senses, we find that none of them expresses the true, simple concept of objectivity. According to him, objectivity primarily 'means that which exists outside us as opposed to what is purely subjective and imaginary'. But we will very quickly see that what exists outside us (by which he

[App., 3]

means external reality) is in no way object and cannot at all be called object. He also says that objectivity, in the language of Kant, means what is universal and necessary in knowledge as opposed to what is particular, contingent and subjective, and also opposed to what is felt and perceived purely according to the organisation of the subject. This meaning, which Hegel excludes, is closer to the true meaning, because the object is in fact what the idea presents to and places before the mind, and this idea is necessary and universal. But these two qualities do not constitute objectivity, although everything that is *per se* object has them when the word 'universality' is understood in diverse senses. Moreover, Kant's universality and necessity, as well as his objectivity, are simply subjective appearances. They are therefore a false objectivity which is destroyed by a critical reflection. This is more a contradictory quibble by the philosopher than an objectivity.

'Finally,' Hegel says, 'the true objectivity of thought is precisely what Kant excludes, and consists in this: thoughts are not only our thoughts but express what things are in themselves.' This hegelian meaning given to objectivity is the most confused and false of all. He speaks about the objectivity of thought but thought is a subjective activity which has no objectivity. However, Hegel had to give it objectivity because his task was to confuse what is subjective with what is objective, that is, to confuse thought with its object, and what is real with what is ideal. Furthermore, the word 'thought' indicates several acts of the spirit: intuition itself, which has an object, is thought, so also is judgment which does not have an object but predicates something about an object given to it. Hence the greatest confusion.

Finally, if, as he says, objectivity consists in our having thoughts which are not only thoughts but express what things are in themselves, it seems that there can be thoughts with which nothing is thought but nevertheless they are thoughts. This is absurd. If we also consider what Hegel understands by what things are in themselves, the falsehood of the definition will be all the clearer, because this philosopher also includes reality in what things are in themselves. Thus, according to him thoughts which express reality have objective reality. Nevertheless (finite) reality has nothing to do with what is truly object, with what is precisely not object *per se*. But Hegel does not stop

here. When he is talking to me about a thought which *expresses* what is real, he is not entirely honest in his use of the word 'expresses'. He understands that thought produces of itself reality, as an evolution. Here he certainly succeeds in materialising thought but never in making it true object.

4. (837)

[Reconciliation of the Scotists' and Thomists' opinion on whether being is shared in common]

This argument [that finite realities have an intimate, essential relationship with being but are not being in the terms proper to being] solves the celebrated question debated by the Scotists and Thomists concerning whether being is shared in common. Scotus maintained that 'ens should not be included in the ultimate differences and intrinsic modes which place it among the first ten genera, nor in those differences called its proper passions which are interchangeable with it, like one, truth and word. Scotus considered these passions as positive, real properties of being (Scotus, in 1, D. 3, q. 3, D. 8, q. 2; D. 3, q. 6. — In 2, D. 3, q. 1, ad arg.)'. Many Thomists denied this and defended the opposite opinion, convinced that nothing can be without being. However, it seems that the two opinions can be reconciled without difficulty and that the two schools consider the diverse teachings from a different point of view and are therefore not truly contrary. Let us attempt the reconciliation.

First, we must consider that these philosophers and theologians formed the doctrine of ens from the consideration of finite ens and not from the intimate concept of ens and being (two concepts mistakenly taken as one). They had learnt this procedure from Aristotle who precisely for this reason caused difficulties for metaphysics, as I have noted elsewhere. Indeed, when we talk about ens divided into ten basic genera and about ultimate differences, it is clear that we are talking about finite ens and not about ens considered in itself.

In the case of finite ens, thought is faced with an antinomy because on the one hand it is true that a finite ens cannot be an ens if it lacks being, nor can any of its parts or a positive quality

[*App.*, 4]

can stand without being. On the other hand, we can form the opposite proposition and say that the nature of finite ens is in no way that of being, and therefore as such the nature lacks being, that is, it can be conceived on its own only as separate from being. We can see this clearly if we consider that being is one and equal to itself, while finite entia are many. Consequently they must have something which is not being and differentiates them from being and multiplies them. This thing is their limited, exclusive reality. This reality can in a certain way be called the ultimate difference because it comes after the difference of the full species common to many individuals that are distinguished solely by reality. Although Scotus speaks obscurely, it seems that when he indicated ultimate differences, the reality of finite entia formed the basis of his thought. Thus when he speaks about the intrinsic modes in which entia are determined into the first ten genera, we can understand that he at least glimpsed that these genera originate from reality and from the abstractions which the human spirit exercises upon reality. If the abstractions that he calls *passions* of ens are considered in finite but not pure ens, they also have their foundation in realities, although they are relationships rather than real properties.

According to this mode of mental conception, *reality* is understood as the *ultimate difference* among finite entia. But this difference differs from all others because it differentiates not only one individual from another in so far as an exclusive reality, but also what is real from what is ideal in so far as this is a categorical difference. All other differences are indicated in finite ens in so far as it is ideal and real. If these two forms remain united, any difference, even an ultimate difference, is always composed of the ideal and the real. These are the ultimate differences present to the minds of Scotus' adversaries, differences which include the concept of ens. Properly speaking, his adversaries should say 'the concept of being'. Indeed, the concept of being is not absent from these differences because what is ideal cannot be without this concept.

To solve this great conflict we must apparently say: if 'ultimate difference' means finite reality, Scotus is right. Finite reality does not include the concept of being and is not being, although without being it is not, and cannot be conceived. Although it cannot be thought separate from being but

only united with being, it does not identify with being in this union; on the contrary it is distinguished from being. If however *ultimate difference* does not mean the pure real but some thing which the mind notes in what is ideal, or in the ideal real, then the concept of being is certainly contained in it.

5. (1032a)

[The will and what kind of union it has]

I cannot agree at all with certain theologians who say that the will tends to only a metaphorical union. Charles Witasse, discussing the Holy Spirit, says: 'The will generally tends *per se* only to metaphorical unity, NOT TRUE or real union, properly speaking. Hence the will, even the most perfect, tends of its own power to metaphorical unity alone, a union that is certainly most perfect in the genus of metaphorical union but always in that genus. — The divine will therefore can produce an inclination, affection and infinite impulse, but never a real likeness or TRUE UNION OF NATURE'* (*De Ss. Trinit.*, q. 5, art. 5, sect. 2). On the contrary, the divine will, from which the Holy Spirit proceeds, produces a totally true and real union, including the perfect identity of the *subject loving its understood self*. This subsistent unity is the divine Spirit, the *loving subject understood and loved*.

Nor am I convinced by Billuart's distinction. He says: 'I grant that it pertains to the concept of most perfect love to produce the most perfect union of the lover with the thing loved, but not the most perfect union of love OR IMPULSE with the lover or loved thing. Love OR IMPULSE, whatever it is, is simply the WAY AND TENDENCY to the union not of itself but of the lover with the thing loved. But here we are not dealing with a union of love with the lover or loved object; the Holy Spirit is not a lover or the loved thing but a love and impulse of the lover into the thing loved. The lovers are Father and Son; the loved thing is the divine essence; the Holy Spirit is the term of the love of both. Hence, that which is one and the same with the loved divine essence issues formally not from the fact that it is love proceeding from the will but from the fact that it is an immanent act in God. And

[*App.*, 5]

whatever is in God is substantially God'* (*Disertat.* 2, art. 5). I make the following observations on this passage of this illustrious theologian, beginning with the last words:

1. It is entirely true that every immanent act in God, and everything in God, must be substantially in God, but this principle cannot be a reason why the Holy Spirit is a divine person, a person distinct from the person of the Word. The Word is equally an immanent act in God; indeed we could say the same about every attribute which is an immanent act in God and is God himself. We have to look elsewhere for the reason why the Holy Spirit is a person, a person different from the Word: we must look at the different species of procession. Only for this reason and no other reason concomitant with it is the Holy Spirit a divine person, distinct from the person of the Word. Otherwise, it would not be true that the Holy Spirit proceeds, but that together with the Holy Spirit there is also procession.

2. Secondly, I note that in the quotation the word 'love' has two meanings. When defined as 'impulse, way and tendency to union', it means a love which precedes the union and tends to produce it, a love which has not yet produced the union. Clearly, as long as the nature of the love is limited to a simple tendency which is still on the way, the love will never have obtained its end of union. To affirm the opposite would contradict the definition. But the same word, 'love', has a totally different meaning when we are told that the Holy Spirit *est amor* [is love], even though the words *et impulsus amantis in rem amatam* [and the impulse of the lover into the thing loved] are added. The Holy Spirit is not simply an impulse, a way, a tendency to the union but is rather the union itself, consummated and perfect; otherwise, the union of the Father and Son would simply be an effect that comes from the Holy Spirit but not the Holy Spirit himself. The Holy Spirit however is certainly the unifying force, identical to the union itself. For this reason Billuart, after saying that the Holy Spirit is Love, is constrained to say later that he *est terminus amoris amborum* [is the term of the love of both]. If he is *term of the love*, he is not purely the love which Billuart had first defined as 'a simple impulse', a way, a tendency to the union. On the contrary, he is the love which, finalised and consummated, has become a *totally*

actual union in which the common concept of love terminates and never ceases; indeed, it lives totally and entirely perfect, without any further movement or tendency to what it is already.

3. When the love of the lover towards its object is finalised and consummated actually in its final term (this must happen always eternally and immutably in God), not only has the object acquired and possesses the nature of *beloved* but, because this object in God is the same loving subject, this same loving subject (object and term of love) is the *beloved*. Hence the divine nature, which with this final perfection is *beloved*, must be subsistent *love* itself, and this subsistent love must be the loving subject understood and become totally and infinitely loved and living love.

Finally therefore, the Holy Spirit must be a divine person because he 'is the same loving subject (Father), *per se* understood and thus totally knowledge (Word) and also *per se* loved, that is, total, most actual love (Holy Spirit). Furthermore, he is a person distinct from the person of the Word for the very sound reason given by St. Thomas: 'The will always produces something, GRANTED THAT A PROCESSION IS PRESUPPOSED'* (*De Potentia*, q. 10, art. 2, ad 7). This is not the case with the procession of the Word, which takes place *per modum naturae seu intellectus* [by way of nature or intellect].

6. (1040) [Glorification]

What is glorification? We can certainly say that it is the act with which an intellectual ens gives *glory* to another. It is one of those concepts we all know but find very difficult to analyse and define; it is hidden from us like a mystery. But this is the characteristic of all direct, ontological concepts, and precisely for this reason I must investigate it carefully.

First of all I note that *glory* must be distinguished from the external signs with which it manifests and produces itself. Fame blows its own trumpet, but words and other external signs of applause do not constitute glory; they are its effects and causes.

[*App.*, 6]

However the manifestation made to the ens which is glorified also responds to the concept of glory.

Glory is something that is principally internal, dwelling, as it were, in spirits; it is 'a just esteem accompanied by enthusiasm which an intellective ens or entia actually pay and manifest to an intellective ens'. This definition enables us to understand how glory in the divine Being is independent of creatures, and how the God-man speaks of a glory which he enjoyed before the creation of the world. 'And now, Father, clarify me, with yourself, with the clarity I had with you before the world was' (Jn 17: 5). The clarity about which the God-man is speaking and which, as I will explain, means the same as glory, contained the glory of both the divine Word and incarnate Word. The incarnation and the glory of the God-man in the presence of intelligent creatures were contained in the exemplar of the world because the divine Word was predestined from eternity to become incarnate. But this glory of the Word as man is indivisible from the glory as God, the source, reason and container of the Word's glory. We must therefore see how the Word (God) could have glory with the Father from eternity, before the world *was made* (logical priority), that is, made by God from eternity in time.

The Word, we must note, in so far as affirmed or generated as such by the Father, is Being as object, and the object is the fullest intelligibility of the Being-subject. If he is *intelligibility* itself, *clarity* is proper to him because all clarity is in intelligibility. The Word, as remaining in the bosom of the Father, had to have this clarity with the Father. But how do this intelligibility and clarity possess the properties contained in the definition I have given of glory? These properties are four: 1. a just esteem, which is 2. accompanied by enthusiasm, 3. actually given, and 4. manifested to the intellective ens to which the glory is attributed. Everything in God is act. Hence if the Father has a just esteem of the Son accompanied by enthusiasm, it can be only an eternal and most perfect act of esteem — the third property cannot be lacking. The esteem paid by the Father to the Son is just, because the Son [generated] by the Father is the Father himself, not as affirming (as this, he is Father) but as continuously understood and affirmed. The Father cannot affirm more than himself because there cannot be more: the divine nature

[App., 6]

contains everything, and he cannot affirm less because the act of affirming intelligence is most perfect. But precisely because the Father affirms his total self most perfectly together with all that is contained in him, he must affirm all subsistent perfections in a most perfect way, perfections which are unified in his most simple essence. Moreover, the affirmative act is not an act of intellect separate from the will because in God there is no distinction of potencies, in fact there are no potencies. It is an intellectual act which is simultaneously estimative and affectionate. By it the Father, knowing and esteeming himself as essential good, knows and esteems the Son as such. Hence, the knowledge of the intellectual, generative act of the Son is an act of *just esteem*.

I cannot express the third property except as: 'accompanied by enthusiasm'. To understand what I mean by these words, we must consider that the divine subject, Father, is essentially life, that is, infinite feeling. Consequently, because the divine intellect with which the Son is generated is not a simple act of speculative intellect but of the whole of divine Being and hence an act of infinite, intellectual feeling, the infinite esteem accompanying this act must be infinite feeling. This infinite stimulation or actuation of feeling that accompanies the esteem, or rather, is the esteem itself as *per se* feeling, is precisely what I have called 'enthusiasm', because I know no other name to give it. All this is glory; it is the *clarity* which the divine Word had with the Father before the world was, and which he prays to be given him, that is, to be manifested to human beings and communicated to the humanity he assumed, and in this way eternal predestination to be accomplished. The fact that 'enthusiasm', understood correctly, can be appropriately applied to God, according to the usage of language, is clear because *enthusiasm* was always considered divine, 'a stimulation and extraordinary exaltation of the intellectual feeling, which was so great that it could not come from any finite thing but be produced and communicated by God himself'. Nevertheless, enthusiasm as a constitutive element of *glory* (which is not an ordinary praise but immeasurable) constitutes, in its nature of feeling, unlimited esteem shown to the person to whom it is given.

The fourth property is that the glory be manifested to the person of the Word. This is clear because the Word is Being understood through itself.

[*App.*, 6]

Original Language References

Quotation from Plato: Ἦν δηλῶσαι μὲν οὐ πᾶνυ χαλεπὸν χρῆσται δὲ παγγάλεπον. πάντα γὰρ, ὅσα τέχνη ἐχόμενα ἦν εὐρεθῇ πρόποτε, διὰ ταύτης φανερά γέγονε.

Quotations in numbered Paragraphs:

762. *Tel est le point de départ de la spéculation c'est l'ÊTRE INDÉTERMINÉ, l'être qui peut tout devenir et qui n'est rien encore, l'être qui n'est que puissance d'être.* (Cf. fn. 9).

773. τὸ γὰρ αὐτὸ νοεῖν ἐστὶ τε καὶ εἶναι.

844. *Sunt autem in rebus omnibus CONGLUTINATAE et quodam modo CONIUNCTAE.*

Nisi haec in rebus INTIMATA et quaedam modo ADUNATA vidisset.

845. *Omne quod commune est uno tempore pluribus, id in se unum esse non poterit. Multorum enim est quod commune est, praesertim cum una atque eadem res in multis uno tempore tota sit. Quantaecumque enim sunt species, in omnibus genus unum est, non quod de eo singulae species quasi partes aliquas carpant, sed singulae uno tempore totum genus habeant: quo fit ut totum genus in pluribus singulis uno tempore positum, unum esse non possit. Neque enim fieri potest ut, cum in pluribus totum uno sit tempore, in semetipso sit unum numero. Quod si ita est, unum quiddam genus esse non poterit, quo fit ut omnino nihil sit, omne enim quod est, idcirco est quia unum est. Et de specie idem convenit dici.* (Cf. fn. 82).

Quod si est quidem genus ac species, sed multiplex, neque unum numero, non erit ultimum genus, sed habebit aliud super se positum genus, quod illam multiplicitatem unius sui nominis vocabulo concludat. Ut enim plura animalia quoniam habent quiddam simile,

eadem tamen non sunt, et idcirco eorum genera perquirunt: ita quoque quoniam genus quod in pluribus est, atque ideo multiplex, habet sui similitudinem quod genus est, non est vero unum quoniam in pluribus est: eius generis quoque genus aliud quaerendam est, cumque fuerit inventum eadem ratione quia superius dicta est, rursus genus tertium vestigatur; itaque in infinitum ratio procedat necesse est, cum nullus disciplinae terminus occurrat. (Cf. fn. 83).

848. *Conceptus entis non solum a creaturis, sed etiam a Deo praescinditur: sed in Deo non distinguitur ex natura rei conceptus entis ut sic a conceptu talis entis, scilicet increati, vel infiniti: ergo neque in coeteris entibus.*

855. Οὐκ ἔνεστιν ἐν τοῖς ὁρισμοῖς οὔτε τὸ ὄν οὔτε τὸ ἐν. (Cf. fn. 97).

889. *ipsa eius essentia intellectui nostro est praesens.
animam per essentiam suam se videt.*

899. *Hoc sentite in vobis, quod et in Christo IESU.*

927. *ea quae sunt posteriora in natura sunt ut plurimum prius nota nobis.*

943. Ἐπὶ μὲν γὰρ τῶν ἄνευ ὕλης, τὸ αὐτὸ ἐστὶ τὸ νοοῦν, καὶ τὸ νοούμενον. (Cf. fn. 120).

1014. *cognitio est quidam veritatis effectus.*

1021. *gratia et veritas per Jesum Christum facta est.
et Verbum caro FACTUM EST.*

1024. *Veritas est, qua ostenditur id quod est.*

1092. *Quid est enim in semetipso? Ut ipsa vita ipse esset.
ut non participatione vivat, sed incommutabiliter vivat,
et omnino ipse vita sit.
quia extrinsecus opis AD CONTINENDAM SE numquam eguerit
et substantia dicitur.*

1108. *Propter aquam, tardis ingens ubi flexibus errat
Mincius, et tenera praetexit arundine ripas.*

1128. *Ista enim quae propterea sunt infima, quia partibus imperfectis tota perfecta sunt, sive in statu, sive in motu pulchra sentiantur, tota consideranda sunt, si recte volumus iudicare.*
1132. *Ordo est similitudo obvia in modo, quo res iuxta se invicem collocantur, vel se invicem consequuntur.*

Quotations in footnotes:

1. *Tres sunt non statu, sed gradu; nec SUBSTANTIA SED FORMA, nec potestate, sed specie [e] S. Augustino.*

cum alium modum aptiorem non invenirent, quo enuntiarent verbis quod sine verbis intelligebant.

23. *essentiae notioni tribuerunt ETIAM externam quam hodie obiectivam vocant veritatem.*

28. Ἀλλὰ σὺ τῆς ἀφ' ὁδοῦ διζήσιος εἶργε νόημα,
μηδὲ σ' ἔθος πολὺ πειρον ὁδοῦ κατὰ τήνδε βιάσθω,
νωμῶν ἄσκοπον καὶ ὕμματα ἠχέσσαν ἀκουήν
καὶ γλῶσσαν· κρῖναι δὲ λόγῳ πολὺ δηνὶν ἐλεγχον
ἐξ ἐμέθεν ῥηθέντα.

*Tu vero ab hac quaerendi via mentem detine;
neve vulgaris te consuetudo cogat in vagam hancce viam,
attendere caecos oculos et obtusas aures
vocemque; sed ratione iudica [vafram] argumentationem
a me propositam.*

29. Εἰ δ' ἄγ', ἐγὼν ἐρέω, κόμισαι δὲ σὺ μῦθον ἀκούσας,
ἄλτερ ὁδοὶ μοῦναι διζήσιος εἰσὶ νοῆσαι·
ἢ μὲν, ὅπως ἔστι τε καὶ ὥς οὐκ ἔστι μὴ εἶναι,
πειθοῦς ἐστι κελευθος, ἀλεθείη γὰρ ὁπηδε.
ἢ δ', ὥς οὐ ἔστιν τε καὶ ὥς χρεὼν ἐστι μὴ εἶναι,
τὴν δὴ τοι φράζω παναπειθέα ἔμμεν ἀπαρπὸν·
οὔτε γὰρ ἂν γνώης τό γε μὴ εἶν (οὐ γὰρ ἀνυστόν),
οὔτε φράσαις.

*Age vero, ego dicam, tu dicta teneto audiens,
quae solae sint quaerendi viae ad cognoscendum propositae:
altera, quod est neque potest non esse,*

*Suadae via est; veritas enim comitatur;
altera, quod non est et quod necesse est non esse,
hanc vero tibi aio plane falsam esse viam:
nam non ens nec animo comprehendas (fieri enim nequit)
nec verbis eloquare.*

30. Χρή τὸ λέγειν τε νοεῖν τ' ἐὼν ἔμμενι ἔστι γὰρ εἶναι,
μηδὲν δ' οὐκ εἶναι τὰ τε σε φράζεσται ἄνωγα·
πρῶτον τῇσδ' ἀφ' ὁδοῦ διζήσιος εἶργε νόημα.
αὐτὰρ ἔπειτ' ἀπὸ τῆς ἥν δὴ βροτο εἰδότες οὐδέν
πλάζονθαι δίκρανοι ἀμηχανίη γὰρ ἐν αὐτῶν
στήθεσιν ἰδύει πλαγκτὸν νόον· οἱ δὲ φορεῦνται
κωφοὶ ὅμοις τυφλοὶ τέ, τεθηπότες, ἄκριτα φύλα,
οἷς τὸ πέλαιν τε καὶ ὥς οὐκ εἶναι ταῦτόν νενόμισται
κ' οὐ ταῦτόν πάντων δὲ παλίντροπος ἐστὶ κέλευθος.

*Oportet dicere ac cogitare esse ens: namque est ens,
nihil vero non est, quod te animo tenere iubeo.
Primum ab ista quaerendi via mentem abstrahe.
Deinde vero ab illa, qua mortales utique ignari
errant ambigui; haesitatio enim in eorum
cordibus iactat fluctuantem mentem; illi autem feruntur
surdique caecique, stupore obsessi, dementia secla,
quibus esse et non esse item aestimatur
et diversum; omnium quae hi probant contraria est via.*

31. Ὅπως ἔστι τε καὶ ὥς οὐκ ἔστι μὴ εἶναι.

Quod est neque potest non esse.

32. Κρῖναι δέ λόγῳ πολύδηνιν ἔλεγχον.

Sed ratione iudica argumentationem.

53. *Quod Deos esse fateris, Vir eximie, in causa est, cognata
quaedam cum Deo natura, et ad rem tibi insitam in-
genitamque colendam impellit, et sane efficit, ut illam
esse arbitreris.*

Ὡς ἄρισε δὴ, φῶμεν, ὅτι μὲν ἡγῆ θεοὺς, συγγένεια τις ἴσως σέ
θεία πρὸς τὸ ζύμφυτον ἄγει τιμᾶν καὶ νομίζειν εἶναι.

74. *Enti non potest addi aliquid quasi extranea natura per
modum quo differentia additur generi, vel accidens sub-
jecto, quia quaelibet natura essentialiter est ens (unde*

etiam probat Philosophus in 3 Metaphys., quod ens non potest esse genus); sed secundum hoc aliqua dicuntur addere supra ens, in quantum exprimunt ipsius MODO, qui NOMINE IPSIUS ENTIS NON EXPRIMITUR.

80. *Plato genera et species coeteraque non modo intelligi universalia, verum etiam esse atque praeter corpora subsistere putat: Aristoteles vero intelligi quidem incorporalia atque universalia, sed subsistere in sensibilibus putat.*
81. *Cogitantur vero universalia nihilque aliud species esse putanda est nisi cogitatio collecta ex individuorum dissimilium numero substantiali similitudine; genus vero cogitatio collecta ex specierum similitudine.*
84. *substantia, quantitas et qualitas, et ea quae sub ipsis continentur CONTRAHUNT ENS, applicando ens ad ALIQUAM quidditatem seu naturam.*
85. *Dicendum est, conceptum entis obiectivum prout in re ipsa existit, non esse aliquid ex natura rei distinctum ac praecisum ab inferioribus, in quibus existit.*
89. *Dicendum est ergo, ens, in quantum est intrinsece includi in omni ente, et in omni conceptu positivae differentiae, aut modi entis realis.*
96. *Sed verum est, quod hoc nomen, ens, secundum quod importat rem, cui competit huiusmodi esse, sic significat essentiam rei, et dividitur per decem genera.*
98. *Quarta igitur opinio, et quae mihi probatur, est, hanc contractionem, seu determinationem conceptus obiectivi entis ad inferiora non esse intelligendam per modum compositionis, sed solum per modum expressionis conceptionis alicuius entis contenti sub ente: ita ut uterque conceptus, tam entis, quam substantiae, v.g. simplex sit, et irresolubilis in duos conceptus, solumque different, quia UNUS EST MAGIS DETERMINATUS, QUAM ALIUS.*
101. *Ergo esse animae est quoddam intelligere, scilicet DEUM, unde dependet.*

Esse nostrum est Deum cognoscere, quia praecipuum esse

animae, est intellectus suus, in quo idem est esse, quod intelligere divina actu perpetuo.

104. πρὸς οὐδέν αἰσθητὸν ποιήσας, ἀλλὰ λαβὼν ὅτιος ἂν γένοιτο, εἰ ἡμῖν ὁ Ζεὺς δι' ὁμμάτων ἐθέλει φανῆναι.

109. *Unde enim mens aliquam mentem novit si se non novit?*

121. *Divina essentia in se nobilitates omnium entium comprehendit, non quidem per modum compositionis, sed per modum perfectionis.*

122. *perfectio rebus tribuitur, quatenus determinationes intrinsece per rationem quamdam generalem seu certas regulas, explicari possunt.*

Quoniam determinationes istae ens quoddam constituunt, quatenus sibi mutuo non repugnant; perfectio rei nullam ei tribuit determinationem, quam non habet. Ipsa igitur non alio respectu rei tribuitur, nisi quatenus per notionem quamdam generalem seu certas regulas explicari potest, cur determinationes intrinsecae tales potius esse debeant, quam aliae.

123. *Natura divina a formis materialibus in duobus differt. Primo quidem per hoc quod formae materiales non sunt subsistentes, unde humanitas in homine non est idem quod homo qui subsistit, deitas autem est idem quod deus. Unde ipsa natura divina est subsistens. Aliud est quo nulla forma, vel natura creata est suum esse, sed ipsum esse Dei est eius natura et quidditas.*

126. *Deus naturaliter amat SUAM BONITATEM, sicut etiam naturaliter intelligit SUAM VERITATEM.*

135. *unusquisque intellectus participat lumen, per quod recte de re iudicat, quod quidem est exemplatum a lumine increato.*

141. *Verbum nostrum est diversum ab essentia intellectus. — Intellectus vero divinus, qui in PERFECTU ACTU INTELLECTUALITATIS EST SECUNDUM SUAM ESSENTIAM, non potest aliquam formam intelligibilem recipere, quae non sit sua essentia. Unde Verbum eius unius essentiae cum ipso est, et iterum ipsa divina natura eius intellectualitas est.*

Et sic communicatio, quae fit per modum intelligibilem, est etiam per modum naturae, ut GENERATIO DICI POSSIT.

142. *Quia tamen intellectus noster non est secundum suam essentiam IN ACTU PERFECTO INTELLECTUALITATIS, nec idem est intellectus hominis, quod humana natura, sequitur quod verbum praedictum (humanum), etsi sit in intellectu et ei quodammodo conforme, non tamen fit idem quod ipsa essentia intellectus, sed eius expressa similitudo. Nec iterum in conceptione huiusmodi formae intelligibilis, natura humana communicatur, ut generatio proprie dici possit quae communicationem naturae importat.*
143. *Licet eadem natura sit in Patre et Filio, est tamen SECUNDUM ALIUM MODUM EXISTENDI, seu cum alia relatione.*
144. *Relatio secundum rem a natura divina non differt.*
148. *Convenienter dixerunt, qui posuerunt unam processionem esse per modum naturae et intellectus, aliam per modum voluntatis, quantum ad id quod processio quae est secundum naturam vel intellectum non PRAEEXIGIT aliam processionem; processio autem quae est per modum voluntatis aliam processionem PRAEEXIGIT. Nam amor alicuius rei non potest a voluntate procedere nisi PRAEINTELLIGATUR processisse ab intellectu illius rei verbum conceptum: bonum enim intellectum est obiectum voluntatis.*
149. *nihil prohibet a voluntate aliquid naturaliter procedere.*
Voluntas enim naturaliter tendit in ultimum finem, sicut et quaelibet alia potentia naturaliter operatur ad suum obiectum.
Non enim voluntas in aliquid tendit, nisi praeexistente productione intellectus aliquid concipientis, cum bonum intellectum moveat voluntatem. Processio autem quae est a naturali agente, non praesupponit aliam processionem, nisi per accidens, in quantum scilicet naturale agens dependet ab alio naturali agente. Sed tamen hoc non pertinet ad rationem naturae, in quantum natura est.

160. *Pulchri vero nomen tametsi rebus etiam compositis simplicibusque tribui quandoque soleat: nihilominus apud celebres auctores, tam Platonicos quam Peripateticos, non nisi compositis rebus exacte tribuitur. Consistit enim in eximia quadam et eleganti diversarum partium compositione: ex quibus ipsa pulchritudo conflatur, indeque dissultat.*
162. *Omnis porro punchritudinis forma unitas est.*
166. *Et animadvertēbam et videbam in ipsis corporibus aliud esse quasi totum, et ideo pulchrum; aliud autem quod ideo deceret, quoniam apte accommodaretur alicui, sicut pars corporis ad universum suum, aut calceamentum ad pedem, et similia.*
180. *Haec igitur pulchra numero placent, in quo iam ostendimus aequalitatem appeti. — Non enim hoc tantum in ea pulchritudine quae ad aures pertinet, atque in motu corporum est, invenitur, sed in ipsis etiam visibilibus formis, in quibus iam usitatus dicitur pulchritudo. An aliud quam aequalitatem numerosam esse arbitraris, cum paria paribus bina membra respondent: quae autem singula sunt, medium locum tenent, ut ad ea de utraque parte paria intervalla servantur?*
185. *cum enim oppositio non est nisi elongatio potentiae ab actu, sicut calor facit potentiam sui subiecti elongari a frigido.*
186. *In ipsa enim oppositione contradictionis alterum extremum est nihil simpliciter et simpliciter nihil sibi determinans, tamquam subiectum, quia nobilius eius extremum seu ens, nullum subiectum requirit.*
187. *Ex dictis ergo manifestum est quod contradictio, secundum quod contradictio est, nihil negat in genere, sed simpliciter extra genus.*
188. *Cum dicitur: 'Sortes est albus', 'Sortus non est albus', non est contradictio absolute, sed contradictio participata in contrariis, in albo scilicet et nigro, et ideo in omnibus talibus propositionibus utrumque extremum est in genere in contradictoriis vero absolute, neutrum*

extremum est in genere, huiusmodi enim sunt esse et non esse.

189. *Privatio enim et habitus faciunt contrarietatem ut dicitur primo Physicorum, et ideo omnes contrarietates reducuntur in habitum et privationem tamquam in primam oppositionem quae est in genere, sed in oppositionem contradictionis reducitur omnis contrarietas, ut in primam oppositionem simpliciter.*
190. *In ipsa enim oppositione contradictionis alterum extremum est nihil simpliciter, et simpliciter nihil sibi determinans tamquam subiectum, quia nobilius eius extremum, scilicet ens, nullum subiectum requirit. — In oppositione vero privativa alterum extremum vilius nihil est simpliciter, cum sit de genere non entium tamen aliquid sibi determinat pro subiecto, quod patet ex altero eius extremo, quod requirit subiectum, et hoc est habitus ipse. — In oppositione autem contraria utrumque extremum aliquid est realiter, licet imperfectius deficiat magis a ratione entis.*
192. *Manifestum enim est quod ens non est in genere, nec suum oppositum et ideo sicut omnes res quae sunt in genere est reducere ad ens quod non est in genere, ita omnes oppositiones rerum in genere existentium, est resolvere in oppositionem illam cuius termini non sunt in genere.*
193. *In contradictoriis vero absolute non sunt extrema realiter diversa, quia non ens non est aliqua res.*
194. *Sciendum est quod dupliciter elongat aliquid potentiam ab actu. Uno modo ipsam potentiam removendo, ita quod nihil eius relinquatur et isto modo in oppositione contradictoria elongatur potentia ab actu, quia in non ente simpliciter nihil potentiae est ad esse.*
197. *In relativis vero neutro modo est convenientia. Non enim conveniunt in subiecto. Idem enim non est pater et filius secundum quod pater refertur ad filium. Nec conveniunt in medio sui generis cum non sit in relativis magis et minus, habent tamen quemdam specialem*

modum conveniendi quia unum illorum secundum illud quod est dependet ad alterum. Relativa enim se mutuo includunt et ponunt, et perimunt, secundum Philosophum.

Quotations in the Appendix

- No. 1. *conceptus formalis dicitur actus ipse, seu (quod idem est) verbum, quo intellectus rem aliquam, seu communem rationem, concipit (Metaph. Disput., d. 2, s. 1, 1).*

dicitur conceptus quia est veluti proles mentis.

Formalis autem appellatur, vel quia est ultima forma mentis; vel quia formaliter repraesentat menti rem cognitam: vel quia revera est intrinsecus et formalis terminus conceptionis mentalis, in quo differt a conceptu obiectivo.

Conceptus obiectivus dicitur illa, vel ratio, quae proprie et immediate per conceptum formalem cognoscitur, seu repraesentatur.

- No. 2. *Je vous ai dit que Spinoza a saisi fugitivement cet antécédent obligé de toute pensée, et qu'on trouve la trace de cette intuition dans la manière dont il définit la substance; mais j'ai ajouté que Spinoza ne s'y est point arrêté, de sorte que le commencement effectif de sa philosophie n'est pas la puissance d'être, mais l'être existant, l'être fixé. Ainsi le mot de causa sui n'a pas chez lui de sens positif, inhérent à la substance; il n'exprime rien de vivant, rien de spéculatif, mais seulement une circonstance extérieure, indifférente pour ainsi dire à l'essence même de l'être, savoir qu'il n'a pas de cause hors de lui. De là résulte pour Spinoza l'impossibilité d'atteindre l'existence finie. La substance de Spinoza n'est qu'objet sans subjectivité, existence sans puissance, c'est pourquoi elle demeure l'illimité, l'infini excluant le fini.*

- No. 5. *Voluntas generatim tendit per se dumtaxat in unitatem tantum metaphoricam, NON VERAM, non realem, non proprie dictam: atque adeo voluntas, etiam perfectissima, vi sua non tendit nisi in unitatem metaphoricam, in eo*

quidem genere perfectissimam, sed tantum intra metaphoricae unionis genus semper inclusam — Ergo voluntas divina poterit quidem producere pondus, affectum et impulsus infinitum; numquam vero similitudinem realem aut VERAM NATURAE UNIONEM.

Est de ratione amoris perfectissimi producere unionem perfectissimam amantis cum re amata, concedo; unionem perfectissimam ipsius amoris SEU IMPULSUS cum amante aut re amata, nego. Amor enim SEU IMPULSUS, qualiscumque sit nihil est aliud, quam VIA ET TENDENTIA ad unionem, non sui ipsius, sed amantis cum re amata: hic autem non est quaestio de unione ipsius amoris cum ipso amante vel obiecto amato: non enim Spiritus Sanctus est amans aut res amata, sed est amor et impulsus amantis in rem amatam. Amantes sunt Pater et Filius, res amata essentia divina; Spiritus sanctus est terminus amoris amborum. Unde quod sit unum et idem cum essentia divina amata, non provenit formaiter ex eo quod sit amor procedens a voluntate, sed ex eo quod sit actus immanens in Deo, et quod quidquid est in deo sit substantialiter Deus.

semper voluntas aliquid producit ALIQUA PROCESSIONE PRAESUPPOSTA.

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